



SUPPLEMENT

TO

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FRIDAY, 1 DECEMBER, 1916.

War Office,

1st December, 1916.

The Secretary of State for War has received the following despatches from General Sir Archibald Murray, K.C.B., Commander-in-Chief, Egyptian Expeditionary Force.

General Headquarters,

Egyptian Expeditionary Force.

1st October, 1916.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit a report on the operations of the Force under my command from the 1st June to 30th September, 1916.

1. On the eastern front, during the month of June, vigorous counter-measures, culminating in the successful attack on the enemy's aerodrome at El Arish, were undertaken to check the much increased activity of hostile aircraft. This operation was brilliantly carried out on the morning of the 18th June. The first British machine to arrive descended to 100 feet and attacked, blowing to pieces an aeroplane on the ground and its attendant personnel. A second machine on the ground was also put out of action by bombs. Heavy fire from rifles and anti-aircraft guns was now

opened on the attackers, but the British pilots carried out their orders most gallantly. Altogether six out of the ten hangars were hit, and two, if not three, were burnt to the ground. A party of soldiers on the aerodrome was also successfully bombed, and at the close one of the observing machines attacked the hangars with its machine gun from a height of 1,200 feet. During the action three of our machines were forced to descend; two were destroyed and one sank in the sea. Two of the pilots were rescued, and the third was taken prisoner.

On the eastern front there was comparatively little activity during the month of June, beyond the usual patrols and reconnaissances, which were actively carried out. A column of Australian Light Horse, with detachments of engineers and of Bikanir Camel Corps, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel T. J. Todd, D.S.O., successfully executed the task of draining the rock cisterns and pools in the Wadi Um Muksheib, some 40 miles S.E. of Ismailia, between 10th and 14th June. Some 5,000,000 gallons of water were disposed of in four days and nights of continuous effort, and the fact that every man and animal that left railhead on 10th June returned safely testifies