

Dated Camp Mastan, 8th June, 1891.
From Brigadier-General Sir W. S. A. Lockhart,
K.C.B., C.S.I., to the Adjutant-General in
India.

I HAVE the honour to make the following report on the operations against the Orakzai tribes carried out by the force under my command for the information of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India.

2. On the withdrawal of the troops at the termination of the previous expedition against the Orakzai Samil clans in February last, the 29th Bengal Infantry, subsequently reinforced by a wing of the 3rd Sikh Infantry, was left to cover the working parties making roads and posts on the Samana. On the 4th April a treacherous and unexpected attack was made on the guards furnished by the 29th Bengal Infantry. These were promptly reinforced from below, and fighting took place all along the Samana Range between Tsalai and Gulistan. Our losses during the day were 14 men killed and 7 wounded, all of the 29th Bengal Light Infantry. The enemy consisted of men of all the Orakzai tribes of the Khanki Valley, and were under the leadership of Zaman Shah, Rabia Khel. On the 5th April it was found necessary to evacuate Tsalai, the only post on the Samana still held by our troops, the enemy following up as far as the low hills near Darband.

3. On the morning of the 6th reinforcements began to arrive from Kohat, and on the evening of the following day I arrived myself at that station, and assumed command of the field force. Further reinforcements were meanwhile being pushed up from India as quickly as possible, the 6th Punjab Infantry marching from Bannu to Kohat, 80 miles, in as many hours, and No. 5 Company, Bengal Sappers and Miners, covering the 56 miles from Khushalgarh to Hangu in 40 hours. There was some delay, however, in pushing on the troops beyond Kohat, as transport and supplies had to be collected from a distance. On the 9th the detachment at Baliamin was withdrawn to the camp near Darband, and an attack was made on that camp on the night of the 10th, but was beaten off without loss on our side, and the enemy did not subsequently venture down from the crest of the Samana.

4. The orders given to me were "to clear the Samana Range of the enemy, put down the hostile coalition of the tribes, and protect the working parties making the proposed roads and posts."

5. By the 16th April the whole force as per margin,* divided into three columns had been concentrated at Hangu and Darband.

At the former place there were also the 19th Bengal Lancers (471 of all ranks), two squadrons of the 5th Punjab Cavalry (311 of all ranks), and three guns of the Punjab Garrison Battery (47 of all ranks).

6. I advanced in the following manner on the morning of the 17th:—

The First Column, accompanied by myself and

* 1st Column, at Hangu.—(Colonel J. M. Sym, C.B.)—No. 3 Mountain Battery, Royal Artillery, 14; 1st Battalion, King's Royal Rifles, 632; Half of No. 5 Company, Bengal Sappers and Miners, 63; 27th Bengal Infantry, 607; 1st Punjab Infantry, 316; 1-5th Gurkha Regiment, 589.

2nd Column, at Darband.—(Lieutenant-Colonel A. H. Turner.)—No. 3 (Peshawar) Mountain Battery, 223; Half of No. 5 Company, Bengal Sappers and Miners, 63; 15th (Sikh) Regiment of Bengal Infantry, 516; 3rd Sikh Infantry, 561; 2nd Punjab Infantry, 352.

3rd Column, at Darband.—(Lieutenant-Colonel C. C. Brownlow.)—No. 2 (Derajat) Mountain Battery (3 guns) 80; 19th Bengal Infantry, 615; 29th Bengal Infantry, 504; 6th Punjab Infantry, 449.

the field force head-quarters, marched from Hangu at daybreak, and reached the foot of the range at 6 A.M. This column was accompanied by three guns of the Punjab Garrison Battery, which, with the guns of No. 3 Mountain Battery, Royal Artillery, took up a position to cover the advance on Lakka. The cavalry, under Colonel Biscoe, 19th Bengal Lancers, consisting of two squadrons of the 5th Punjab Cavalry and the 19th Bengal Lancers, acting as escort to the guns. The advance up to the crest was then carried out, and Lakka was reached at 8.30 A.M. without opposition. From here I heliographed to the Second Column to advance to the Darband Kotal. This column had been ordered to make a false attack to distract the enemy's attention should he have attempted to hold Lakka. At the same time that the Second Column advanced, I ordered the Third Column, which was also at Darband, to move rapidly to Pat Darband and ascend to the crest at Sangar.

7. These orders having been given, I continued my advance along the crest from Lakka, meeting the Second Column at Darband Kotal. This column I strengthened by the 27th Bengal Infantry, and Lieutenant-Colonel Turner was ordered to descend to Gwada by the Saifaldarra road. This road, as well as that on the crest near the Darband Kotal, was found to have been broken up by the enemy. From the kotal I continued the advance, at 11 A.M., along the crest, with the First Column, towards Tsalai. That place was found to be occupied by the enemy, who opened fire on the troops as they advanced. I accordingly ordered up the guns of No. 3 Mountain Battery, Royal Artillery, and under their fire the place was assaulted and captured at 12.30 P.M., the King's Royal Rifles leading the attack. During this operation Colonel Cramer, commanding the King's Royal Rifles, and Major Egerton, Assistant Adjutant-General, were both severely wounded. Besides these casualties, the King's Royal Rifles had one man dangerously, one severely, and two slightly wounded; and Major Egerton's orderly, a lance-duffadar of the 3rd Punjab Cavalry, was also severely wounded.

8. I next carried Gogra and Sangar without further loss, and reached the latter place at two P.M., simultaneously with the Third Column, advancing up the Pat Darband Spur. This column was opposed during its advance, but succeeded in inflicting some loss on the enemy without any casualties to itself. On reaching Sangar, I decided to bivouac there for the night, as the enemy were reported to be holding Sartop in strength, and the men were completely knocked up by the intense heat and the want of water. They, however, behaved admirably, and only one man fell out during the day. In the meanwhile the Second Column had established itself at Gwada, which is immediately below Sangar and in sight of it. Lieutenant-Colonel Turner had, however, to fight his way, and lost one man killed and four wounded—one dangerously. The cavalry had also moved round by Shahu Khel after the First Column had gained the crest at Lakka, and advanced up the Khanki Valley and joined hands with Lieutenant-Colonel Turner. On the Second Column reaching the Khanki at Saifaldarra, the cavalry returned to Hangu by the Darband Kotal. They were fired on during the day, but suffered no loss. The position of my force on the evening of the 17th was therefore as follows:—The First and Third Columns holding the crest at Sangar, and the Second Column in the Khanki Valley at Gwada.

9. A seven o'clock on the morning of the 18th