



**EIGHTH SUPPLEMENT**

TO

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**FRIDAY 11 APRIL, 1919.**

*War Office,  
11th April, 1919.*

The Secretary of State has received the following despatch, addressed to the Chief of the General Staff, India, by Lieut.-General Sir W. R. Marshall, K.C.B., K.C.S.I., Commanding-in-Chief, Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force:—

*General Head-Quarters,  
Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force,  
1st February, 1919.*

Sir,

1. I have the honour to submit the following report on the operations of the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force from 1st October, 1918, the date of my last despatch, to 31st December, 1918:—

2. The overwhelming victories achieved by General Allenby in Palestine and Syria had naturally re-acted, greatly to our advantage, on the situation in N.W. Persia. The Turkish threat against Kasvin (and therefore Teheran) was now no longer to be feared. In fact, even before the fall of Damascus, my information

led me to believe that the Turks were hurriedly withdrawing troops from the Caucasus.

This, then, seemed the moment to take the offensive against the Turkish 6th Army, covering the approaches to Mosul, and it was with great pleasure that on the 7th October I received orders to carry out this movement.

3. The forces opposed to me were the 2nd and 14th Divisions of the 6th Turkish Army, and, possibly, the 5th Division, which was known to be on its way to the Mosul Vilayet from the direction of Urmiä.

The bulk of the Turkish forces (calculated at about 9,000 rifles and 59 guns) was located on the Tigris, and holding a position of great natural strength astride the Fatha Gorge. This position had been in their occupation nearly 18 months, and had been thoroughly prepared for a protracted defence. The enemy's right flank from the Fatha Gorge to Shergat was not only artificially defended, but also naturally protected by two formidable ranges of hills known as the Jebel Makhul and the Jebel Khanuka, which could not be turned owing to lack of water in the desert.

On the left bank of the Tigris the position