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MONDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER, 1916.

War Office,
25th September, 1916.

The following Despatch has been received by the Secretary of State for War from General Sir Archibald Murray, Commander-in-Chief, Egyptian Expeditionary Force:—

General Headquarters,
Egyptian Expeditionary Force,
1st June, 1916.

Sir,—I have the honour to submit a report on the operations of the Force under my command from the date on which I assumed command to the 31st May, 1916.

1. On 9th January, 1916, I arrived in Cairo, and, on the following day, took over the command of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force from General Sir C. C. Monro, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., who had himself arrived from Mudros but a few days before. At that date the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force was in a state of transition as regards its larger component, the Dardanelles Army. On the night of the 8th/9th January this Army had completed its successful evacuation of Cape Helles; its units were still concentrated at Mudros and Imbros awaiting transport to Egypt, where all the Force, excluding the Salonica Army, had been ordered to concentrate. Meanwhile, a portion of the Force, which had been set free by the earlier evacuation of the Suvla Bay and Anzac positions, had

already arrived in Egypt, where it had come under the command of General Sir John Maxwell, K.C.B., K.C.M.G. The concentration of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, for instance, was practically complete, and the 53rd Division was occupied in operations on the Western Frontier of Egypt. General Headquarters of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force were temporarily established in Cairo.

The instructions which I had received from the Secretary of State for War placed under my command all organized formations then in Egypt, or on their way to Egypt, with the exception of such troops as might be considered necessary for the defence of Egypt and the Nile Valley against attack from the west, or for maintaining order in the Nile Valley and the Nile Delta. The function assigned to me was that of protecting Egypt against attack from the east, and the westward limit of my command was roughly fixed by a line running north and south approximately five miles west of the Suez Canal. The British Force at Salonica was also placed under my general supervision.

2. During the period under review, in addition to the extensive military preparations required for the defence of the eastern front, the amount of purely administrative work thrown on all sections of my Staff has been extremely heavy. The exigencies of the Gallipoli cam-