

Although large Turkish reinforcements were seen advancing no counter-attack was delivered until our withdrawal commenced, when the enemy endeavoured to envelop both flanks of the main column. This attack was successfully met.

In December, 1917, a unit of the R.F.C. was added to the Aden Force and aeroplanes co-operated successfully with the troops.

The Royal Navy has afforded valuable help throughout in maintaining the active defence of Aden and in connection with the defence of the defended port.

(ii) *Bushire*.—The Khans of the Bushire Hinterland have maintained a hostile attitude throughout the period under review, necessitating constant vigilance on the part of the Bushire Garrison.

No active operations, however, have taken place.

(iii) *South Persia*.—Since the establishment of the mission under Sir Percy Sykes, K.C.I.E., C.M.G., at Shiraz the organisation of the Persian Force, known as the South Persia Rifles, has continued in the provinces of Kerman and Fars and at Bandar Abbas.

During the period under review portions of the forces, British and Persian, under Sir P. Sykes were in action on the following occasions:—

(a) On the Shiraz-Ispahan road. Several successful punitive operations were carried out during 1917 against robber bands and raiders. During January and February, 1918, operations against the Mishmasts and Meshedi Jani Khan Arabs were successful in inflicting punishment for lawlessness and in restoring order.

(b) On the Shiraz-Kerman road in June, 1917, an attack by raiders on a detachment of regular troops at Deh Chah was punished with a loss to the Persians of 10 killed.

(c) In the area lying between Yezd and Shiraz continued attacks on caravans on the main trade routes rendered it necessary to carry out punitive measures against the Lashani, Tutaki and Charrahi tribes.

These operations were carried out successfully with the desired result.

In addition to the more important operations referred to above, a number of minor enterprises against robbers and raiders were undertaken with success.

(iv) *East Persia*.—In the early stages of the period under review the withdrawal of regular troops from the north of Robat was undertaken with a view to their greater concentration.

On the 18th May, 1917, the command of the Sistan Force was taken over from Brigadier-General C. O. Tanner by Lieutenant-Colonel, now Brigadier-General, G. A. Dale, C.M.G.

In January, 1918, in consequence of the Russian withdrawal from North-East Persia it was decided to extend the British Cordon so as to include the Birjand-Meshed line. Reinforcements were despatched from India, and on the 1st February, 1918, the force was constituted the Eastern Persian Cordon Field Force.

The expansion of the Sistan Levies was also sanctioned and has been taken in hand.

(v) *Operations on the North-West Frontier*.—During the period under review important operations were undertaken against the

Mahsuds in Waziristan during the months of March to August, 1917, and to deal with rising of the Marri and Ketran tribes, from February to May, 1918.

The former operations have been dealt with in a separate despatch.†

The Marri operations are referred to hereafter.

The Mohmand blockade referred to in my last minor operations despatch of the 23rd July, 1917, was brought to a successful conclusion in July, 1917, the Mohmand tribes submitting to Government terms.

Apart from the above, the activity of the troops on the frontier has been confined to dealing with trans-border raiders.

In this connection, the most important action occurred on 31st December, 1917, in the Bannu district. A band of 16 Khost raiders was surrounded by a small force of regulars and Frontier Constabulary. The raiders fought resolutely, but were eventually all killed, with a loss to our troops of 3 killed and 10 wounded.

*Baluchistan*.—Unrest in the Zhob district, which was due to the outbreak of trouble in Waziristan, necessitated the reinforcement of Fort Sandeman from May to July, 1917. During this period the regular troops in this area, as well as the men of the Zhob Militia, did much useful work, and were called upon to endure much hardship and privation owing to the intense heat.

In the early part of 1918 general unrest among the Marri tribes culminated in an unsuccessful attack on Gumbaz fort on the night of the 19th-20th February. The attack was made by some thousand Marris, and was pressed with considerable determination, a number of tribesmen actually entering the fort. The casualties inflicted on the enemy were heavy, 77 dead and wounded Marris being counted on the morning of the 20th.

The necessity for undertaking punitive operations was accepted in consequence of further acts of hostility, including the burning of Government buildings at Kohlu.

Operations were carried out under the orders of Lieutenant-General R. Wapshare, C.B., C.S.I., by the simultaneous movement of two columns, which had been concentrated in the first place at Duki and Rakhni. The Duki Force was commanded by Brigadier-General (now Major-General) T. H. Hardy and the Rakhni or Dera Ghazi Khan column by Brigadier-General P. J. Miles.

On the 15th March an enemy attack on Fort Munro was repulsed with a loss to them of 21 killed and wounded.

The advance into Khetran territory was practically unopposed and a cessation of destructive operations against the Khetrans was ordered at the end of March, as the majority of the sections and sub-sections had surrendered. On the 3rd April, at Hadb, the Duki Force encountered the enemy, estimated at about 1,200. Our troops attacked with great determination and forced the enemy to retire, leaving 70 dead on the ground.

The Duki force subsequently occupied Kahan, the Marri capital, without further opposition.

The Marri Nawab and tribal headmen submitted unconditionally to Government terms,

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