

7. Apart from various reconnaissances, the only military operations of any importance in which our troops have been engaged since the occupation of Peking are those detailed below:—

(i.) Reconnaissance South of Tientsin on 15th August.

On the 15th August a small cavalry reconnaissance, consisting of 30 men 1st Bengal Lancers and about 50 American cavalry, was sent south of Tientsin, supported by a detachment of Madras Sappers and Miners. As the advance party of the cavalry patrol approached within 300 yards of the village of Yaud-shia-Tsun a large number of Chinese troops suddenly showed themselves, and from the whole line of villages, nearly a mile in length, a heavy but badly-aimed fire was opened on them. The cavalry wheeled about and retired rapidly. At this point the horse of one of the American troopers suddenly came down throwing the rider heavily, the Chinese soldiers dashed out to secure him, when Lieutenant Gaussen, 1st Bengal Lancers, seeing how matters stood, at once rode back in the face of a heavy fire, took the American trooper on his horse and brought him back into safety. The force then returned to Tientsin.

Both Lieutenant-Colonel Wint, 6th U.S. Cavalry, and Major-General Chaffee, Commanding the United States Forces in Northern China, have brought Lieutenant Gaussen's services on this occasion to my special notice.

(ii.) Action 19th August South of Tientsin.

As it was evident that an increasing number of Imperial troops and Boxers were collecting in villages from 7 to 10 miles south of Tientsin, a combined force* under the orders of Brigadier-General A. R. F. Dorward, C.B., D.S.O., was despatched from Tientsin on the 19th August to disperse them.

The cavalry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Wint, 6th United States Cavalry, covered the advance and came into touch with the enemy near the village of Wang-Landi. The cavalry were dismounted and returned the enemy's fire; meanwhile, the infantry changed direction to the left, and, pushing steadily on, intercepted a large body of Chinese who were advancing against the flank of the cavalry, and drove them back upon their main position, which they had not time to properly occupy before it was rushed by our infantry. Only a slight stand was made here, and the enemy was soon in full flight pursued by the cavalry. Sixty prisoners, a quantity of arms and a large number of standards were captured, and 300 killed and wounded were left on the field. Our casualties were one officer slightly wounded and one soldier severely, while the Americans and Japanese had a few more.

The expedition, which was ably conducted by General Dorward, had a most excellent effect on the districts, and freed the peaceful villagers from the terrors of the Boxer rule.

(iii.) Tiu-Liu Expedition.

In order to free the country lying between the Grand Canal and Tientsin of Boxers who were raiding villages and cutting off supplies, a force was sent to the town of Tiu-Liu, 22 miles distant from Tientsin.†

Three columns‡ under the command of

* 398 6th United States Cavalry; 30 1st Bengal Lancers; 20 Austrian Infantry; 200 Japanese Infantry. Detachments:—Bombay Sappers and Miners, Hong Kong Regiment, Chinese Regiment, 7th Bengal Infantry, 24th Punjab Infantry, 1st Sikh Infantry, 1st Madras Pioneers, 26th Bombay Infantry, aggregating 350 men.

† Vide Sketch No. II.

‡ Left Column:—Brigadier-General Richardson; B Battery, Royal Horse Artillery; 16th Bengal Lancers;

Brigadier-General A. R. F. Dorward, C.B., D.S.O., were despatched to operate against them.

The Left column moved from Tientsin on 8th, and the Central and Canal columns on the 9th September. The several columns were ordered to be in position round Tiu-Liu on the morning of the 10th September. Heavy rain fell on the night of the 8th and all day on the 10th, causing much discomfort to the troops and adding to the difficulties of the march; nevertheless, on the 10th Tiu-Liu was occupied without opposition, the enemy having fled on the approach of the attacking force. The troops then returned to Tientsin.

Brigadier-General Dorward reports that each column succeeded in carrying out its orders exactly, and was in the prescribed position round Tiu-Liu at 9 A.M. on the 10th September. As a manoeuvre, therefore, over partially unknown country the expedition was, he considers, a distinct success, reflecting credit on Brigadier-General Richardson and on Colonel Garioni, of the Italian Army, commanding the left and centre columns respectively, which view I cordially endorse, and, at the same time, wish to bring to your Lordship's notice the excellent arrangements made by Brigadier-General Dorward on this occasion.

(iv.) Affair at Matao.

On the 9th September a small American foraging party was attacked by Boxers near Matao. On hearing of this Captain Browne, Central India Horse, with 21 Lancers at once proceeded to clear the village in which the Boxers, some 300 in number, had established themselves. The enemy were completely dispersed with a loss of about 40 men, our only casualty being one man wounded.

(v.) Affair at Liang-Hsian.

A German column under Major General Von Hoepfner marched out on the 11th September to attack Liang-Hsian,* about 10 miles south of Liukochao; a half squadron 1st Bengal Lancers and two Maxim guns, Hong Kong and Singapore Artillery, co-operated under the command of Captain Griffin, 1st Bengal Lancers. The detachment behaved most creditably, and General Von Hoepfner in his report stated that "Captain Griffin attacked the Boxers, who made an energetic resistance in the maize fields, several times with great valour. His horse was shot under him in a hand-to-hand combat." General Von Hoepfner adds that he has submitted Captain Griffin's name for a decoration.

(vi.) Punitive Expedition to Pa-ta-Ch'u.

This place is a group of temples in the low hills 14 miles west of Peking,† which temples have for many years been used as a summer resort by the members of the Corps Diplomatique at Peking, and near which were several prosperous mission stations as well as the new summer retreat of the British Minister. Since the troubles began Pa-ta-Ch'u has been a head centre of the Boxer movement, and the neighbouring foreign buildings have all been ruthlessly levelled to the ground. As a punishment for these acts and with a view to

3rd Bombay Cavalry; Mounted Detachment Bengal Sappers and Miners; 250 Japanese Infantry, with four guns; 350 Italian Infantry; 200 Russian Infantry; 50 1st Chinese Regiment; Detachment Bombay Sappers and Miners; 100 7th Bengal Infantry; 100 1st Sikh Infantry.

Centre Column:—Colonel Garioni; 2 Japanese Siege Guns; 500 Italian Infantry; Detachment Bombay Sappers and Miners; 100 34th Punjab Pioneers.

Canal Column:—Detachment 1st Bengal Lancers; 200 United States Infantry; 150 Italian Infantry; 100 24th Punjab Infantry; 100 1st Madras Pioneers; 100 26th Bombay Infantry.

* Vide Sketch No. III (green line).

† Vide Sketch No. III (red line).