

"Lord Kitchener has ordered me to express to all the very great pleasure it gave him to have the opportunity, which he considers a privilege, of visiting 'Anzac' to see for himself some of the wonderfully good work which has been done by the officers and men of our Army Corps, as it was not until he had himself seen the positions we had captured and held that he was able fully to realize the magnitude of the work which had been accomplished. Lord Kitchener much regretted that time did not permit of his seeing the whole corps, but he was very pleased to see a considerable proportion of officers and men, and to find all in such good heart, and so confidently imbued with that grand spirit which has carried them through all their trials and many dangerous feats of arms, a spirit which he is quite confident they will maintain to the end, until they have taken their full share in completely overthrowing our enemies.

"Boys, we may all well be proud to receive such messages, and it is up to all of us to live up to them and prove their truth.

"W. R. BIRDWOOD."

I desire to take this opportunity of saying that during my frequent visits to their lines with Generals Birdwood and Godley and others I was extremely pleased to note the firm friendship that existed between the soldiers of Australia and New Zealand, and the admiration expressed by each of the fighting qualities of the other. There is no doubt that a lasting bond of friendship between Commonwealth and Dominion has been forged by the difficulties and the dangers which the heroes of Anzac shared in common.

When bidding me farewell at Mudros General Birdwood desired me to convey to you his appreciation of the services rendered by New-Zealanders in the Army Corps commanded by him, and to tell you that he would gladly welcome as many more such men as New Zealand could send.

I consider it an honour to have been entrusted by the Government with a mission to Forces that have made such a name for themselves, and if I have been of service in promoting their comfort and well-being I am amply repaid for any little sacrifice I may have made.

CONCLUSION.

As already stated, I had intended to spend a week or two with our men in their new stations at the canal, but unfortunately illness laid me up for a month in Cairo and prevented me from spending more than one day with them on my way to Port Said to catch the boat by which I had booked my passage.

Before taking my final departure from Cairo I cabled you that I was prepared to prolong my stay in Egypt, to proceed to England, or to return to New Zealand at once, and, later on, if the Government thought my services would be of further use to the Dominion, to proceed to England at my own expense. To this you replied that the Government thought it advisable for me to return to New Zealand, and, later, to revisit Egypt and proceed to England if necessary. This I am still prepared to do if the Government so desires.

I cannot conclude this report without expressing my cordial thanks to the naval and the military authorities in Egypt, Mudros, Gallipoli, and Malta, and particularly to General Godley, for affording me every facility in the furtherance of my mission.

To my Private Secretary, Mr. W. Crow, who accompanied me to all places that you directed me to visit, including Gallipoli, I desire to express my great appreciation of the able assistance he rendered me in my work, and subsequently in the preparation of this report. At all times, and sometimes under trying circumstances, he never spared himself in his endeavour to further my mission. I must also place on record my obligation for the efficient services, since my return to the Dominion, of Miss V. A. Mills, of the Prime Minister's Office, as shorthand-writer and typiste, in connection with the preparation of the report and other work incidental to the mission.

I have, &c.,

R. HEATON RHODES, Lieut.-Colonel.

The Hon. the Minister of Defence, Wellington.