

Major-Generals Sir Louis Bols and Sir Walter Campbell, and the Staff of "Q" Branch, 2nd Echelon; I tender my very cordial thanks.

The assistance of the Royal Navy has been very essential to the execution of the military operations on land: and I wish to express my warm thanks to Rear-Admiral T. Jackson, C.B., M.V.O., the senior Naval Officers of the Red Sea Patrol, Captain W. H. D. Boyle, C.B., R.N. (until November, 1917), and his successor, Captain H. A. Buchanan-Wollaston, R.N., to the Principal Naval Transport Officer; Commodore E. Unwin, V.C., C.M.G., and his Staff, and to the Commanders of the "G" boats, for their unflinching and invaluable help.

The Acting Sirdar has been, as ever, most ready and prompt to meet such requests for personnel as I have found it necessary to make to him: and the work of the Egyptian Army detachments in the Hedjaz has been most praiseworthy.

The heads of the French Military Mission, Colonel E. Brémond, C.M.G., and his successor, Commandant Cousse, have discharged their functions in a spirit of accommodation and good-fellowship which has greatly facilitated the conduct of joint operations. As an instance of the good relations existing, it may be mentioned that Colonel Brémond in November last placed all French troops in the area under Colonel Wilson's personal command for the operations it was then hoped to carry out between El Ula and Medina.

The relations between the British Officers, serving in an advisory capacity, and the King of the Hedjaz have continued to be thoroughly cordial and satisfactory. This is due in a very great measure to the personality and energy of Colonel Wilson. During the latter's illness his difficult and onerous duties were discharged very efficiently by Lieut.-Colonel J. R. Bassett.

To the Officers of the Headquarters Staff at Cairo, to the Arab Bureau, and to my personal Staff I am indebted for their excellent work. The organisation on a more practical basis than formerly of the Hedjaz staff has been mainly due to Lieut.-Colonel A. Dawnay, whose previous experience as a Staff Officer, tact and capacity have proved of very great assistance.

I have the honour to forward separately a list of Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men whose names I desire to bring to Your Lordship's notice with a view to recognition for specially valuable services performed in connection with these operations.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient Servant,

REGINALD WINGATE,

General.

General Officer Commanding, Hedjaz.

[Despatch No. 3.]

*The Residency, Cairo,*

*27th December, 1918.*

My Lord,

I have the honour to submit my third despatch on the military operations in the Hedjaz.

1. At the date of my last despatch of June 15th the isolation of the enemy's Second Composite and Hedjaz Expeditionary Forces had been effected by the complete destruction, by Emir Feisal's northern army, during April, of the Hedjaz railway south of Maan to Mudaw'ra (exclusive). Since then the Turkish garrisons in the Southern Hedjaz, including that of Medina, were entirely cut off from communication with the outside world, with the exception of a single aeroplane despatch, which reached Tebuk from the north about the middle of August, and of infrequent and very irregular supply convoys to Medina from Hail or Riadh.

2. In the meantime the Sherifs were encouraged to occupy the summer months in demolition attacks on the railway and in raiding operations against the Turkish garrisons north of Medina, whilst maintaining as rigidly as possible the blockade of Medina from the east, and preparing for operations on a decisive scale against Medina, to be carried out during the autumn—the most favourable campaigning season in the Southern Hedjaz. In accordance with this general intention, towards the end of May Emir Abdulla, supported by strong contingents of the Huteim, Ateiba and Juheina tribesmen, attacked the Wadi Hamdh bridges; but, although at the first assault several outlying advanced posts were captured, the attack failed to develop. A week later a fresh offensive was undertaken further south, in the section between Bir Nasif and Hafira, this time in co-operation with a detachment of Emir Ali's army, led by the Emir in person; but, again, little more than demonstration was effected, although some 1,000 rails and half a dozen culverts were destroyed by Emir Abdulla's demolition parties. On June 7th a more successful raid was carried out in the neighbourhood of Toweira, in the course of which 1,200 rails, a bridge and three large culverts were demolished and a water train with its locomotive was captured and destroyed by the Arabs. In this operation the losses of the enemy were heavy, and a number of prisoners were taken.

3. At the end of July an offensive was launched by Emir Ali against the Turkish positions at Jelajila, north-west of Medina, but the enemy's defensive works proved too strong to be taken by infantry assault without extensive artillery support, which, owing to difficulties of transport, Ali lacked; and, notwithstanding a determined and praiseworthy effort on the part of the Sherifial troops engaged, Jelajila remained in the hands of the enemy.

In the meantime the capture of Mudaw'ra by an Imperial Camel Corps column operating from Akaba, on August 8th, and the destruction of the water supply at that place, compelled the enemy to evacuate the railway south of Maan as far as Dhat El Haj, and finally dispelled any hope he may till then have entertained of the ultimate communications with Medina from the north.

4. From the beginning of August until the Turkish débâcle in Syria in the last week of September no operations worthy of separate mention were carried out by the forces of Emirs Ali or Abdulla.

5. With a view to the inception of the autumn offensive operations against Medina,