

Civil, were unstintingly given to further the necessities of that expedition.

The operations in the Gallipoli Peninsula by threatening Constantinople drew off the bulk of the Turkish forces belonging to Djemal Pasha's command, which had already been beaten back from the vicinity of the Suez Canal. It was therefore possible, whilst retaining just sufficient force to safeguard the Canal, to move troops to other theatres where their presence was most required. But throughout the summer and autumn of 1915, my principal cause of anxiety was the possibility of trouble on the Western Frontier, which might lead to serious religious and internal disorders. The attitude of Sayed Ahmed the Senussi was becoming more and more truculent notwithstanding my efforts to preserve peaceful relations; everything possible was done to avoid hostilities, and they were avoided until late in the year, when hostile acts on his part led to the withdrawal of the Egyptian Frontier post at Sollum and subsequent operations.

Suez Canal Zone.

The duty of guarding the Suez Canal was allotted to the Indian Expeditionary Force "E" under the command of Major-General Sir A. Wilson, K.C.B.

This force was gradually reduced by calls on it for other theatres; thus the 29th Brigade under Major-General Sir H. Cox, K.C.M.G., C.B., C.S.I., was sent to Gallipoli; subsequently the Punjabi-Mohammedan battalions of that brigade were withdrawn from the Peninsula and replaced by Gurkha battalions taken from brigades on the Canal; two double companies of Sikhs from the Patiala Imperial Service Regiment were sent to replace losses in the 15th Sikhs, and every British and Indian officer who could be spared was sent to replace casualties; the 30th Brigade under Major-General C. J. Melliss, V.C., K.C.B., was sent to Basrah, the 28th Brigade under Major-General Sir G. Younghusband, K.C.I.E., C.B., was sent first to Aden and then to Basrah; the force was further weakened by the exchange of tired units from the Indian divisions in France with some of the best battalions on the Canal.

To this force fell the tiresome and onerous duty throughout the entire summer of exercising ceaseless vigilance over the 100 miles of Canal front. Great credit is due for the way this duty was performed; indifferent troops would have been demoralised. Though small bodies of the enemy were constantly endeavouring, occasionally with success, to place mines in the Canal or damage the railway, yet no accident of importance occurred except that one merchant ship, the s.s. "Teresias," struck a mine. She fortunately escaped with but little damage. The passage of the Canal was interrupted on this one occasion for only a few hours.

A little affair, creditable to the Imperial Service Troops engaged, occurred on the 23rd November, when a squadron of the Mysore Lancers operating 15 miles east of El Kantara came upon a force of 60 or 70 Turks, the advance party of a raiding party 200 strong. These they pursued for 7 miles, killing seven, capturing 12 and wounding many others. Amongst the dead was a Bedouin leader named Rizkalla Salim, who was responsible for most

of the raids on the Canal; since his death they entirely ceased.

Part of 30th Squadron Royal Flying Corps, under the command of Brevet Major S. D. Maasy, I.A., with Headquarters at Ismailia, carried out daily reconnaissances without a single important accident.

The French Naval Seaplane detachment, with Headquarters at Port Said, under the command of Capitaine de Vaisseau de l'Escaille, whose services were placed at my disposal for Intelligence purposes, was continually employed in reconnoitring the Syrian and Anatolian Coast from the requisitioned vessels "Raven" and "Anne." The results of their work were invaluable. The "Anne" was torpedoed near Smyrna during an armistice while employed by the Royal Navy, but was fortunately able to reach Mudros, where she was patched up and returned to Port Said. I cannot speak too highly of the work of the seaplane detachment. Lengthy land flights are extremely dangerous, yet nothing ever stopped these gallant French aviators from any enterprise. I regret the loss of two of these planes whilst making dangerous land flights over Southern Syria.

I would be failing in my duty were I not to bring to Your Lordship's notice the valuable and whole-hearted assistance always readily given by the Count de Serionne and his able assistants of the Suez Canal Company. The whole of the resources of this Company were put unreservedly at my disposal.

It is perhaps needless for me to report that His Majesty's Royal Navy, under Vice-Admiral Sir R. Peirse, K.C.B., Commander-in-Chief, East Indies, were always ready and anxious to help and facilitate the duty of protecting the Canal and advising in any enterprise that needed Naval assistance. To the Navy fell the duty of guarding the Bitter Lakes.

To the Vice-Admiral Commanding the French Syrian Squadron I am especially indebted, in that he and the Officers and ships under his command maintained a constant watch throughout on the Syrian and Anatolian Coasts. They supplied me with the fullest information of enemy movements that it was possible to obtain by means of agents, etc. I had only to express a wish and it was at once carried out.

I now submit my report as follows:—

OPERATIONS ON THE WESTERN FRONT TO 31st JANUARY, 1916.

Outbreak of Hostilities on the Western Front.

Early in November, during my temporary absence from Egypt to meet your Lordship at Mudros, the situation on the Western Frontier, which, as your Lordship is aware, had for some months been a subject for anxiety, became suddenly acute, and a series of acts of hostility committed against our frontier posts at Sollum and Barrani made final rupture with the Senussi inevitable.

As early as May, 1915, signs were apparent that the steadily increasing pressure brought to bear upon the Senussi by the Turkish party in Tripoli, under the leadership of Nuri Bey, a half-brother of Enver Pasha, was beginning to take effect.

For some time, even after the outbreak of hostilities between Great Britain and Turkey in 1914, the anti-British influence of this party