

to which reference has already been made, the organisation and equipment of a mobile force of camel-mounted infantry and artillery was commenced at Wejh early in August, and was proceeding satisfactorily when, on September 14th, an epidemic of plague broke out among the Arab population, which spread to the troops and indefinitely postponed preparation for the operations in prospect.

Notwithstanding this enforced postponement, however, the increasingly low morale of the Turkish troops in the Southern Hedjaz due to privation was evidenced by the number and condition of the deserters brought in to the Arab forces; and the reaction of the Turkish catastrophe in Syria gave hope, at the end of September, that an offer of honourable capitulation might be accepted by the Turkish Commander at Medina. Such an offer was accordingly despatched by King Hussein, supported by a written guarantee by myself, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, that honourable treatment and safe conduct to Egypt would be assured to the garrison; but this offer was refused by Fakhreddin Pasha.

6. Tebuk was seized by the Arab forces on October 12th, over 300 prisoners with four mountain howitzers and six machine guns being captured; and the Turks subsequently evacuated their posts on the railway north of Kalaat-el-Akhdar, losing material and stores in the process. Mudarij was captured by the Arabs, who also attacked with a measure of success the Turkish garrisons at Medain, Saleh, and Abu Naam.

7. In the meantime Sherifs Ali and Abdulla moved to El-Ayun and El-Jafr, where a large force of tribal levies was concentrated with a view to an early and vigorous effort to secure the capitulation of Medina. These arrangements, which were on a more extensive scale than previous ones, were rendered abortive by the Armistice with Turkey, when all hostilities by the Arabs were at once suspended.

8. The foregoing review of operations in the Hedjaz would be incomplete without reference to the great victory achieved by the Army under General Allenby in Syria, and its corollary, the entry of the Arab forces under Emir Feisal, after a series of cleverly-planned and daring flanking operations, into Damascus. These operations of the Northern Arab Army, in which Lieut.-Colonel T. E. Lawrence played so distinguished a rôle, will, as occurring within the area controlled by the Commander-in-Chief, Egyptian Expeditionary Force, be reported on by the latter; and in paying a tribute to his military genius I would record my gratitude to General Sir Edmund Allenby and his Staff for their ready assistance and consideration on all occasions. To this, and to the close and cordial relations existing between us and our respective Staffs, may be attributed the fact that the divided control of Arabs' operations, described in my previous report, has worked without any sort of friction or difficulty.

9. I take this final opportunity of expressing my deep sense of obligation to all ranks of the British, French, Egyptian, and Indian detachments serving in the Hedjaz; however courteous and helpful the Emirs Ali, Abdulla, and Zeid, and the other Sherifial military

commanders have been in their relations with their European advisers, the service has been a difficult and trying one which, whilst giving fewer opportunities of showing their military skill than in other theatres of war, made no light demands on their loyalty, enthusiasm and powers of endurance.

In my previous despatches I have referred to the French Military Mission, which has co-operated with the Arab Forces since September, 1916, up to date—firstly under the direction of Colonel Bremond, C.M.G., and latterly under Chef de Bataillon Cousse, C.M.G. To both these Commanders, their French and Moslem subordinates and officers, and to the *sous-officiers* and men comprising the French Algerian detachment, the greatest credit is due. Their efficiency, good comradeship and readiness and resource under difficult and trying conditions of climate and service invariably assisted largely in the success of the joint operations in which they took a very gallant and conspicuous part.

It is a matter of extreme satisfaction to me to be able to offer this cordial testimony to our gallant French allies who, no less in the Hedjaz than in the various other theatres of operations, have so whole-heartedly co-operated in the successes which have liberated Arabia and inflicted so severe a blow on the prestige of our enemies in the Near and Middle East.

It is also my pleasant duty to refer again to the valuable services of the various detachments of the Egyptian Army, who have taken no inconsiderable share in these operations since their inception in June, 1916, up to the signature of the Armistice. They have shown a gallantry and endurance under hardships which is in every sense most praiseworthy. The admirable behaviour of the men under difficult conditions reflects great credit on themselves, no less than on their officers and non-commissioned officers, who were responsible for the efficiency of the organisation and for the excellent spirit of discipline maintained throughout the various units.

In my second despatch I also referred to the outstanding services rendered by the small detachment of Indian Moslem Gunners under the able command of Jemadar Hassan Shah, who was promoted Rissaldar and granted the award of the Military Cross for gallantry and devotion to duty. I cannot speak too highly of the behaviour of this detachment, "who," in the words of Major Davenport, "never complained in spite of great hardships, and did all the arduous service they were called upon to perform with a willing smile." This detachment specially distinguished itself at the defence of Zumurud Fort and displayed a military zeal and resource in action which was most praiseworthy.

My task has been greatly facilitated by the ready co-operation given me at all times by the Acting Sirdar; by Rear-Admiral Jackson, C.B., M.V.O., and the officers commanding ships of the Red Sea Patrol; Brigadier-General G. F. Clayton, C.B., C.M.G., as my liaison officer with the Commander-in-Chief, and latterly as Chief Political Officer; Temp. Lieut.-Colonel K. Cornwallis, D.S.O., the Director of the Arab Bureau, and Commander D. G. Hogarth, have rendered very valuable services in connection with Arab military and political affairs. My