

between El Burj and Beit Ur El Foka, but the Yeomanry and Scottish troops successfully resisted all attacks and inflicted severe losses on the enemy. At Beit Ur El Foka one company took 300 prisoners. All efforts by the enemy to drive us off the Neby Samwil ridge were completely repulsed. These attacks cost the Turks very dearly. We took 750 prisoners between 27th and 30th November, and the enemy's losses in killed and wounded were undoubtedly heavy. His attacks in no way affected our positions nor impeded the progress of our preparations.

21. Favoured by a continuance of fine weather, preparations for a fresh advance against the Turkish positions west and south of Jerusalem proceeded rapidly. Existing roads and tracks were improved and new ones constructed to enable heavy and field artillery to be placed in position and ammunition and supplies brought up. The water supply was also developed.

The date for the attack was fixed as 8th December. Welsh troops, with a Cavalry regiment attached, had advanced from their positions north of Beersheba up the Hebron-Jerusalem road on the 4th. No opposition was met, and by the evening of the 6th the head of this column was ten miles north of Hebron. The Infantry were directed to reach the Bethlehem-Beit Jala area by the 7th, and the line Surbahir-Sherafat (about three miles south of Jerusalem) by dawn on the 8th, and no troops were to enter Jerusalem during this operation.

It was recognised that the troops on the extreme right might be delayed on the 7th and fail to reach the positions assigned to them by dawn on the 8th. Arrangements were therefore made to protect the right flank west of Jerusalem, in case such delay occurred.

22. On the 7th the weather broke, and for three days rain was almost continuous. The hills were covered with mist at frequent intervals, rendering observation from the air and visual signalling impossible. A more serious effect of the rain was to jeopardise the supply arrangements by rendering the roads almost impassable—quite impassable, indeed, for mechanical transport and camels in many places.

The troops moved into positions of assembly by night, and, assaulting at dawn on the 8th, soon carried their first objectives. They then pressed steadily forward. The mere physical difficulty of climbing the steep and rocky hillsides and crossing the deep valleys would have sufficed to render progress slow, and the opposition encountered was considerable. Artillery support was soon difficult, owing to the length of the advance and the difficulty of moving guns forward. But by about noon London troops had already advanced over two miles, and were swinging north-east to gain the Nablus-Jerusalem road; while the Yeomanry had captured the Beit Ikksa spur, and were preparing for a further advance.

As the right column had been delayed and was still some distance south of Jerusalem, it was necessary for the London troops to throw back their right and form a defensive flank facing east towards Jerusalem, from the western outskirts of which considerable rifle and artillery fire was being experienced. This delayed the advance, and early in the afternoon it was decided to consolidate the line gained and resume the advance next day, when the right column would be in a position to exert its pres-

sure. By nightfall our line ran from Neby Samwil to the east of Beit Ikksa, through Lifta to a point about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of Jerusalem, whence it was thrown back facing east. All the enemy's prepared defences west and north-west of Jerusalem had been captured, and our troops were within a short distance of the Nablus-Jerusalem road.

The London troops and Yeomanry had displayed great endurance in difficult conditions. The London troops especially, after a night march in heavy rain to reach their positions of deployment, had made an advance of three to four miles in difficult hills in the face of stubborn opposition.

During the day about 300 prisoners were taken and many Turks killed. Our own casualties were light.

23. Next morning the advance was resumed. The Turks had withdrawn during the night, and the London troops and Yeomanry, driving back rearguards, occupied a line across the Nablus-Jerusalem road four miles north of Jerusalem, while Welsh troops occupied a position east of Jerusalem across the Jericho road. These operations isolated Jerusalem, and at about noon the enemy sent out a parlementaire and surrendered the city.

At noon on the 11th I made my official entry into Jerusalem.

24. In the operations from October 31st to December 9th over 12,000 prisoners were taken. The total captures of material have not yet been fully counted, owing to the large area covered by these operations; but are known to include about 100 guns of various calibres, many machine guns, more than 20,000,000 rounds of rifle ammunition, and 250,000 rounds of gun ammunition. More than twenty aeroplanes were destroyed by our airmen or burnt by the enemy to avoid capture.

25. My thanks are due to the cordial assistance which I have received from His Excellency the High Commissioner, General Sir Francis Wingate, G.C.B., G.C.V.O., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., who has always given me the greatest assistance.

26. During the whole period Rear-Admiral T. Jackson, C.B., M.V.O., has given me most loyal support, and has co-operated with me in a manner which has materially contributed to our success.

27. Brigadier-General Sir G. Macauley, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Railway Transport, has given invaluable help in the organisation of my railways.

28. All ranks and services in the Force under my command have acquitted themselves in a manner beyond praise. Fatigue, thirst, heat and cold have been endured uncomplainingly. The co-operation of all arms has been admirable, and has enabled success in battle to be consummated by irresistible and victorious pursuit.

Leaders and staffs have all done well, and in particular I bring to Your Lordship's notice the names of the following officers:—

Major-General (temporary Lieutenant-General) Sir Philip Chetwode, Bart., K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O.

My plan of operations was based on his appreciation of the situation and on the scheme which he put forward to me on my arrival in Egypt last summer. To his strategical foresight and tactical skill the success of the campaign is largely due.