

and men of the Indian Army with whom they were associated.

5. The conspicuous gallantry displayed by Captain Aylmer, Royal Engineers, and Lieutenants Boisragon and Badcock, 1st Battalion, 5th Gurkha Rifles, at the storming of Nilt, and by Lieutenant J. Manners Smith in leading the advance on the 20th December, has already been reported,* and separate recommendations will hereafter be submitted in regard to other officers; but I am desirous by the Commander-in-Chief to bring more particularly to the favourable notice of the Government of India the services of Lieutenant-Colonel Durand, Indian Staff Corps; Surgeon-Major Robertson, Indian Medical Service; and Major C. J. Mackenzie, Seaforth Highlanders.

6. The despatches having been so long delayed it seems necessary to point out that in consequence of the difficulty of communication between Hunza, Gilgit, and India, they only reached the British Resident in Kashmir on the 17th instant, and were forwarded by him the same day to the Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department.

No. 249, dated Gilgit, 27th January and 6th February, 1892.

From Lieutenant-Colonel A. G. A. Durand, Commanding Hunza-Nagar Field Force. To the Adjutant-General in India (through the Resident in Kashmir).

I HAVE the honour to submit the following despatch on the Hunza-Nagar Expedition for the information of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief.

2. The Hunza-Nagar Field Force was embodied on the 30th November at Chalt, the fort at the boundary of Kashmir, territory to the north of Gilgit.

The force was composed as under:—

Section of No. 4 (Hazara), Mountain Battery—British officers, 2; native officers, non-commissioned officers and men, 76. 1-5th Gurkha Rifles—British officers, 2; native officers, non-commissioned officers and men, 188. Bengal sappers and miners—British officer, 1; native officers, non-commissioned officers and men, 7. 20th (Punjab) Bengal Infantry—native officers, non-commissioned officers and men, 18. Gatling gun detachment, 20th (Punjab) Bengal infantry—British officer, 1; native officers, non-commissioned officers and men, 10. Signallers—native officers, non-commissioned officers and men, 12. 1st Kashmir infantry—British officers, 2; native officers, non-commissioned officers and men, 377. 2nd Kashmir Rifles, British officers, 3; native officers, non-commissioned officers and men, 484. Punial levy—British officer, 1; native officers, non-commissioned officers and men, 159. Total—British officers, 12; native officers, non-commissioned officers and men, 1,031.

Accompanying the force were 200 Pathan road coolies under Mr. Charles Spedding, with a strong European staff placed at the disposal of Government by Mr. Spedding to make roads.

3. The staff consisted of Lieut.-Colonel A. G. A. Durand, Commanding; Captain R. H. Twigg, 12th (Khelat-i-Ghilzai) Bengal Infantry, Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General; Captain C. J. Mackenzie, Seaforth Highlanders, Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief; Deputy Assistant Quarter-Master-General; Captain E. J. Aylmer, R.E., Commanding Royal Engineers; Lieutenant J. Manners Smith, Political

Officer; Captain W. H. M. Stewart, Political Officer; Lieutenant F. Duncan, 23rd Bengal Infantry (Pioneers), Transport Officer; Lieutenant C. S. Williams, 43rd Bengal Infantry (Gurkha Rifles), Commissariat Officer; Surgeon-Captain J. R. Roberts, Indian Medical Service, Principal Medical Officer; General Suram Chand, Commanding Kashmir Troops at Gilgit; Kashmiri, Brigade-Major, Gilgit.

4. On the 1st December the force, strength as below, crossed the Hunza river into Nagar territory:—

Section of Hazara Mountain Battery—British officers, 2; fighting men, 76. 1-5th Gurkha Rifles—British officers, 2; fighting men, 188. Bengal Sappers and Miners—British officer, 1; fighting men, 7. 20th (Punjab) Bengal Infantry—fighting men, 18. Gatling gun detachment, 20th (Punjab) Bengal Infantry—British officer, 1; fighting men, 10. Signallers—fighting men, 12. 1st Kashmir Infantry—British officers, 2; fighting men, 257. 2nd Kashmir Rifles—British officers, 3; fighting men, 404. Punial levy—British officer, 1; fighting men, 159. Total British officers, 12; total fighting men, 1,031.

5. On the 2nd December the force advanced and captured the fort of Nilt, the first in Nagar territory. The fort was one of great strength, placed at the junction of two precipitous cliffs several hundred feet high, which form the banks of the Hunza river, and of a great ravine which here runs into it. Owing to the configuration of the ground, the fort could not be properly seen till the force was within 300 yards of it. The walls of the fort were of solid stone, cemented by mud and strengthened by large timbers. In front of the main wall ran a loopholed wall completely hiding the gateway; before this again was a very deep ditch encumbered with abattis, and a broad band of abattis filled the space intervening between the ditch and a precipitous spur projecting from the mountain above into the narrow strip of cultivated land before the fort. Although this hill was crowned with infantry, guns could not be taken up, and the fire of the infantry could not touch the defenders of the fort, who were under perfect cover. The attack had therefore to be delivered straight to the front over a space, narrowing to a width of about sixty yards. The guns, though admirably served, could make no impression on the walls, and the fort was assaulted by the detachment of the 1-5th Gurkha Rifles, and carried after Captain Aylmer, Royal Engineers, had blown in the main gate. The gallantry of this officer and of Lieutenants Boisragon and Badcock, of the 1-5th Gurkha Rifles has been made the subject of separate representation. The brunt of the fighting fell on the detachment 5th Gurkha Rifles, for, from the nature of the ground, the troops in support could be of little use. The Gurkhas behaved with their usual gallantry and dash, and the Kashmir Imperial Service Troops, showed remarkable coolness in this their first action. The casualties amounted to three British officers, wounded, three men killed, three mortally wounded, and one Native officer and twenty-two non-commissioned officers and men wounded. Eleven men of the Gurkhas and Sappers, who displayed particular bravery, have been recommended for the Order of Merit. The enemy's loss was over 80 killed and many wounded.

6. I had given orders that Captain C. J. Mackenzie, who with 20 men of the 20th Bengal Infantry and the Punial Levy, under their own Bajas, directed by Lieutenant J. Manners Smith, should, after seizing the heights above the fort, attempt

* No. 279-F.C., dated 13th January, 1892. No. 2113-A, dated 24th March, 1892.