

Indian Soldiers' Fund (Sir Tredrevyn White).
Lady O'Dwyer's Punjab Comforts Fund
(Lady O'Dwyer).

Central Provinces Comforts Fund (Lady
Robertson).

Shanghai Comforts Fund (Mrs. Sausmarez),

who have so generously provided gifts of money
and in kind for the benefit of the troops.

In April we had the honour of a visit from
Their Excellencies Lord and Lady Willingdon,
who have, throughout the campaign in Mesopotamia,
done so much for the benefit of all
members of the Force. Their visit was a source
of genuine pleasure to all, and they were
enabled to see for themselves some of the results
of their unremitting labours on our behalf.

27. The difficulties of the administrative
departments and services have naturally in-
creased with the extended area now occupied
by the Force.

Local Resources have been developed in a
very satisfactory manner, and good results
achieved. The activities of this Department are
many and varied, and demand much ingenuity
and tact in dealing with the local inhabitants.
The most important part of its functions during
the past summer has been the preparation for
the collection of the harvest: the success at-
tained redounds to the credit of the staff of
this Directorate in carrying out this arduous
duty at a most trying part of the year.

The harvest, though later than was anti-
cipated, has been bountiful, and it is confidently
expected that in the future the Force will be
self-supporting as regards barley and fodder.

Supplies have been satisfactorily main-
tained, and delivered to the troops with a
regularity which is worthy of all praise, when
it is remembered that not a single metalled road
exists throughout the length and breadth of
Mesopotamia.

The work of the Transport, particularly of
the Mechanical Transport, has been extremely
arduous. Immense wear and tear to vehicles
has been caused on the Persian road, and it
reflects great credit on all concerned to have
kept so many vehicles in working order. It is
safe to say that a line of communication of
such a length has never previously been kept
up. The strain thrown on the personnel of the
Mechanical Transport branch has been very
considerable, but the demands on them have
been met with unfailing regularity and will-
ingness.

The development and opening up of new
lines by the Railway Department during the
period has been most marked. Allusion has
already been made to the broad gauge line to
Hilla. A narrow gauge extension thence to
Kifl on the other branch of the Euphrates has
since been opened to traffic. In the forward
areas also much time and labour has been ex-
pended in extending both standard and metre
gauge lines, and the service of trains has been
well maintained.

The Ordnance Services have kept up their
high standard of efficiency. Supplies of cloth-
ing, stores and ammunition have been satis-
factory, and the needs of the troops promptly
met.

The responsibilities of the Department of
Works have increased during the period under
review, and though this Department has had
to contend with a shortage of supervising and

subordinate personnel as well as of actual
material, the work has been of a consistently
high order.

The Board of Agriculture was constituted
some three months ago, and has already proved
of value in co-ordinating with the Political
Department the work of the two recently estab-
lished Directorates of Irrigation and Agricul-
ture. Considerable irrigation projects are in
hand with the object of increasing the food
development of the country, but the scope of
these is limited by the labour available for the
works and the number of cultivators available
for the ultimate production of crops. Circle
officers have been appointed in order to stimu-
late agriculture and to improve the methods
hitherto employed by the natives. In addi-
tion, both Government and demonstration
farms are being started.

The Directorate of Labour has to contend
with ever-increasing demands for roads, rail-
ways, works and irrigation, for all of which the
requirements in personnel are always inade-
quate. The necessary steps are being taken to
cope with the situation, and it is hoped that
the advent of additional Labour Corps from
India will ease matters.

The Remount and Veterinary Departments
continue to be administered in a satisfactory
manner. It has been recently found possible
to supplement drafts of horses from overseas
by local purchases. The condition and health
of the animals of the Force has been most satis-
factory during the past summer as compared
with the summer of 1917.

The work performed by the Inland Water
Transport has, as always, been of a high order
in spite of the hot weather and the difficulties
of navigation during the low river season.

The Postal Service is successfully competing
with the demands made upon it, and these
have been especially heavy during the summer
months, when individuals have more leisure for
writing.

28. The period under review has been, owing
to the extreme heat during the greater part
of it, one of inactivity for the large majority
of the troops, and I was enabled to send a large
number of officers and men on leave to India.
Leave camps at various centres had been kindly
arranged for by Army Head-Quarters in India,
to which the British troops were sent; the
Indian troops were, of course, able to visit their
own homes. The General Officer Commanding
Ceylon also made arrangements for the recep-
tion of a large number of British officers, and
his efforts in this respect have been much ap-
preciated.

Urgent cases (treated for precedence on their
merits) were granted leave to the United King-
dom, but transport difficulties naturally con-
fined this privilege to a selected few.

The country has gone ahead, and is being
further developed, and the inhabitants are
showing by their behaviour that they appreciate
the blessings of a just and sympathetic govern-
ment.

29. I have been throughout most ably and
loyally served by my subordinate commanders,
staff and technical advisers, and take this
opportunity of recording my most sincere
thanks for all their good work.