

Camp, Tangku,

SIR,

August 24, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, the result of the operations of the Force under my command, employed in the advance from Pehtang, and the attack of the Tartar post at the Sinho entrenchment.

The troops left their billets at 4 A.M. of the 12th instant, and moved out in the following order :—

An advanced guard of 200 men of the 3d Buffs with two Armstrong guns of Milward's Battery, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Sargent, 3d Buffs.

4 Armstrong guns, Milward's Battery.  
23d Company Royal Engineers.  
3d Buffs.  
8th Regiment Punjab Infantry.  
44th Regiment.  
Rolton's Rocket Battery.  
Royal Marines.  
Madras Sappers and Miners.  
Right Wing 67th Regiment.  
Reserve Ammunition.  
Hospital Stretchers, &c.  
Rear-guard.  
Left Wing 67th Regiment.

CAVALRY BRIGADE.

2 Squadrons King's Dragoon Guards.  
Probyn's Horse.  
3 guns, Stirling's Battery.  
Fane's Horse.

The head of the column moved at 4 A.M., but though two days hard work had been devoted to repairing the roads, the deep tenacious mud rendered them so difficult that it was not till half-past seven that the rear of the column cleared the gate of Pehtang.

According to His Excellency's instructions the force above enumerated struck off from the causeway by a track to the right, at half a mile from Pehtang. The Commander-in-Chief was himself a witness of the extreme difficulties which had to be overcome in extricating the troops from the inundated town of Pehtang, and advancing them through the deep mud, in which the gun-wheels frequently were embedded axle-deep. It cost two hours hard labour to the troops to traverse the first two miles.

I advanced by brigades in line of contiguous columns at quarter distance, my front covered by the advanced guard of 200 3d Buffs and Milward's Battery, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Sargent. The cavalry was formed on my right.

A considerable halt was necessary to enable the rear to struggle through the heavy ground, and close up, for I was aware that I was liable to attack from the north as well as from the enemy in front.

Observing the approach of the allied columns to the direct attack of the entrenchment upon the causeway, and perceiving the enemy in great force both in that entrenchment and in front of the village of Sinho, I marched directly towards them, taking their position in flank, and threatening their line of retreat.

On arriving within 1,500 yards, Milward's Armstrong guns opened on the enemy. These were the first shots fired with that weapon in war, and the range and accuracy of their fire excited

the admiration of the force. The Tartar Horsemen were surprised by the fire, but not shaken. After some hesitation they streamed out in a long line through a passage across the marsh which separated us, and forming with great regularity and quickness, enveloped my force in a great circle of skirmishers. The northern portion, formed by the cavalry known to be in that direction, who hitherto kept out of sight, seemed suddenly to rise in position from the plain.

As soon as the enemy's movements were clearly defined, I sent to Brigadier Pattle, commanding the cavalry, directing him to detach a troop to protect my right rear, and to take the opportunity to charge, which the enemy so boldly offered him.

I then had the satisfaction of seeing the admirable charge of my cavalry, by which the Tartar horde in front of them was driven from the field in disorder. Milward's Battery had continued to play upon the enemy as long as it was possible to do without injury to our advancing cavalry.

About this time Stirling's half battery, which, being unable to follow the movements of cavalry in such heavy ground, had been left with an escort of 30 of Fane's Horse, under Lieutenant Macgregor, was charged by a body of Tartar cavalry, of very superior numbers. Lieutenant Macgregor gallantly led his small party against the enemy and defeated them; many Tartars being killed, and Lieutenant Macgregor and many of his men being severely wounded.

Whilst this was going on, my attention had been diverted from my right front to a large party of Tartars who were steadily approaching the Buffs on the left front, apparently regardless of the fire of two of Milward's guns under Lieutenant Harvey, of the Rifles, of the advanced guard, and of Rolton's rockets. They advanced to within 450 yards, and bore unflinchingly, for a considerable time, such a fire as would have tried any troops in the world. The 4th Brigade, under Brigadier Reeves, being similarly attacked at the same time, replied with a steady fire, which did considerable execution.

At length the courageous endurance of the enemy began to give way, and they fled from the field with precipitation.

I then advanced my force towards the western end of the village of Sinho, and joined the allied columns.

At no time throughout the day had we opportunity of coming into contact with the enemy's infantry.

Trusting that the objects intended by His Excellency have been carried out by the force under my command, I beg to bring to his notice the excellent conduct and discipline of the troops of all arms, during a very trying day.

I am much indebted to the Brigadiers commanding the several brigades of cavalry and of infantry, and to the Officer commanding the Field Artillery, all of whom performed the duties entrusted to them to my entire satisfaction.

I received the most valuable assistance from my Divisional and Personal Staff, whose labours were unremitting.

I beg to subjoin a list of officers, whom I desire earnestly to recommend to His Excellency's favourable consideration.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) R. NAPIER, Major-General,  
Commanding 2d Division China Force.

To Captain Biddulph,  
Military Secretary.