



SECOND SUPPLEMENT TO The London Gazette

Of TUESDAY, the 10th of JULY, 1917.

Published by Authority.

The Gazette is registered at the General Post Office for transmission by Inland Post as a newspaper. The postage rate to places within the United Kingdom, for each copy, is one halfpenny for the first 6 ozs., and an additional halfpenny for each subsequent 6 ozs. or part thereof. For places abroad the rate is a halfpenny for every 2 ounces, except in the case of Canada, to which the Canadian Magazine Postage rate applies.

TUESDAY, 10 JULY, 1917.

War Office,
10th July, 1917.

The Secretary of State for War has received the following despatch addressed to the Chief of the General Staff, India, by Lieut.-General Sir Stanley Maude, K.C.B., Commander-in-Chief, Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force:—

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,
MESOPOTAMIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

10th April, 1917.

SIR,—

1. I have the honour to submit herewith a report on the operations carried out by the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force for the period extending from August 28th, 1916, the date upon which I assumed command of the Army, until March 31st, 1917, three weeks after the fall of Baghdad.

2. The area over which the responsibilities of the Army extended was a wide one, embracing Falahiyeh, on the Tigris; Ispahan (exclusive), in Persia; Bushire, on the Persian Gulf; and Nasariyeh, on the Euphrates.

Briefly put, the enemy's plan appeared to be to contain our main forces on the Tigris, whilst a vigorous campaign, which would directly threaten India, was being developed in Persia. There were indications, too, of an impending move down the Euphrates towards Nasariyeh. To disseminate our troops in order to safeguard the various conflicting interests involved would have relegated us to a passive defensive everywhere, and it seemed clear from the outset that the true solution of the problem was a resolute offensive, with concentrated forces, on the Tigris, thus effectively threatening Baghdad, the centre from which the enemy's columns were operating. Such a stroke pursued with energy and success would, it was felt, automatically relieve the pressure in Persia and on the Euphrates, and preserve quiet in all districts with the security of which we were charged.

This then was the principle which guided the subsequent operations, which may be conveniently grouped into phases as follows:—

First: Preliminary preparations, from August 28th to December 12th.