

irruption in force by the Sultan's troops and levies into the Sudan could take place before the rainy season (July), when the country between his capital at El Fasher and the Kordofan boundary would become passable, and by which time the assistance he expected from the Turkish officers with the Senussi might have arrived, it was not clear that minor raids by the Sultan's detachments near the frontier upon our own and other friendly Arabs were imminent.

At the beginning of 1916 it was evident that the despatch of a considerable force to the frontier could only be delayed at the risk of alienating the sympathy of our border tribesmen and thereby facilitating the spread of serious disaffection in the Sudan.

The assembly of the necessary troops was accordingly carried out as quietly and rapidly as possible, and by the middle of March a mixed force of all arms was concentrated at Nahud under the command of Major (temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) P. V. Kelly.

An account of the military operations in Darfur has been given in my despatch of August 8th, 1916, printed in the London Gazette of October 25th, 1916.*

It will readily be understood that the past two years have put a very severe strain upon the personnel and resources of the Egyptian Army and the Sudan Government. The number of British officers and officials in the Sudan even in normal times of peace is barely adequate to the ever-increasing needs of the country; and an enormous amount of additional work and grave responsibility devolved on individuals, the majority of whom have had to be denied the leave so necessary to the preservation of health and vitality in this climate.

It is then with especial gratification that I am able to particularise the assistance it has been possible to render in other fields of activity and military operations, from the Egyptian Army and the Sudan Civil Service.

Of 56 officers who have reverted to the *British establishment in England* since the beginning of the war, 9 have been killed in action and 3 wounded, and 16 have been mentioned in despatches.

Of 58 officers and 12 Sudan Government officials who have served—most of them for short periods equivalent to the amount of leave to which in normal circumstances they would have been entitled—with the *Mediterranean Expeditionary Force*, 15 officers eventually reverted to the British establishment, 6 officers were killed or died of wounds received in action, 11 were wounded; 21 officers and 1 civil official were mentioned in despatches.

Of 60 officers and 27 Sudan Government officials who at various times, and mostly for short periods, were loaned for service with the *Egyptian Expeditionary Force*, 13 eventually rejoined the British Establishment and 5 officers and 1 civilian were mentioned in despatches.

Besides the personnel referred to in the preceding paragraph, the services of Captain and Brevet Major (temporary Brigadier-General) C. F. Clayton, C.M.G., Director of Intelligence and Sudan Agent, on the outbreak of war were placed at the disposal of the General Officer Commanding in Egypt, who has offi-

cially brought to notice the valuable work performed by this officer as G.S.O. in charge of the Intelligence Section. Brigadier-General Clayton and the officials of the Sudan Agency have continued to discharge their functions in connection with the Sudan Government in an entirely efficient manner.

Several buildings, belonging to the Egyptian War Department in Cairo, a quantity of war material of all kinds, and a large number of transport animals have been put at the disposal, either by loan or purchase, of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, and, subsequently, the Egyptian Expeditionary Force. Of these the following are the most noteworthy:—

The loan of the Egyptian Army Hospital in Cairo, with equipment, etc., complete, to the New Zealand Division. The purchase in the Sudan of some 14,000 riding and baggage camels, the collection, veterinary examination and despatch of which necessitated the establishment of a special organisation with branches in almost every province, and threw a large amount of additional work upon province staffs as well as on the officers of the Veterinary Department. Credit for the collection of this large number of camels must be shared by the native notables and sheiks, without whose loyal and hearty co-operation it could never have been accomplished. The invention, manufacture, and supply of 174,000 "Garland" grenades. An average of 10,000 grenades a week was at one time being furnished to the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, and their output placed a severe tax upon the resources of the Egyptian Army Ordnance Department.

The manufacture and supply of 200,000 "bursh" mats. These were urgently required for the Suez Canal defences, and were made almost entirely in Berber province, at a rate of 50,000 a week.

The Sudan Government steamer "Enterprise," fitted with one 12 1/2 pounder gun and two Maxims, was handed over to the Admiralty for work in connection with Red Sea patrols, and three tugs and a number of steel plates were supplied to the Canal defences. A very large number of articles of equipment, clothing, etc., were made in the Stores Department of the Egyptian Army, and issued to British, Colonial and Indian troops of the Mediterranean and Egyptian Expeditionary Forces; in some cases units such as the Camel Transport Corps and the Zion Mule Corps for service in the Dardanelles being entirely clothed and equipped on formation from these stores. Orders were also received and carried out for the French and Italian Armies.

The work of the Stores Department (Egyptian Army) included a quantity of repairs and the supply of a great number of miscellaneous articles of camp and other kit to officers of the British and Allied forces, particularly after the evacuation of the Gallipoli peninsula. The Supplies Department of the Egyptian Army in Cairo was also able to assist in various minor matters connected with the supply of units in Egypt; and Major E. S. Blunt's services in this connection and as Acting Director of the Stores Department (Egyptian Army) have been very valuable.

* No. 29800.