

were all that could be desired, and I am much indebted to him for the quiet and order he maintained.

37. General Baker, on the morning of the 11th, started early from his encampment in the neighbourhood of Maidan, and found the enemy in considerable force, occupying the hills on either side of the Arghandi road. The main body of General Baker's force was allowed to proceed unmolested, but his rear guard and baggage were somewhat hotly attacked; owing, however, to the able manner in which the rear guard was commanded by Captain G. K. McCallum, 92nd Highlanders, and to the energy of the officers* in charge of the transport, the whole of the baggage was brought through in safety.

38. The advanced guard had in the meantime reached Arghandi, and found the enemy in possession of both sides of the gorge, through which the road runs into the Chardeh Valley. Although late in the afternoon, it was necessary to dislodge the enemy from their position, commanding, as it did, the road to Kabul.

This was effected in a brilliant manner by a portion of the 92nd Highlanders under the command of Major G. S. White, and gallantly led by Lieutenant the Honourable J. Scott Napier.

General Baker encamped on the night of the 11th at Arghandi.

39. Several times during the day I tried to communicate with General Baker, in order that he might be kept acquainted with all that had been going on nearer Kabul; it was not, however, until early on the morning of the 12th, that, by means of the heliograph, he learnt that the enemy were threatening the city in very considerable strength, that I had found it necessary to withdraw General Macpherson's brigade to Deh Mozang, and that it was my wish he should return at once, as it was important that the whole force should be concentrated in the neighbourhood of the city and cantonments.

40. During the night, Colonel F. H. Jenkins, C.B., with the Guide Cavalry and Infantry arrived. Foreseeing the probability of reinforcements being required, and thinking that troops coming from the direction of India would have a good effect politically, I had ordered Colonel Jenkins on the 7th December to march on Kabul from Jagdalak.

41. The casualties which occurred during the 11th, were as follows:—

General Macpherson's Brigade.

1 man 3rd Sikhs; 1 man 5th Goorkhas, Sepoys, killed. Total, 2 killed.

Lieutenant W. Cook, 1 Native officer, and 2 men, 3rd Sikhs, Major Cook, V.C., and 2 men, 5th Goorkhas, wounded. Officers, 2, Native officers 1, sepoy, 4. Total, 7 wounded.

General Massy's Brigade:

Lieutenant C. J. W. Hearsey, 2nd Lieutenant W. P. Ricardo, 16 men, 36 horses, 9th Lancers, Lieutenant O. E. S. Forbes, 7 men, 8 horses, 14th Bengal Lancers, Lieutenant E. Hardy, 7 horses, E.A. Royal Horse Artillery. Officers, 4, rank and file—British 16, Native 7. Total, 27 killed. Horses, 51 killed.

Lieutenant-Colonel R. S. Cleland, Captain J. A. F. H. Stewart-Mackenzie, 19 men, and 10 horses, 9th Lancers, 3 men and 4 horses, 14th Bengal Lancers, 1 man and 2 horses F.A., Royal Horse Artillery. Officers 2, rank and file—

* Captain W. A. Wynter, 33rd Foot; Lieutenant A. F. Cotton, 35th Native Infantry; Lieutenant R. H. F. W. Wilson, 10th Royal Hussars.

British 20, Native 3. Total, 25 wounded. Horses, 16 wounded.

General Baker's Brigade.

1 man 5th Punjab Infantry, Sepoy, killed.

2 men, 92nd Highlanders, 5 men 5th Punjab Infantry, 4 men No. 2 Mountain Battery, 1 follower, rank and file—British 2, Native 9, follower 1. Total, 12 wounded.

Making a total of:—

Officers 4, rank and file—British 16, Native Total, 30 killed. Horses, 51 killed.

Officers 4, Native Officers 1, rank and file—British 26, Native 16, follower, 1. Total, 48 wounded. Horses, 16 wounded.

42. Feeling that the enemy could not be permitted to retain their commanding position on the Takht-i-Shah, I directed General Macpherson, on the morning of the 12th December, to endeavour to drive them from it by an attack from the Bala Hissar and Deh Mozang directions.

Lieutenant-Colonel G. N. Money, of the 3rd Sikhs, was deputed to undertake this operation; the force placed at his disposal was—

2 guns, No. 1 Mountain Battery, 215 men, detachments 67th and 72nd Regiments, 150 men 3rd Sikhs, 195 men 5th Goorkhas. Total, 560 rifles and 2 mountain guns.

43. The crest of the Takht-i-Shah is naturally difficult; the slopes are very steep, strewn with jagged masses of rock and intersected with scarps, and the natural impediments with which the assaulting party had to contend were still further increased by breastworks which the enemy had thrown up at different points on the ascent of the peak, and behind which they were strongly posted and fought resolutely.

The position was an exceedingly formidable one, and after gallant attempts to carry it, which lasted during the greater part of the day, I ordered the assault to be deferred. I saw that to ensure success without very serious loss, and to prevent the enemy relieving and reinforcing the party holding the peak, as I had observed them to be doing during the day, it was necessary not only to attack in front, but to operate also on the enemy's line of retreat.

I therefore directed General Macpherson to hold the ground of which he had already gained possession, and informed him that on the following morning General Baker would co-operate with him from the Ben-i-Shar side.

44. On the occasion of the attack on the Bala Hissar position and the subsequent counter-attack on the Takht-i-Shah, three non-commissioned officers,—Colour-Sergeant W. Macdonald, Sergeants W. Cox and R. McIlveen, all of the 72nd Highlanders,—greatly distinguished themselves, especially Colour-Sergeant Macdonald, by the cool and intelligent manner in which he superintended the construction of a breastwork under a very heavy fire.

Sergeant Cox on the following day again brought himself to notice by his coolness and judgment when escorting the wounded from the Bala Hissar hill to Sherpur.

45. During this day, the 12th December, General Baker's brigade returned to Sherpur. The enemy showed themselves in considerable force in his rear and on both flanks, and the rear guard, which was ably commanded by Major H. M. Pratt, 5th Punjab Infantry, was at first closely pressed.

On the march, the little column was skilfully protected and covered by the 5th Punjab Cavalry, who, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel B. Williams, missed no opportunity of inflicting loss on the enemy.