



SUPPLEMENT

TO

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TUESDAY, 14 NOVEMBER, 1916.

War Office,
14th November, 1916.

The following Despatch from Lieutenant-General Sir Percy Lake, K.C.B., relative to the operations in Mesopotamia subsequent to 30th April, 1916, has been received from the Government of India for publication.

In forwarding this Despatch to the Government of India the Commander-in-Chief expressed his appreciation of the zeal and perseverance with which Sir Percy Lake faced and energetically improved the difficult conditions encountered by him during the tenure of his command:—

General Headquarters,
I.E.F. "D."
27th August, 1916.

From Lieutenant-General Sir P. H. N. Lake, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., Commanding Indian Expeditionary Force "D."
To the Chief of the General Staff, Army Headquarters, India, Simla.

SIR,—On relinquishing command of Indian Expeditionary Force "D" I have the honour to submit a short Despatch, dealing with the operations of this Force since the fall of Kut on April 30th, and also describing in general terms the work carried out at the Base and on

the Line of Communications up to the present date.

OPERATIONS.

1. No operations on a large scale have been undertaken since the fall of Kut.

On the Tigris Line the troops immediately facing the enemy were, with the exception of those actually on duty in the trenches, resting, recuperating and consolidating their position. Fatigues were very heavy, the heat of summer came on rapidly, and a good deal of sickness prevailed.

Nevertheless pressure on the enemy was never relaxed, and every opportunity was taken to test his morale by bombardments and minor engagements whenever opportunity offered.

2. During May the pressure of the Russian advance from Persia towards Baghdad must have begun to make itself felt by the enemy, for on the 19th May General Gorringe reported his apparent withdrawal from his advanced positions at and in front of Es Sinn on the right bank, though the Sannaiyat position was still strongly held. This withdrawal was followed up, and by the evening of May 20th General Gorringe was able to report that, except for small rearguards covering the bridges over the Hai river, the right bank of the Tigris as far as the Hai was clear of the enemy.