



FIFTH SUPPLEMENT

TO

The London Gazette

Of FRIDAY, the 4th of JANUARY, 1918.

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, 8 JANUARY, 1918.

*War Office,
8th January, 1918.*

The following Despatch has been received by the Secretary of State for War from Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, K.T., G.C.B., G.C.V.O., Commanding-in-Chief, British Armies in France:—

*General Headquarters,
British Armies in the Field.
25th December, 1917.*

My Lord,

I have the honour to submit the following Report on the operations of the Forces under my Command from the opening of the British offensive on the 9th April, 1917, to the conclusion of the Flanders offensive in November. The subsequent events of this year will form the subject of a separate Despatch, to be rendered a little later.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE GENERAL ALLIED PLAN.

(1) The general plan of campaign to be pursued by the Allied Armies during 1917 was unanimously agreed on by a conference of mili-

tary representatives of all the Allied Powers held at French General Headquarters in November, 1916.

This plan comprised a series of offensives on all fronts, so timed as to assist each other by depriving the enemy of the power of weakening any one of his fronts in order to reinforce another.

A general understanding had also been arrived at between the then French Commander-in-Chief and myself as to the rôles of our respective Armies in this general plan, and with the approval of His Majesty's Government preparations based upon these arrangements had at once been taken in hand.

(2) Briefly stated, my plan of action for the Armies under my command in the proposed general offensive was as follows:—

In the spring, as soon as all the Allied Armies were ready to commence operations, my first efforts were to be directed against the enemy's troops occupying the salient between the Scarpe and the Ancre, into which they had been pressed as a result of the Somme battle.

It was my intention to attack both shoulders of this salient simultaneously, the Fifth Army