

## PREFACE

THE greater part of this book was written on the scene of the actions described. Very little could be published at the time about the doings and sufferings of our Army in Mesopotamia and our relations with the people of the country; for though an official "Eye-Witness" was appointed, he was always judiciously gagged. From the beginning the Censorship was a source of mystification to our troops; it provoked anger and mirth in an equal degree. Obscurity became a tradition; and the Censorship seemed to exist more as a nursery of convenient assumptions than as a screen to hide our preoccupations from the Turk. Not only was the darkness and secrecy about the military and political situation maintained when we had a great deal to hide; it was continued when things were going exceptionally well. Under the circumstances I have derived a certain satisfaction from the writing of this narrative in which nothing has been glossed over. Although I was the official "Eye-Witness" in Mesopotamia, there is little in these volumes that is officially inspired. I saw the campaign through the eyes of the Army, and I hope to perpetuate its verdict.

In re-reading some of the earlier chapters many months after they were written I have discovered a morbid vein. If, in turning out one's kit after a campaign, one were to come on a whiff of iodoform from a garment packed in hospital, it would give one the same sort of