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to the light of the day which shone upon them, not the light of the morrow, which had not yet broken when they were called upon to act. Illumined by this morrow's light, we now know that it might have been better if the Barrackpore and Dinapore regiments had been disarmed in the middle of May; but the former were then protesting their loyalty, and offering to fight against the rebels, and the latter were still believed in by General Lloyd, who commanded the Division.\* The temper of the troops, in all parts of the country, seemed at that time to depend upon the fate of Delhi, and more experienced Indian statesmen than Lord Canning believed that Delhi would soon be crushed. And, whilst it was deemed expedient to keep the Bengal Native Army together so long as any hope survived, it was, at that time, in Bengal, held to be impossible to disarm all the Native regiments. Disarming, said Lord Canning, is "a very effective measure, where practicable, but in Bengal, where we have, spread over from Barrackpore to Cawnpore, fifteen Native regiments to one European, simply impossible. A very different game has to be played here."†

Moreover, in the neighbourhood both of Calcutta and of Dinapore, there were other dangers than those arising from the armed Sepoy regiments. In the latter there was the excited Mahomedan population of Patna, of which I shall speak hereafter; and in the former there were the many local perils, of which I

\* As late as the 2nd of June, General Lloyd wrote to Lord Canning, saying, "Although no one can now feel full confidence in the loyalty of Native troops generally, yet I believe that the regiments here will remain quiet, unless some great temptation or excitement should

assail them, in which case I fear they could not be relied upon. The thing required to keep them steady is a blow quickly struck at Delhi."  
—*MS. Correspondence.*

† Lord Canning to Mr. Vernon Smith, June 5, 1857.—*MS. Correspondence.*



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have already spoken. And it was at least doubtful whether an undisciplined body of sailors and civilians, even with a few staff-officers to keep them together, would have supplied the place of a regular regiment of Europeans. Lord Canning, knowing well the constitution of the European community of Calcutta did not think, from the very nature of their interests and their occupations, that they could form a defensive body on which any reliance could be placed. Where the treasure of men is there will their hearts be also; and, in many instances, if possible, their hands. It was hardly to be expected that, if there had been any sudden alarm—if the signal had been sounded, and every man's services needed in a critical emergency, many would not have thought rather of their wives and children than of the public safety, and some, perhaps, more of their own material property than of that of the State.\* Doubtless there were brave and patriotic spirits among them who would have gone gladly to the front; but Lord Canning, perhaps, did not err in thinking that the majority of members of the non-military community were too much encumbered by their worldly affairs to make efficient soldiers, either for the performance of ordinary duties or the confronting of imminent peril. That they could have formed a substitute for regular soldiers was improbable, though they would have been a serviceable supplement to them.

If, then, the volunteers had been enrolled when the first offer of service was made to Lord Canning,

\* It is very vividly in my recollection that, on the famous 10th of April, 1848, when there was a vague expectation that London would be sacked by the Chartists, and immense numbers of special constables had been sworn in, I asked one of

the most experienced men in the district in which I lived how many of those sworn in would turn out on the given signal (it was to be the ringing of the church bell), and I was told "not ten per cent."



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he could not have done more than he did to send succours up the country. Nor did it, at the time, seem to him that the danger was so imminent on the Gangetic provinces as to demand that Bengal should be stripped, even for a few weeks, of her only reliable defences. It was just during that particular interval between the receipt of intelligence of the Meerut outbreak and the arrival of the first reinforcements from beyond the seas, that the accounts from the upper country were least alarming. There was, apparently, a suspension of rebellious activity. The telegraphic messages received from the principal stations were all of an assuring character. On the 19th and 20th the report from Benares was, "All perfectly quiet," "troops steady." On the 19th Sir Henry Lawrence telegraphed from Lucknow, "All very well in city, cantonments, and country." Sir Hugh Wheeler, at Cawnpore, on the same day, sent a kindred message, "All quiet here, the excitement somewhat less." From Allahabad, on the same day, the tidings were, "Troops quiet and well behaved;" and the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces at Agra assured the Governor-General that "Things were looking cheerful." "There may," it was added, "be some delay in the actual advance on Delhi. It is generally felt, however, that it must soon fall, and the flame has not spread." The following days brought intelligence of the same satisfactory complexion, the only evil tidings being those which spoke of mutiny at Alighur, and that was quickly followed by the announcement from Agra that a strong expedition had been organised for the recapture of the place.

There was little, therefore, that Lord Canning could do in the earlier weeks of May to succour the





North-Western Provinces, and judged by the light of the day no pressing necessity to incur, for that purpose, great risks in the neighbourhood of the capital. What little he could do with safety he did. He ordered up a detachment of the Eighty-fourth to Benares, and he suggested to General Lloyd, at Dinapore, that he might, perhaps, send a company or two of the Tenth to the same point. These first movements might save a few lives, and might give a general impression of action on our part, the importance of which was great at such a time. But it was to the reinforcements coming from beyond the seas that he eagerly looked for substantive aid. He had written on the 19th to the Indian Minister in England, saying: "Towards this object the steps taken are as follows—The Madras Fusiliers are on their way, and will be here on the 21st or 22nd. A regiment has been sent for from Rangoon, and will arrive in the course of next week. Two regiments at least with some Artillery (perhaps three regiments), will come round from Bombay as soon as they arrive from Persia. They are all on their way. Another regiment from Kurrachee is ordered up the Indus to Ferozpore, as a stand-by, if John Lawrence should want help. An officer goes to-day to Ceylon to procure from Sir Henry Ward every soldier he can spare. I have asked for at least five hundred Europeans, but will accept Malays in place of or besides them. The same officer carries letters to Elgin and Ashburnham, begging that the regiments destined for China may be turned first to India. . . . This is all that I can do at present to collect European strength, except the withdrawal of one more regiment from Pegu, which, when a steamer is available, will take place." And now,





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before the end of the month, he learnt that the Madras Fusiliers were in the river. Such was his confidence, that when succours began to arrive, he felt, however small they might be in proportion to his needs, that the tide was beginning to turn in his favour. After a fortnight of enforced inaction, there was something invigorating in the thought that he was now beginning to hold palpably in his hands the means of rendering substantial aid to his defenceless countrymen. And he knew, moreover, that the moral effect of the arrival of a single European regiment would be greater than the material assistance, for it would soon be noised abroad that the English were coming from beyond the seas to avenge their slaughtered brethren, and Rumour would be sure to magnify the extent of the arrival.\*

Colonel Neill  
and the  
Madras  
Fusiliers.

Still, in itself the gain was very great; for the vessels which were working up the Hooghly were bringing not only a well-seasoned, well-disciplined regiment, in fine fighting order, but a chief who had within him all the elements of a great soldier. The Second Madras European Regiment was commanded by Colonel James George Neill. It was one of those few English regiments which, enlisted for the service of the East India Company, and maintained exclusively on the Indian establishment, bore on their banners the memorials of a series of victories from

\* I am aware that a contrary statement has been made. It has been asserted that the Government took pains rather to conceal than to make known the arrival of reinforcements at Calcutta. Especially by disguising the names of the vessels in which the troops were coming up the river. If the *Aietha*, for example, were coming up, she was telegraphed, it was said, as the *Sarah Sands*. Assuming the fact to

be as stated, we may readily understand the object of the concealment. It might have been sound policy not to make known the coming of the troops until they were landed and fit for service. If there had been any combination for a rising, the moment seized would probably have been when it was known that our reinforcements were at the Sandheads. But I am assured, on the highest authority, that the story is not true.



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the earliest days of our conquests in India. It had just returned from the Persian Gulf, when Neill, fresh from Crimean service,\* found to his delight that he was to be appointed to command the regiment, with which he had served during the greater part of his adult life. He had gone down to see the regiment disembark, and he had written in his journal that they were "a very fine healthy body of men, fully equal to any regiment he had ever seen." This was on the 20th of April, and he little then knew how soon he would be called upon to test their efficiency in the field. Three or four weeks afterwards, news came that Upper India was in a blaze, and the tidings were quickly followed by a summons for the regiment to take ship for Bengal. Then Neill rejoiced exceedingly to think of the lessons he had learnt in the Crimea, and the experience he had gained there; and he felt, to use his own words, "fully equal to any extent of professional employment or responsibility which could ever devolve upon him."

Born in the month of May, 1810, at a short distance from the chief town of Ayrshire, in Scotland, James Neill had entered the Indian service in his seventeenth year, and was, therefore, when summoned to take active part in the Sepoy War, a man of forty-seven years of age, and a soldier of thirty years' standing. Of a strong physical constitution, of active athletic habits, he shrunk from no work, and he was overcome by no fatigue. There were few men in the whole range of the Indian Army better qualified by nature and by training to engage in the stirring events of such a campaign as was

\* He had been Second-in-Command, under Sir Robert Vivian, of the Anglo-Turkish Contingent.





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opening out before him. He was a God-fearing Scotchman, with something in him of the old Covenantant type. He was gentle and tender as a woman, in his domestic relations, chivalrous and self-denying in all the actions of his life, and so careful, as a commander, of all under his charge, that he would have yielded his tent or given up his meals to any one more needing them than himself. But towards the enemies of our nation and the persecutors of our race he was as hard and as fiery as flint; and he was not one to be tolerant of the shortcomings of our own people, wanting in courage or capacity, or in any way failing in their manliness. He knew, when he embarked for Bengal, that there was stern work before him; and he brooded over the future so intently, that the earnestness and resolution within him spoke out ever from his countenance, and it was plain to those around him, that once in front of the enemy, he would smite them with an unsparing hand, and never cease from his work, until he should witness its full completion or be arrested by the stroke of death.

May 23.

On the 23rd of May, Colonel Neill was off Calcutta with the leading wing of his regiment, and soon the whole corps had disembarked. But it was easier to bring troops into port along the great highway of the ocean, than to despatch them with the required rapidity into the interior of the country. Every possible provision, however, had been made and was still being made to push forward the reinforcements by river and by road. Every available horse and bullock along the line had been purchased by Government; every carriage and cart secured for the conveyance of the troops up the country.\* The river

\* "A steady stream of reinforcements is now being poured into Benares. Every horse and bullock that can be bought on the road is engaged,





steamers were carrying their precious freights of humanity, but too slowly for our needs, in that dry season, and the railway was to be brought into requisition to transport others to the scene of action. It was by the latter route that the bulk of Neill's regiment, in all nine hundred strong, were to be despatched towards Benares.\* It might have been supposed that, at such a time, every Christian man in Calcutta would have put forth all his strength to perfect and to expedite the appointed work, eager to contribute by all means within his power to the rescue of imperilled Christendom. Especially was it to be looked for that all holding such authority as might enable them to accelerate the despatch of troops to our threatened, perhaps beleaguered posts, would strain every nerve to accomplish effectually this good work. But on the platform of the Calcutta terminus, on the river side, opposite to Howrah, all such natural zeal as this seemed to be basely wanting. There was no alacrity in helping the troops to start on their holy duty; and soon apathy and inaction grew into open opposition. When the second party of a hundred men was to be despatched, stress of weather delayed their arrival, from the flats in the river, at the platform or landing-stage, near which the train was waiting for them, under the orders of the Supreme

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and the dawk establishments have been increased to the utmost. The men who go by horse-dawk reach Benares in five days; those by bullock in ten. The former conveyance can take only from eighteen to twenty-four a day; the latter a hundred. Some are gone up by steamers. These will be sixteen days on the journey."—*Lord Canning to Sir H. Wheeler, May 26. MS.*

\* "I landed and saw the Military

Secretary and the Deputy Quarter-master-General, and made all arrangement to start off the men I had brought up by steamers to Benares. However, next day there was a change. Only a hundred and thirty men went up the country by steamer, and the rest I am starting off by the train."—*Private Letter of Col. Neill.* The rail then only went as far as Raneegunge.





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Government. But as the Fusiliers came alongside and were landing, in the darkness of the early night, without an effort of help from the railway people, the station-master cried out that they were late, and that the train would not wait for them a moment. Against this Neill remonstrated, but the official, growing more peremptory in his tone and insolent in his manner, threatened at once to start the train. Other functionaries then came forward, and addressed him in the same threatening strain. One said that the Colonel might command his regiment, but that he did not command the railway, and that the train should be despatched without him. On this, Neill telling them that they were traitors and rebels, and that it was fortunate for them that he had not to deal with them, placed a guard over the engineer and stoker, and told them to stir at their peril. A few weeks later, in parts of the country more distant from the central authority, such traitors as these would, perhaps, have been hanged.

The train started, some ten minutes after its appointed time, with its precious burden of Fusiliers; and the tidings of what Neill had done soon reached Lord Canning. It was not in the brave heart of the Governor-General to refuse its meed of admiration to such an act. Even official Calcutta, though a little startled in its proprieties, commended, after a time, the Madras Colonel, whilst at all the stations above, when the story was known, people said that the right man was on his way to help them, and looked eagerly for the coming succours.



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spoken now seemed to be at an end. As the month of May burnt itself out, the tidings which came from the country above were more distressing and more alarming. It was plain that the North-West Provinces, from one end to the other, were fast blazing into rebellion—plain that we were destined to see worse things than any we had yet witnessed—and that the whole strength of the British nation must be put forth to grapple with the gigantic danger. If there had been any hope before, that the rebellion would die out, or be paralysed by the infliction of swift retribution on Delhi, it had now ceased to animate the breasts of Lord Canning and his colleagues. They now saw that it was necessary to the salvation of the English power in India, not only that our people should be everywhere let loose upon the enemy, but that they should be armed with exceptional powers suited to, and justified by, the crisis. A reign of lawlessness had commenced; but for a while the avenging hand of the English Government had been restrained by the trammels of the written law. It was time now to cease from the unequal conflict. The English were few; their enemies were many. The many had appealed to the law of brute force; and the few were justified in accepting the challenge. The time for the observance of municipal formalities—of niceties of criminal procedure—of precise balancings of evidence and detailed fulness of record—had clearly now passed away. A terrible necessity had forced itself upon the rulers of the land. In the great death-struggle which had come upon us, the written law had been violated upon the one side, and it was now to be suspended upon the other. The savage had arisen against us, and it had become our work to fight the savage with his own





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weapons. So the law-makers stood up and shook themselves loose from the trammels of the law. On the 30th of May, the Legislative Council passed an act which swept away the old time-honoured seats of justice, wheresoever Rebellion was disporting itself, and placed the power of life and death in the hands of the executive officer, whatsoever his rank, his age, or his wisdom. The Act, after declaring that all persons owing allegiance to the British Government, who should rebel or wage war, or attempt to do so, against the Queen or Government of the East Indies, or instigate or abet such persons, should be liable to the punishment of death, transportation, or imprisonment, gave the Executive Government of any Presidency or Place power to proclaim any district as in a state of rebellion, and to issue a Commission forthwith for the trial of all persons charged with offences against the State, or murder, arson, robbery, or other heinous crime against person or property—the Commissioner or Commissioners so appointed were empowered to hold a Court in any part of the said district, and without the attendance or *futwah* of a law officer, or the assistance of assessors, to pass upon every person convicted before the Court of any of the above-mentioned crimes the punishment of death, or transportation, or imprisonment; “and the judgment of such Court,” it was added, “shall be final and conclusive, and the said Court shall not be subordinate to the Sudder Court.”\* This gave immense power to individual Englishmen. But it armed only the civil authorities; so an order was passed by the Governor-General in Council authorising the senior

\* The Act, which received the assent of the Governor-General, and thus passed into law on the 8th of June, is given entire in the appendix.



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military officer, of whatsoever rank, at any military station in the Bengal Presidency, to appoint General Courts-Martial, either European or Native, or mixed, of not less than five members, and "to confirm and carry into effect, immediately or otherwise, any sentence of such Court-Martial."

June.  
More rein-  
forcements.

With the new month came in further reinforcements from beyond the seas, and something like confidence was re-established in the Christian communities of Calcutta; for although rebellion was spreading itself all over Upper India, the continual stream of English troops that was beginning to pour into the capital seemed to give security to its inmates. The regiments released from service in the Persian Gulf, were now making their appearance on the banks of the Hooghly. The Sixty-fourth arrived on the 3rd of June, and soon afterwards the Thirty-fifth came in from Moulmein. And then the kilted Highlanders of the Seventy-eighth, also from Persia, were seen ascending the ghauts of Calcutta, with their red beards and their bare knees—an unaccustomed sight to the natives of Bengal, in whose eyes they appeared to be half women and half beasts. Others followed, and every effort was made to expedite their despatch to the upper country. At Raneegunge, to which point the railway ran from the neighbourhood of Calcutta, an experienced officer was making arrangements to send on detachments by horse-dawk and bullock-dawk to Benares; but the resources of the State were miserably inadequate to the necessities of the crisis, and prompt movement by land, therefore, on a large scale was wholly impossible. The journey to Benares could be accomplished in five days; but





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June.

it was officially reported to Lord Canning that only from eighteen to twenty-four men a day could thus be forwarded by horsed carriages. By the 4th of June, it was computed that, by these means of conveyance, ninety men with their officers would have reached Benares; by the 8th, eighty-eight more; and by the 12th, another batch of eighty-eight. The bullock-carriages, which afforded slower means of progression, but which could carry larger numbers, might, it was calculated, convey the troops onward at the rate of a hundred men a day.\* So, on the 10th of June, Lord Canning was able to write to Mr. Colvin, saying, "The Europeans are still sent up steadily at the rate of a hundred and twenty men a day, and henceforward they will not be stopped either at Benares or Allahabad, but be passed on to Cawnpore. My object is to place at Sir Hugh Wheeler's disposal a force with which he can leave his entrenchments at Cawnpore, and show himself at Lucknow or elsewhere. He will best know where when the time arrives. To this end, I call upon you to give your aid by furthering by every means in your power the despatch southwards of a portion of the European force which has marched upon Delhi." It had not yet dawned upon the Government that Delhi was not to be "made short work of" by the force that had come down from the North to attack it. And there were many others of large experience all over the country who believed that there was no power of resistance in the place to withstand the first assaults even of such an English army as Anson was gathering up and equipping for service. What that force was, and what its efforts, I have now to relate.

\* Mr. Cecil Beadon to Lord Canning, May 26.—*MS. Correspondence.*





## CHAPTER V.

GENERAL ANSON AT UMBALLAH—FIRST MOVEMENT OF TROOPS—THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS—DIFFICULTY OF MOVEMENT—THE PANIC ON THE HILLS—THE SIEGE-TRAIN—REMONSTRANCES AGAINST DELAY—VIEWS OF LORD CANNING AND SIR JOHN LAWRENCE—GOOD WORK OF THE CIVILIANS—CONDUCT OF THE SIKH CHIEFS—THE MARCH TO KURNAUL—DEATH OF GENERAL ANSON—SUCCESSION OF SIE HENRY BARNARD.

DISQUIETED by reports of the uneasy nervous state of the Regiments at Head-Quarters, but little apprehending the approach of any gigantic danger, General Anson was recreating himself on the heights of Simlah, when, on the 12th of May, young Barnard rode in from Umballah bearing a letter from his father. It informed the Commander-in-Chief that a strange incoherent telegraphic message had been received at the latter place from Delhi. But it was plain that the Meerut Sepoys had revolted. An hour afterwards, another message was brought to Anson, confirming the first tidings of revolt. Confused though it was, it indicated still more clearly than its predecessor, that the Native Cavalry prisoners at Meerut had escaped from gaol, that the Sepoys thence had joined the Delhi mutineers, and that there had been at both places a massacre of Europeans.\*

May 12.  
At Head  
Quarters.

\* The first telegram, as given in a letter from Anson to Lord Canning, ran thus: "We must leave office. All the bungalows are on fire—burning down by the Sepoys of Meerut. They came in this morning. We are





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May 12.

When this intelligence reached the Commander-in-Chief, he did not at once take in its full significance; nor, indeed, did men of far greater Indian experience—the Head-quarter's Staff, by whom he was surrounded—perceive the dire purport of it. But he discerned at once that something must be done. He saw that the city of Delhi and the lives of all the Europeans were at the mercy of the insurgents; and that it was incumbent upon him to send down all the white troops that could be despatched from the Hills, to succour our imperilled people, if the flames of rebellion should spread. So he sent an Aide-de-camp to Kussowlee, on that day, with orders for the Seventy-fifth Foot to march to Umballah,\* and, at the same time, the Company's European regiments at Dugshai and Sobathoo were directed to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's notice. But he did not put himself in motion. He wrote to Lord Canning, saying that he anxiously awaited further reports, and that if they were not favourable he should "at once proceed down to Umballah." He had scarcely despatched this letter, when a third telegraphic message was received, from which he learnt more distinctly what had happened at Meerut on the preceding Sunday. Next morning, he wrote again to Lord Canning, still saying that his

off. Mr. C. Todd is dead, I think. He went out this morning, and has not yet returned. We learnt that nine Europeans are killed." This was received at three P.M. The second message, received at four, said: "Cantonments in a state of siege. Mutineers from Meerut—Third Light Cavalry—numbers not known—said to be a hundred and fifty men. Cut off communication with Meerut. Taken possession of the Bridge of

Boats. Fifty-fourth Native Infantry sent against them, but would not act. Several officers killed and wounded. City in a state of considerable excitement. Troops sent down, but nothing known yet. Information will be forwarded."

\* Captain Barnard had, on his way to Simla, warned the Seventy-fifth to be ready to march on the arrival of orders from Head-Quarters.



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May 13.

own movements would depend upon the information he received. But he was beginning to discern more clearly the magnitude of the danger, and he ordered the two Fusilier Regiments to move down to Umballah,\* and the Sirmoor battalion† to proceed from Dhera to Meerut. From the first he appears to have perceived clearly that the most pressing danger which threatened us was the loss of our Magazines. He felt that the great Magazine at Delhi, with its rich supplies of arms and ordnance stores, and implements of all kinds, must already be in possession of the mutineers, and he lost no time in taking measures to secure our other great military store-houses, by sending European troops for their defence. "I have sent express," he wrote to Lord Canning on the 13th, "to desire that the Fort at Ferozapore may be secured by the Sixty-first Foot, and the Fort at Govindghur by the Eighty-first. Two companies of the Eighth from Jullundhur to Phillour." The importance of securing the latter place could scarcely, indeed, be over-estimated.‡ How it was accomplished by the authorities of the Punjab will hereafter be told. In this place it need only be recorded that thence was it that the siege-train was to be drawn which was to open the way for our re-entrance into Delhi, or to perform any other

\* Major G. O. Jacob, of the First European Regiment, who happened to be at Simlah, rode down to Dugshai during the night, and warned the regiment early in the morning.

† A corps of brave and faithful Goorkahs, whose good services will be hereafter detailed.

‡ Mr. Cave-Browne says, "A report did float about the Punjab, the truth of which we have never heard denied, that one member of the Staff suggested that all European troops

should concentrate on Phillour, and, taking boat down the Sutlej, make for England as fast as possible; another, however—one who, alas! fell among the earliest victims of the rebellion—suggested that the Phillour fort, with its large magazine, might be made available for a very different purpose. Hence the idea of a siege-train." This last was Colonel Chester, Adjutant-General of the Army.





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May.

service that circumstances might demand from it in the operations to be now undertaken. An Artillery officer was despatched thither with all speed to make the necessary arrangements;\* and the Goorkah Regiment, known as the Nusseree Battalion, and then believed to be loyal to the core, was ordered down from Jutogh, near Simlah, to form, with a detachment of the Ninth Irregular Cavalry, an escort for the train from Phillour to Umballah. This was not more than any soldier of a few years' experience would have done; but as it was an important, though an obvious movement, and tended much to our subsequent success, it should be held in remembrance by all who say that in this conjuncture Anson did less.†

May 14.  
First move-  
ments of  
General  
Anson.

Before the day was spent, the Commander-in-Chief had made up his mind that he must quit Simlah. "I am just off for Umballah," he wrote to Lord Canning, at eight o'clock on the morning of the 14th. . . . "This is a most disastrous business," he added, "and it is not possible to see what will be the result. They say the King of Delhi is at the bottom of it. I doubt it; but I have no doubt that he has taken advantage of the opportunity, and is assisting the insurgents. . . . If the mutineers, having possession of the city, make their stand behind the walls, we shall want a good force and artillery. This must be collected at Kurnaul, as it would not be wise, I think, to divide the force we shall have and send part from Meerut on the opposite side of the river. But I hope to hear something which will enable me to

\* Captain Worthington, who was on sick-leave at Simlah at the time.

† The author of the "History of the Siege of Delhi" says: "On the 16th Sir John Lawrence telegraphed to Jullundhur to secure the Fort of Phillour. Two marches to the south,

and commanding the bridge over the Sutlej, it contained the only magazine that could now furnish us with a siege-train, &c. &c." But it is clear that General Anson had sent instructions to this effect three days before.





decide what is best to be done when I get to Umballah."

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May 15.

He reached that place on the morning of the 15th, and many sinister reports met him there. It was plain that the Native regiments in the Punjab were in a state of open or suppressed mutiny, and, therefore, that he could not expect immediate assistance from that province. "We are terribly short of artillery ammunition," he wrote. "The two companies of Reserve Artillery I asked for from Lahore and Loodhianah cannot, of course, now be given, and we have no means of using the Siege-train. All the European troops within reach will be here on the 17th. If we move upon Delhi, I think it must be from Kurnaul. It is extraordinary how little we know of what is going on in other parts of the country—nothing whatever from Agra, Cawnpore, Oudh, &c." On the following day, he wrote again to Lord Canning, saying: "I have been doing my best to organise the Force here, ready for a move; but tents and carriages are not ready, and they are indispensable. We are also deficient in ammunition, which we are expecting from Phillour. I hope we shall be in a state to move shortly, if required. But we have no heavy guns for Delhi, if we are to attack the mutineers there. We must not fritter away or sacrifice the Europeans we have, unless for some great necessity."

Many troubles and perplexities then beset him. It has been already shown that the Native Regiments at Umballah were in a state of smouldering mutiny, kept only from bursting into a blaze by the contiguity of European troops.\* The incendiary work,

The Umballah Regiments.

\* *Ante*, book iii. chapter v.





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LAST DAYS OF GENERAL ANSON.

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✓ which, in the preceding month, had so mystified the Commander-in-Chief and the General of Division, had by this time explained itself. It was clear that the Sepoys were ripe for revolt. With the strong European force now gathered at Umballah, Anson might have reduced them to impotence in an hour. To the vigorous understanding of Sir John Lawrence nothing was clearer than that the true policy, in that conjuncture, was to disarm the Native Regiments at Umballah before advancing upon Delhi; and he impressed this necessity upon Anson by telegraph and by post from Rawul-Pindee, but the Commander-in-Chief refused to sanction the measure.\* It seemed to be an easy escape out of some difficulties which beset his position at Umballah. He had the wolf by the ears. He could not with safety carry the regiments with him, and he could not leave them behind. But he was met with remonstrances from officers on the spot, who protested that some pledges had been given to the Sepoys which could not honourably be broken, though in truth the Sepoys themselves had practically violated the compact, and there would have been no breach of faith in turning their treachery against themselves. It was, however, resolved to appeal only to their good feelings, and so they were left with arms in their hands to use them on a future day foully against us in return for our forbearance.†

\* See Punjab Report of May 25, 1858: "The Chief Commissioner conceived that the first step was to disarm these regiments, whom it was equally dangerous either to leave at Umballah or to take to Delhi. This course the Chief Commissioner lost no time in urging, but when the Commander-in-Chief took the matter in hand, the local military authorities pointed out that they had pledged themselves not to disarm the Sepoys.

It was in vain urged per contra that the compact had been no sooner made than it was broken by the Sepoys themselves. There was not, indeed, the shadow of a reasonable hope that these men would prove faithful."

† It should not be omitted altogether from the narrative that on the 19th the Commander-in-Chief issued another address to the Native Army, in the shape of a General





Another source of anxiety was this. Before the week had passed, news came to Umballah that the Goorkahs of the Nusseree Battalion, from no sympathy with the regular army, but from some personal causes of disaffection, had broken into revolt just when their services were wanted, had refused to march to Phillour, had plundered the Commander-in-Chief's baggage, and threatened to attack Simlah. Then there came a great cry of terror from the pleasant places which Anson had just quitted, and in which, only a few days before, the voice of joy and gladness had been resonant in a hundred happy homes. It was the season when our English ladies, some with their husbands, some without them, were escaping from the hot winds of the Northern Provinces and disporting themselves, in all the flush of renovated health and strength and new-born elasticity, under the cheering influence of the mountain breezes on the slopes of the Himalayahs. It might well have been regarded, in the first instance, as a happy circumstance that so many of our countrywomen were away from the military cantonments, in which mutiny and murder had so hideously displayed themselves; but when it was known that these joyous playgrounds were being stripped of their defences, and that if danger were to threaten the homes of our

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Mutiny of the  
Nussuree  
Battalion.The panic on  
the Hills.

Order, in which, after adverting to the general uneasiness of the Sepoys and to his former efforts to allay it, he said: "His Excellency has determined that the new rifle-cartridge, and every new cartridge, shall be discontinued, and that in future ball ammunition shall be made up by each regiment for its own use by a proper establishment entertained for this purpose. The Commander-in-Chief solemnly assures the Army that no interference with their castes or religions was ever contemplated, and

as solemnly he pledges his word and honour that none shall ever be exercised. He announces this to the Native Army in the full confidence that all will now perform their duty free from anxiety and care, and be prepared to stand and shed the last drop of their blood, as they have formerly done, by the side of the British troops, and in defence of the country." Such words in season might be good, but the season had long since passed.



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people there would be nothing but God's mercy to protect them, a feeling of insecurity and alarm arose, which needed but little to aggravate it into a great panic. When, therefore, tidings came that the Nusserree battalion, at a distance of some three or four miles from Simlah, had risen in rebellion, there was general consternation. It was rumoured that the officers and their families at Jutogh had been murdered, and that the Goorkahs were marching on Simlah intent on slaughter and spoliation. Then, for the greater part of two long days, many tasted the bitterness of death. The agony of terror swept our English families out of their holiday-homes, as with the besom of coming destruction; and in wild confusion men, women, and children streamed down towards the plains, or huddled together at the point esteemed to be best capable of defence.\* Never, at any time or in any place, have the consummate gallantry of Englishmen and the heroic endurance of Englishwomen been more nobly—more beautifully—manifested than in the great conflict for supremacy, of which I am writing. But the incidents of those two days on the Hills are not to be regarded with national pride. The strong instinct of self-preservation was dominant over all. Men forgot their manhood in what seemed to be a struggle for life;† and it is not strange, therefore, that delicate ladies with little children clinging to them, should have abandoned themselves uncontrolledly to their fears.

\* This was the Bank. See Cave-Browne's "Punjab and Delhi in 1857," which contains an animated account of the two days' panic on the Hills. The writer says that at the Bank were congregated some four hundred of our Christian people, "of whom above a hundred were able-bodied men."

† Mr. Cave-Browne describes "ladies toiling along on foot, vainly trying to persuade, entreat, threaten the bearers to hurry on with their *jampans*, on which were their helpless children, while men were outbidding each other, and *outbidding ladies*, to secure bearers for their baggage."



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But the panic was a groundless panic. The Nusseree battalion, though grossly insubordinate, was not intent on the murder of our people. The Goorkahs had grievances, real or supposed, to be redressed, and when certain concessions had been made to them, they returned to their allegiance, and afterwards became good soldiers.\* And not without some feeling of shame our people went back to their deserted homes and found everything just as it had been left. Those, whose excited imaginations had seen blazing houses and household wrecks, re-entered their dwelling places to see with their fleshly eyes the unfinished letter on the desk and the embroidery on the work-table undisturbed by marauding hands. Even the trinkets of the ladies were as if they had never been out of the safest custody. But confidence, which is ever "a plant of slow growth," is slowest when once trampled or cut down; and it was long before our English families at the hill-stations recovered the serenity they had lost. Every officer fit for service was called to join his regiment, and the European soldiery were too much needed in the field to allow any force to be left for the protection of the tender congregation of women and children on the slopes of the great hills.†

The Commander-in-Chief had, indeed, other things to consider than these social alarms. The defection of the Nusseree battalion was a source of perplexity

Preparation  
of the Siege  
Train.

\* It is said that one of their principal causes of complaint was the fact that they had been ordered to march down to the plains, and that no arrangements had been made for the protection of their families in their absence. They were also in arrears of pay.

† Mr. Cave-Browne relates that as the Commander-in-Chief was riding

out of Simlah, Mr. Mayne, the Chaplain, informed him that the station was in great danger from the number of "badmashes" in the Bazaars, and asked that some Europeans might be sent up for its protection. The General said that he could not spare any. "What, then, are the ladies to do?" asked the Chaplain. "The best they can," was the answer.





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upon other grounds, as it was hard to say how the siege train could be escorted safely to Umballah. It was of the highest importance, at this time, that the European troops should be exposed as little as possible to the blazing heats of the summer sun. It was the sultriest season of the year, and cholera was already threatening our camp. The regiment of hardy Goorkahs, of whose loyalty there had been no previous doubt, were just the men for the work; and now their services were lost to us for a while. There was nothing, therefore, left but a resort to Hindostanee troops of doubtful fidelity, or to a contingent force supplied by a friendly Native chief. Meanwhile there was great activity in the magazine of Phillour. Day and night our troops, under Lieutenant Griffith, Commissary of Ordnance, toiled on incessantly to prepare the siege train and to supply ammunition of all kinds for the advancing army. A day, even an hour, lost, might have been fatal; for the Sutlej was rising, and the bridge of boats, by which the Train was to cross the river, might have been swept away before our preparations were complete.

The Departments.

But there were worse perplexities even than these. The elaborate organisation of the army which Anson commanded was found to be a burden and an encumbrance. The Chiefs of all the Staff-departments of the Army were at his elbow. They were necessarily men of large experience, selected for their approved ability and extensive knowledge; and it was right that he should consult them. But Departments are ever slow to move—ever encumbered with a sense of responsibility, which presses upon them with the destructive force of paralysis. These Indian Military Departments were the best possible Departments in



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time of peace. They had immense masses of correspondence written up and endorsed with the most praiseworthy punctuality and precision. They were always prepared with a precedent; always ready to check an irregularity, and to chastise an over-zealous public servant not moving in the strictest grooves of Routine. It was, indeed, their especial function to suppress what they regarded as the superfluous activities of individual men; and individual men never did great things until they got fairly out of the reach of the Departments. They were nominally War Departments. There would have been no need of such Departments if war had been abolished from off the face of the land. But it was the speciality of these War Departments that they were never prepared for war. Surrounded as we were, within and without, with hostile populations, and living in a chronic state of danger from a multiplicity of causes, we yet were fully prepared for almost anything in the world but fighting. Without long delay we could place ourselves in neither a defensive nor an offensive attitude. We could "stand fast" as well as any nation in the world, but there was never any facility of moving. As soon as ever there came a necessity for action, it was found that action was impossible. The Adjutant-General, the Quartermaster-General, the Commissary-General, the Chief of the Army Medical Department, each had his own special reason to give why the "thing" was "impossible." No ammunition—no carriages—no hospital stores—no doolies for the sick and wounded. Each head of a Department, indeed, had his own particular protest to fling in the face of the Commander-in-Chief. *Nunquam paratus* was his motto. It was the custom of Departments. It was the rule of the Service. No





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one was at all ashamed of it. It had come down by official inheritance from one to the other, and the Chief of the Department merely walked in the pleasant paths which, years before, as a Deputy Assistant, he had trodden under some defunct Chief of pious memory. In a word, it was the system. Every now and then, some seer like Henry Lawrence rose up to protest against it. And when, in the plain language of common sense, the truth was laid bare to the public, some cried, "How true!" but the many smiled incredulously, and denounced the writer as an alarmist. And so General Anson, having found things in that normal state of unpreparedness in which his predecessors had delighted, had followed in their footsteps, nothing doubting, until suddenly brought face to face with a dire necessity, he found that everything was in its wrong place. The storm-signals were up, but the life-boat was in the church-steeple, and no one could find the keys of the church.\*

It was not strange, therefore, that Anson felt it would not be prudent, with the means then at his disposal, to risk "an enterprise on Delhi." "It becomes now a matter for your consideration," he wrote to Sir John Lawrence on the 17th, "whether it would be prudent to risk the small European force we have here in an enterprise on Delhi. I think not. It is wholly, in my opinion, insufficient for the purpose. The walls could, of course, be

\* On the 18th of May General Barnard wrote from Umballah, saying: "And now that they [the European regiments] are collected, without tents, without ammunition, the men have not twenty rounds apiece. Two troops of Horse Artillery, twelve guns, but no reserve ammunition, and their waggons at Loodianah—seven days' off! Commissariat without sufficient transport at hand. This is the boasted Indian Army, and this is the force with which the civilians would have us go to Delhi."—Compare also letter quoted in the text, page 165.



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battered down with heavy guns. The entrance might be opened, and little resistance offered. But so few men in a great city, with such narrow streets, and an immense armed population, who knew every turn and corner of them, would, it appears to me, be in a very dangerous position; and if six or seven hundred were disabled, what would remain? Could we hold it with the whole country around against us? Could we either stay in or out of it? My own view of the state of things now is, that by carefully collecting our resources, having got rid of the bad materials which we cannot trust, and having supplied their places with others of a better sort, it would not be very long before we could proceed without a chance of failure, in whatever direction we might please. Your telegraphic message informing me of the measures which you have taken to raise fresh troops confirms me in this opinion. I must add, also, that this is now the opinion of all here whom I have consulted upon it—the Major-General and Brigadier, the Adjutant-General, Quarter-master-General, and Commissary-General. The latter has, however, offered a positive impediment to it, in the impossibility of providing what would be necessary for such an advance under from sixteen to twenty days. I thought it could have been done in less; but that was before I had seen Colonel Thomson. Indeed, it is very little more than forty-eight hours since I came here, and every turn produces something which may alter a previous opinion.”\*

\* The views of General Anson at this time are thus stated in an unpublished memoir by Colonel Baird Smith, from which other quotations will be made: “It is generally understood that the course which recommended itself most to his mind

was one strongly opposed to the popular instinct at the moment. Recognising, as all conversant with military affairs could not fail to do, that strategically considered the position of a weak force at Delhi must be, if not utterly false, yet of extreme





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Correspondence with Lord Canning.

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But these doubts were but of brief duration. Let Adjutants-General, and Quarter-masters-General, and Commissaries-General suggest what difficulties they might, there were other powers, to North and South, in whose sight all delay, in such a crisis, was an offence and an abomination. Lord Canning, from Calcutta, and Sir John Lawrence, from the Punjab, flashed to the Head Quarters of the Army emphatic messages, urging Anson to move on Delhi, with such force as he could gather; and followed up their eager telegrams with letters scarcely less eager. The Governor-General, to whom Anson had not communicated the views which he had expressed in the preceding letter to the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, was overjoyed by the thought that there was so much activity at Head-Quarters. Encouraged by the earlier letters of the Military Chief, and still more by a message he had received from Mr. Colvin, at Agra, Canning wrote on the 17th to Anson, saying that he learnt the good news "with intense pleasure." "For," he added, "I doubted whether you would be able to collect so strong a body of troops in the time. I cannot doubt that it will now prove amply sufficient, and I am very grateful to you for enabling me to feel confident on this point. An unsuccessful demonstration against Delhi, or even any appearance of delay in proceeding to act, when once our force is on the spot, would have a most injurious effect—I mean in Bengal generally. Every station

danger, he is believed to have advocated the withdrawal of the small and isolated detachments on the Doab, and the concentration of the whole available British force between the Sutlej and the Jumna, there to await the arrival of reinforcements by the line of the Indus, and, while

permitting the fire of revolt to burn as fiercely as it might within the limits indicated, to check its spread beyond them on the northward, and ultimately to proceed to quench it with means that would make the issue certain."—*Unpublished Memoir by Colonel Baird Smith. MS.*



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and cantonment is in a state of excitement, and anything in the nature of a check would give confidence to the disaffected regiments, which might lead to something worse than the horrors of Delhi. Allahabad, Benares, Oudh (except Lucknow, which I believe to be safe), and a host of places of less importance where Native troops are alone, will continue to be a source of much anxiety until Delhi is disposed of. It is for this that I have telegraphed to you to make as short work as possible of the rebels, who have cooped themselves up there, and whom you cannot crush too remorselessly. I should rejoice to hear that there had been no holding our men, and that the vengeance had been terrible."

Whilst Lord Canning was thus expressing his gratitude to Anson, Sir John Lawrence, who was nearer the scene of action, and in closer communication with the Commander-in-Chief, knowing better what were the prevailing counsels at Head Quarters, was urgent in his remonstrances against delay. He knew the temper of the people well; and nothing was clearer to the eye of his experience than that, in the conjuncture which had arisen, it was necessary above all things to maintain an appearance of successful activity. Any semblance of paralysis at such a time must, he knew, be fatal to us. At such periods the Natives of India wait and watch. It is in conformity with the genius of a people, equally timid and superstitious, to be worshippers of success. John Lawrence knew well that if at any time the English in India should betray symptoms of irresolution in the face of danger, thousands and tens of thousands, believing that the day of our supremacy is past, would first fall away from, and then rise against their masters. But we had reached an epoch in the

Correspondence with Sir John Lawrence.





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History of our great Indian Empire at which the impression of our coming fall was stronger than it had ever been before, and there were those who, on the first sign of weakness in our camp, would have pointed exultingly to the beginning of the end. It was not a time, indeed, to calculate military means and resources, or to regard strategical principles in the conduct of our armies; but simply to move and strike—to move somewhere and to strike some one. And it was to this necessity of prompt and vigorous action that the counsels of John Lawrence ever pointed—not to any particular line of procedure to be dictated to the Military Chief. “I do not myself,” he wrote to Anson, on the 21st of May, “think that the country anywhere is against us—certainly not from here to within a few miles of Delhi. I served for nearly thirteen years in Delhi, and know the people well. My belief is, that with good management on the part of the Civil officers, it would open its gates on the approach of our troops. It seems incredible to conceive that the mutineers can hold and defend it. Still, I admit that on military principles, in the present state of affairs, it may not be expedient to advance on Delhi; certainly not until the Meerut force is prepared to act, which it can only be when set free. Once relieve Meerut, and give confidence to the country, no difficulty regarding carriage can occur. By good arrangements the owners will come forward, but in any case it can be collected. From Meerut you will be able to form a sound judgment on the course to be followed. If the country lower down be disturbed; and the Sepoys have mutinied, I conceive it would be a paramount duty to march that way, relieve each place, and disarm or destroy the mutineers. If, on the other



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hand, all were safe, it would be a question whether you should consolidate your resources there, or march on Delhi. I think it must be allowed that our European troops are not placed at this or that station simply to hold it, but to be ready to move wherever they may be required. Salubrious and central points for their location were selected; but so long as we maintain our prestige and keep the country quiet, it cannot signify how many cantonments we abandon. But this we cannot do, if we allow two or three Native corps to checkmate large bodies of Europeans. It will then be a mere question of time, by slow degrees, but of a certainty the Native troops must destroy us. We are doing all we can to strengthen ourselves, and to reinforce you, either by direct or indirect means.\* But can your Excellency suppose for one moment that the Irregular troops will remain staunch, if they see our European soldiers cooped up in their cantonments, tamely awaiting the progress of events. Your Excellency remarks that we must carefully collect our resources; but what are these resources, but our European soldiers, our guns, and our matériel: these are all ready at hand, and only require to be handled wisely and vigorously to produce great results. We have money also, and the control of the country. But if disaffection spread, insurrection will follow, and we shall then neither be able to collect the revenue, nor procure supplies." "Pray," he continued, "only reflect on the whole history of India. Where have we failed, when we acted vigorously? Where have we succeeded, when guided by timid counsels? Clive, with twelve hundred, fought at Plassey in

\* This is to be understood as referring to the measures taken in the Punjab.



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✓ 26/

opposition to the advice of his leading officers, beat forty thousand men, and conquered Bengal. Monson retreated from the Chumbul, and before he gained Agra, his army was disorganised and partially annihilated. Look at the Caubul catastrophe. It might have been averted by resolute and bold action. The Irregulars of the Army, the Kuzzilbashes, in short our friends, of whom we had many, only left us when they found we were not true to ourselves. How can it be supposed that strangers and mercenaries will sacrifice everything for us? There is a point up to which they will stand by us, for they know that we have always been eventually successful, and that we are good masters; but go beyond this point, and every man will look to his immediate benefit, his present safety. The Punjab Irregulars are marching down in the highest spirits, proud to be trusted, and eager to show their superiority over the Regular troops—ready to fight, shoulder to shoulder, with the Europeans. But if, on their arrival, they find the Europeans behind breastworks, they will begin to think that the game is up. Recollect that all this time, while we are halting, the emissaries of the mutineers are writing to, and visiting, every cantonment. . . . I cannot comprehend what the Commissariat can mean by requiring from sixteen to twenty days to procure provisions. I am persuaded that all you can require to take with you must be procurable in two or three. We have had an extraordinary good harvest, and supplies must be abundant between Umballah and Meerut. The greater portion of the country is well cultivated. We are sending our troops in every direction without difficulty, through tracts which are comparatively desert. ✓ Our true policy is to trust the Maharajah of Puttecala,





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and Rajah of Jheend, and the country generally, for they have shown evidence of being on our side, but utterly to distrust the regular Sepoys. I would spare no expense to carry every European soldier—at any rate, to carry every other one. By alternately marching and riding, their strength and spirits will be maintained. We are pushing on the Guides, the Fourth Sikhs, the First and Fourth Punjab regiments of Infantry, from different parts of the Punjab, in this way. If there is any officer in the Punjab whom your Excellency would wish to have at your side, pray don't hesitate to apply for him. There is a young officer now at Head Quarters, who, though young in years, has seen much service, and proved himself an excellent soldier. I allude to Captain Norman, of the Adjutant-General's office. Sir Colin Campbell had the highest opinion of his judgment; and when he left Peshawur it was considered a public loss."

Of the exceeding force and cogency of this no doubt can be entertained. It was the right language for the crisis—rough, ready, and straight to the point. The great Punjab Commissioner, with his loins girt about, eager for the encounter, impatient to strike, was not in a mood to make gentle allowances or to weigh nice phrases of courteous discourse. But, in what he wrote, he intended to convey no reproaches to the Military Chief. It was simply the irrepressible enthusiasm of a nature, impatient of departmental dallyings and regulation restraints, and in its own utter freedom from all fear of responsibility not quite tolerant of the weakness of those who, held back by a fear of failure, shrink from encountering heroic risks. It was not that he mistrusted the man Anson, but that he mistrusted all the cum-





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brous machinery of the Head-Quarters Departments, which never had been found ripe for sudden action—never had improvised an expedition or precipitated an enterprise, ever since Departments were created—though, in truth, he could not see that in the machinery itself there was anything to unfit it for prompt action. “I should greatly regret,” he wrote two days afterwards, “if any message or letter of mine should annoy you. I have written warmly and strongly in favour of an advance, because I felt assured that such was the true policy. However much we may be taken by surprise, our military organisation admits of prompt action. The country is almost sure to be with us, if it were only that we save them from trouble; and this will more especially be the case in an affair like the present, when we have really to contend only with our own troops, with whom the people can have no sympathy.” The Commissariat, in such a case, is ever the chief stumbling-block; and the impediments thrown up are those of which military men take the most, and civilians the least, account. Anson was told at Umballah that they were insuperable. But John Lawrence, at Rawul-Pindee, could not recognise the force of the obstructive argument. “I cannot comprehend,” he wrote to Anson, “why Colonel Thomson requires so much supplies. To carry so much food with the troops is to encumber the column and waste our money. To guard against accidents, three or four days’ supplies should be taken, but no more. My belief is, that ten thousand troops might march all over the North-West, and, provided they paid for what they required, no difficulty in obtaining supplies would be experienced.” It is plain, too, that at this time the Delhi difficulty was, in the Punjab,





held to be a light one, for Lawrence added: "I still think that no real resistance at Delhi will be attempted; but, of course, we must first get the Meerut force in order, and, in moving against Delhi, go prepared to fight. My impression is, that, on the approach of our troops, the mutineers will either disperse, or the people of the city rise and open their gates."\*

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Whether General Anson ever recognised the fact that the conjuncture was one in which all rules of warfare must bow their necks to stern political necessity, is not very apparent; but if he still maintained his opinions as a soldier, he knew well that it was his duty to yield his judgment to the authority of the supreme Civil power; and when he received an emphatic enunciation of the views of the Governor-General, he prepared to march down upon Delhi. "I regret," he wrote to the Governor-General on the 23rd of May, "that it has not been possible to move sooner upon Delhi. The force is so small that it must not be frittered away. You say in your Telegraphic Message that Delhi must be recovered, 'but [the operations] to be undertaken by a strong British force.' There is not this in the country. We have collected all within reach. I venture to say that not an hour has been lost, and that the movement of the troops from Umballah will have been accomplished in a space of time which was not considered possible on my arrival here." And he concluded his letter by

Final orders  
of the Civil  
Government.

\* In a previous letter (May 21) Lawrence had written: "At Delhi the Sepoys have murdered their officers and taken our guns, but even there they did not stand. No number of them can face a moderate body of Europeans fairly handled. Of late years, even when fighting under our

own banners, in a good cause, with European officers at their head, and English comrades at their side, they have seldom done anything; as mutineers they cannot fight—they will burn, destroy, and massacre, but not fight."





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saying: "I should be glad to know whether you consider the Force with which I propose to attack Delhi sufficient—and, namely, 'a strong British Force.'" He had by this time clearly calculated his available strength for the great enterprise before him—and it was this, as detailed in a letter which he wrote to General Hewitt at Meerut: "The force from Umballah consists of the Ninth Lancers, one squadron of the Fourth Lancers, Her Majesty's Seventy-fifth Foot, First European Regiment, Second European Regiment, Sixtieth Native Infantry, two troops of Horse Artillery. They are formed into two small brigades. Brigadier Halifax commands the first. . . Brigadier Jones the second brigade. Four companies of the First Fusileers, one squadron of Ninth Lancers, two guns, Horse Artillery, were moved to Kurnaul on the 17th, and arrived on the 20th. Six companies of the First Fusileers followed on the 21st. Her Majesty's Seventy-fifth Foot and Sixtieth Regiment of Native Infantry marched on the 22nd. One squadron Ninth Lancers and four guns will march on the 24th or 25th. The above will be at Kurnaul on the 28th. The Second Europeans, third troop third brigade of Horse Artillery will probably follow on the 26th. The whole will be at Kurnaul on the 30th. I propose then to advance with the column towards Delhi on the 1st, and be opposite to Baghput on the 5th. At this place I should wish to be joined by the force from Meerut. To reach it four days may be calculated on." "A small siege train," he added, "has left Loodianah, and is expected here on the 26th. It will require eleven days to get it to Delhi. It may join us at Baghput on or about the 6th, the day after that I have named for the junction of your force. I depend on your supplying at least one hundred and



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twenty Artillerymen to work it. You will bring, besides, according to statement received, two squadrons of Carabineers, a wing of the Sixtieth Rifles, one light field battery, one troop of Horse Artillery, and any Sappers you can depend upon, and of course the non-commissioned European officers belonging to them."

Whilst Anson was writing this from Umballah, Lord Canning was telegraphing a message to him, through the Lieutenant-Governor of Agra, announcing the reinforcements which were expected at Calcutta, and adding that everything depended "upon disposing speedily of Delhi, and making a terrible example. No amount of severity can be too great. I will support you in any degree of it." There was nothing uncertain in this sound. But it is clear that the Governor-General, in his eagerness to strike a sudden and a heavy blow at the enemy, very much under-rated the military difficulties with which Anson was called upon to contend, and believed overmuch in the facile execution of the impossible; for, on the 31st of May, he telegraphed again to the Commander-in-Chief, saying: "I have heard to-day that you do not expect to be before Delhi till the 9th (June). In the mean time Cawnpore and Lucknow are severely pressed, and the country between Delhi and Cawnpore is passing into the hands of the rebels. It is of the utmost importance to prevent this, and to relieve Cawnpore. But rapid action will do it. Your force of Artillery will enable you to dispose of Delhi with certainty. I therefore beg that you will detach one European Infantry Regiment and a small force of European Cavalry to the south of Delhi, without keeping them for operations there, so that Alighur may be recovered and Cawnpore relieved immediately. It is



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impossible to overrate the importance of showing European troops between Delhi and Cawnpore, Lucknow and Allahabad, depend upon it."

It is easy to conceive what would have been the perplexity in General Anson's mind, if he had received these instructions. The recovery of Delhi seemed to be an enterprise beyond the reach of the slender means at his disposal; but he was expected also to operate in the country beyond, and in the straits of his weakness to display strength on an extensive field of action. The Army was already on its way to Delhi. For whilst the Military Departments were protesting their inability to move the Army, the Civilians at Umballah—officially the Commissioner of the Cis-Sutlej States, and the Deputy Commissioner of the district, individually Mr. George Barnes and Mr. Douglas Forsyth—were putting forth their strength, moving all the agents beneath them, and employing the influence which their position had given them among the people to accomplish promptly and effectually the great object now to be attained. It little mattered if, at such a time, the ordinary civil business were temporarily suspended. It behoved, at such a moment, every man to be more or less a soldier. So the civil officers, not only at Umballah, but all around it, in the important country between the Jumna and the Sutlej, went to work right manfully in aid of the military authorities; collected carts, collected cattle, collected coolies, and brought together and stored in Umballah large supplies of grain for the army.\* And this, too, in the

\* Mr. Barnes, in his official report, has recorded that, "As soon as it was seen by the Commander-in-Chief that an onward movement should be made, a sudden difficulty

arose in the want of carriages. The Deputy-Commissionary General having officially declared his inability to meet the wants of the army, the Civil Authorities were called upon to supply



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face of difficulties and impediments which would have dismayed and obstructed less earnest workmen; for ever, after the fashion of their kind, Natives of all classes stood aloof, waiting and watching the issue of events; from the capitalist to the coolie all shrunk alike from rendering active assistance to those whose power might be swept away in a day.

There were other important services, which at this time the civil officers rendered to their country; doing, indeed, that without which all else would have been in vain. In the country between the Jumna and the Sutlej were the great chiefs of what were known as the "Protected Sikh States." These states, at the commencement of the century, we had rescued by our interference from the grasp of Runjeet Singh, and ever since the time when the Rajah of Puteelah placed in the hands of young Charles Metcalfe the keys of his fort, and said that all he possessed was at the service of the British Government, those chiefs, secure in the possession of their rights, had been true to the English alliance. They had survived the ruin of the old Sikh Empire, and were grateful to us for the protection which we had afforded and the independence which we had preserved. There are seasons in the lives of all nations, when faith is weak and temptation is strong, and, for a little space, the Cis-Sutlej chiefs, when the clouds of our first trouble were lowering over us, may have been beset with doubts and perplexities and fears of siding with the weaker party. Their hesitation, however, was short-lived.

the demand. At Umballah there has ever been a difficulty to furnish cattle of any kind, the carts being of a very inferior description; however, such as they were, they had to be pressed into service, and in the course of a week, after the utmost exertions, five hundred carts, two thousand camels, and two thousand coolies were made over to the Commissariat Department; thirty thousand maunds of grain were likewise collected and stored for the Army in the town of Umballah."



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The excellent tact of Douglas Forsyth, who took upon himself the responsibility of calling upon the Maharajah of Puteecalah for assistance, smoothed down the apprehensions of that chief, and he took his course manfully and consistently, never swerving from the straight path of his duty. The chiefs of Jheend and Nabha followed his example, and were equally true to the British alliance.\* It was of the utmost importance, at that time, that the road from Umballah to Kurnaul should be kept open; for it was to the latter place—once a flourishing military cantonment, but at the time of which I am writing deserted and decayed—that the troops from Umballah were now marching; and there the fugitives from Delhi had mostly assembled, and something of an attempt had been made to re-establish the shattered edifice of British authority upon a fragment of the ruins of Delhi.† Above all, to hold Kurnaul was to keep open the communications between Umballah and Meerut, and so to facilitate the junction of the forces from those two points. Happily for us, in this juncture the Newab of Kurnaul, a Mahomedan

\* See Mr. Barnes's report. "The first object was to provide for the safety of the Grand Trunk Road and the two stations of Thanosur and Loodhianah, which were without reliable troops. I accordingly directed the Rajah of Jheend to proceed to Kurnaul with all his available force. The Maharajah of Puteecalah, at my request, sent a detachment of all arms, and three guns, under his brother, to Thanosur on the Grand Trunk Road between Umballah and Kurnaul. The Rajah of Nabha and the Newab of Malak Kotela were requested to march with their men to Loodhianah, and the Rajah of Ferozepore was desired to place himself under the orders of the Deputy

Commissioner of Ferozepore. Thus all points of the main line of road were secured, and the Rajah of Jheend was also instructed to collect supplies and carriages for the field force, to protect the station of Kurnaul, &c." It should be added that Sir John Lawrence had telegraphed on the 13th to "get the Maharajah of Puteecalah to send one regiment to Thanosur and another to Loodhianah." The policy from the first was to trust the great Cis-Sutlej Chiefs. See also note in the Appendix.

† Brigadier Graves and Mr. Le Bas, who had effected their escape from Delhi, were the representatives of the military and civil authority.



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nobleman and land-owner of large influence in that part of the country, threw the weight of his personal power into the scales on our side.\* This, doubtless, was great help to us; and when the Jheend Rajah sent down his troops to Kurnaul, the danger of a general rising of the mixed population of that part of the country had passed away. The Contingent arrived on the night of the 18th, and on the following morning the first detachment of Europeans marched into the cantonment.† Meanwhile, the Puteelah Rajah was occupying Thaney-sur, on the great high road between Umballah and Kurnaul, and thus the communication between these two important points was fully secured.

At the distance of a few miles from the station of Kurnaul lies the town of Paniput, a place famous in Indian annals; for there, on the neighbouring plain, had great armies contended, and thrice with tremendous carnage the destinies of India had been decided on its battle-fields. At this point the bulk of the Jheend Contingent was now posted, and as fresh detachments of the army from Umballah marched into Kurnaul, the advanced guard pushed on to Paniput, where it was presently joined by the rear companies of the Fusileers, two more squadrons of the Lancer regiment, and four guns. The Europeans, weakened though they were by the burning heats of May, were eager for the conflict, and already there had grown up amongst them that intense hatred of the

\* Mr. Raikes states, in his "Notes on the Revolt," that "When we had no military force near Kurnaul, and all men watched anxiously the conduct of each local chief, the Newab of Kurnaul went to Mr. Le Bas and addressed him to the following effect, 'Sir, I have spent a sleepless night in meditating on the state of affairs;

I have decided to throw in my lot with yours. My sword, my purse, and my followers are at your disposal.'"

† This advanced detachment consisted of four companies of the First Fusileers, two Horse Artillery guns, and a squadron of the Ninth Lancers.





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Native races which afterwards bore such bitter fruit, for even then they were beginning to see before them evidences of the destroying hand of the Insurgent.

May 27.

Death of  
General  
Anson.

With the last of the European Regiments General Anson left Umballah, on the 25th of May; and, on the 26th, he was lying at Kurnaul, helpless and hopeless, on the bed of death, in the mortal agonies of the great pest of the country. On the following day, Sir Henry Barnard arrived in Camp, a little after midnight, just in time, as he said, to receive the dying farewell of his chief. Anson was all but gone; but he recognised his friend, and, in a faint voice, articulated: "Barnard, I leave you the command. You will say how anxious I have been to do my duty. I cannot recover. May success attend you. God bless you. Good-bye."\* And another hour had not spent itself before General George Anson had passed beyond the reach of all human praise or censure. The great responsibility thrown upon the Chief-Commander had filled him with mental anxiety, which had increased the depressing influences of over-fatigue and exposure to the climate in the most trying season of the year. He had evinced much tender consideration for the health of his men, and he was one of the first to be struck down by the fiery blasts of the Indian summer. He was a brave soldier and an honest gentleman; and another brave soldier and honest gentleman, whilst the corpse lay unburied in the next room, wrote a letter, saying: "I solemnly declare to you on my character as an officer, who, at all events, came to this country with the prestige of recent service with him, that not an hour has been lost in getting the

\* Letter of Sir H. Barnard to Sir Charles Yorke, May 27, 1857. one A.M. on the 27th; at 2.15 he breathed his last." Cholera was the immediate cause of his death. "This," he adds, "was at half-past





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small force now advanced as far as Paniput, and I hope to keep pushing on, as fast as I can get them up, on Delhi. The day I heard of the disaster at Delhi—which at Umballah preceded any account from Meerut—I immediately despatched my son, who rode to Simlah during the night to warn the Commander-in-Chief, and bring him down. He has himself detailed all his movements to you, and I cannot but entertain hope, had he lived, you would have taken a different view of his conduct, and not attributed any want of energy to him. Whatever might have been accomplished by an immediate rush from Meerut could not be expected from Umballah. The European troops were all in the Hills. Nothing but three regiments of Native troops and some Artillery Europeans were at the latter place; and when the Regiments on the Hills were assembled, the General was met by protests against his advance by the leading Staff and Medical Officers of his Army. The Commissariat declared their utter inability to move the troops; the Medical men represented theirs to provide the requisite attendants and bearers. Still matters went on. Troops were moved as fast as could be done, and arrangements made to meet the difficulty of bearers. Ammunition had to be procured from Phillour, for the men had not twenty rounds in their pouches, and none in store; and the Artillery were inefficient, as their reserve waggons were all at Loodhianah. It is only this day that I expect the necessary supply of ammunition to arrive at Umballah. I have determined (I say *I*, for poor Anson could only recognise me and hand me over the command when I arrived last night) not to wait for the siege-train.”\*

\* Sir Henry Barnard to Sir John Lawrence, May 27, 1857. MS.





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General Bar-  
nard in com-  
mand.

Thus passed away from the scene one of its chief actors, just as the curtain had risen on the great drama of British action. With what success Anson might have played his distinguished part can now be only conjectured. There are those who believe that alike in wisdom and integrity he far outshone all his colleagues in the Supreme Council, and that when the crisis arrived he took in the situation and measured the work to be done with an accuracy and precision which none beside, soldier or civilian, brought to bear upon the opening incidents of the War.\* Little time was allowed to him to recover from the first shock of the storm before it overwhelmed and destroyed him. But it would be unjust to estimate what he did, or what he was capable of doing, by the measuring-rod of those who, during that eventful fortnight, believed that the recovery of Delhi was to be accomplished by the prompt movement of a small and imperfectly equipped British force. It is not in cotemporary utterances that we are to look for a just verdict. We must put aside all thought, indeed, of what even the wisest and the strongest said in the first paroxysm of perplexity, when all men looked to the Chief of the Army to do what then seemed to be easy, and found that it was not done. How difficult it really was will presently appear. And though the result of a sudden

\* See the statements of the author of the "Red Pamphlet." "It was a common practice to sneer at General Anson as a mere Horse Guards' General, as one who had gained his honours at Newmarket. But it is nevertheless a fact that this Horse Guards' General, by dint of application and perseverance, made himself so thoroughly a master of his profession, that, when the mutiny broke out, he drew up a plan of operations, which his successor, a Crimean General, carried out in all its details,

rejecting as crude and ridiculous the suggestions sent up by the collective wisdom of Calcutta." History may not unwillingly accept this; but when it is said that General Anson, "when brought, in both the Councils"—that is, the Executive and Legislative Councils—"face to face with men who had made legislation for India the study of their lives, distanced them all," one cannot help being somewhat startled by the boldness of the assertion.



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blow struck at Delhi might have been successful, it is impossible, with our later knowledge of subsequent events to guide us, not to believe that in the month of May the risk of failure was greater than the fair prospect of success. And we may be sure that if Anson had flung himself headlong upon the stronghold of the enemy and failed, he would have been stigmatised as a rash and incapable general, ignorant of the first principles of war.

Perhaps the judgment of Lord Canning on these initial delays and their causes may be accepted as sound and just. "The protracted delay," he wrote, "has been caused, as far as I can gather from private letters from General Anson since I last wrote, by waiting for the siege-train, and by want of carriage for the Europeans. As regards the siege-train, I believe it to have been an unwise delay. We shall crush Delhi more easily, of course; but I do not believe that we should have been exposed to any reverse for want of a siege-train, and the time lost has cost us dear indeed. As to the carriage and Commissariat, it is impossible, in the absence of all information, to say how far the delay was avoidable and blameable. It would have been madness to move a European force at this season with any deficiency of carriage (with cholera, too, amongst them), but I greatly doubt whether General Anson was well served in this matter of carriage. From many letters from Head Quarters which have been before me, I am satisfied that, with the exception of one young officer,\* there was not a man on the Army Staff who gave due thought to the political dangers of delay and to

Summing up  
of Lord Canning.

\* It need scarcely be said that the officer here indicated was Captain, now (1869) Colonel, Norman, who has abundantly justified all the high opinions of his character then entertained.





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the perils which hung over us elsewhere as long as no move was made upon Delhi. With the Staff, the Medical Staff especially, arguing the necessity of completeness, and none of them apparently conscious of the immense value of time, it is very probable that time was lost. On this subject you will see a letter from Sir John Lawrence to the Commander-in-Chief. It is very earnest and practical, like all that comes from him, and I wish with all my heart that he had been nearer to Head Quarters. His counsels and his thorough knowledge of the country would have been invaluable. You must bear in mind, however, in regard to his estimate of the time which should have been sufficient to put the army in motion, that a great change was made in the Commissariat three years ago, when the Transport establishments were given up, and it was determined to trust henceforward to hiring beasts for the occasion. We are now making the first experiment of this change. Economically, it was a prudent one, and in times of ordinary war might work well; but I shall be surprised if General Anson were not greatly impeded by it. Could it have been foreseen that our next operations would be against our own regiments and subjects, no sane man would have recommended it."

From the death-bed of General Anson Sir Henry Barnard had received his instructions to take command of the Delhi Field Force. And taking that command, he cast up at once the difficulties of his position. He thought that if Anson's death had not been accelerated, his last moments had been embittered, by the reproaches of eager-minded civilians, who could not measure military difficulties as they are measured by soldiers; and he felt that, in the





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execution of his duty to his country, he might bring like censure upon himself. He was in a novel and wholly unanticipated position,\* and he felt that he was expected to do what was impossible. But he went resolutely at the work before him; and flung himself into it with an amount of energy and activity which excited the admiration and surprise of much younger men. He determined, on the morning of the 27th, not to wait for the siege-train, but, after exchanging his six-pounders for eight-pounders, to march on to Delhi, forming a junction on the way with the Meerut force under Brigadier Wilson. "So long as I exercise any power," he wrote to Lawrence on the day after Anson's death, "you may rest assured that every energy shall be devoted to the objects I have now in view, viz., concentrating all the force I can collect, at Delhi, securing the bridge at Baghput, and securing our communications with Meerut. For those objects all is now in actual motion. The last column left Umballah last night, and the siege-train will follow under escort, provided by Mr. Barnes. I have noticed to the Commissariat that supplies will be required, and hope that, when within two days' march of Delhi, our presence may have the influence you anticipate, and you may soon hear of our being in possession of the place." On the 31st he wrote from Gurrounda: "I am preparing with the Commanding Engineer the plan of the position to take up

\* "It is a novel position," he wrote to Sir John Lawrence, "for an officer to find himself placed in who comes to the country prepared to treat its army as his own; to make every allowance for the difference of constitution; to encourage its past good deeds and honourable name; to

have 'side blows of reproof,' because he has not treated them with the utmost severity and rather sought occasion to disgrace than endeavour to support them. That I have endeavoured to support them I fully admit, and, if a fault, I must bear the blame."—*MS. Correspondence.*





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when we reach Delhi, and hope that no let or hindrance will prevent our being ready to act upon the place by the 5th."

22/ The force from Umballah was now in full march upon Delhi. The scorching heat of the summer, which was taking terrible effect upon the health of the European soldiery, forbade much marching in the daytime. The fierce sun beat down upon the closed tents of our people, and as they lay in weary sleep, or vainly courting it, there was stillness, almost as of death, in our camp. But with the coolness of evening Life returned. The lassitude was gone. Men emerged from their tents and were soon in all the bustle and preparation of the coming march. The clear starlit nights are said to have been "delicious."\* But as the English soldier marched on beneath that great calm canopy of heaven, there was within him the turmoil and the bitterness of an avenging thirst for blood. It fared ill with those against whom charges were brought of inflicting injury upon fugitives from Delhi. Some villagers, believed to be thus guilty, were seized, tried, condemned, and executed amidst every possible indignity that could be put upon them by our soldiers under the approving smiles of their officers.† And ever as they marched on, there was an eager desire to find criminals and to execute judgment upon them; and it was not easy for the hands of authority to restrain the retributive impulses of our people.

\* See the "History of the Siege of Delhi, by One who Served there" for a very animated account of the march.

† "The fierceness of the men increased every day, often venting itself on the camp-servants, many of whom ran away. The prisoners,

during the few hours between their trial and execution, were unceasingly tormented by the soldiers. They pulled their hair, pricked them with their bayonets, and forced them to eat cow's flesh, while officers stood by approving."—*History of the Siege of Delhi by One who Served there.*





CSL

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The day of action was now not far distant; and all believed that it would be a day of signal retribution. "Most of the men," it has been said, "believed that one battle would decide the fate of the mutinous regiments. They would fight in the morning; they would drink their grog in Delhi at night."\* Even the sick, in the hospital tents, sat up, declared that they were well, and with feeble voices implored to be discharged that they might be led against the hated enemy. But Barnard's force was weak, and impatient as were his troops to push forward, it was necessary that they should form a junction with Wilson's brigade, which was advancing from Meerut, on the other side of the river. What that brigade had done since the disastrous night of the 10th of May must now be briefly related.

\* "The History of the Siege of Delhi, by One who Served there."





## CHAPTER VI.

STATE OF MEERUT—THE SAPPERS AND MINERS—DEFENCE OF ROORKHEE—  
COLONEL BAIRD SMITH—MUTINY OF THE SAPPERS—MARCH OF WILSON'S  
BRIGADE—BATTLES OF THE HINDUN—JUNCTION WITH BARNARD—BATTLE  
OF BUDLEE-KA-SERAI—POSITION BEFORE DELHI.

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Meerut after  
the Outbreak.  
May 12—27.

ON the day after that dreadful night at Meerut, which witnessed the first horrors of the revolt, it was the effort of the authorities to concentrate all the surviving Europeans, and such property as could be saved, within the English quarter of the great Cantonment. All the outlying picquets and sentries were therefore recalled; and all who lived beyond the new line of defence were brought in and lodged in a capacious public building used as the Artillery School of Instruction, and known as the Dum-dumma. There also the treasure was brought from the Collectorate, and safely guarded against the plunderers, who were roving about the place. For the predatory classes were now making high festival, the escaped convicts from the gaols, the Goojurs from the neighbouring villages, and all the vile scum and refuse of the bazaars were glorying in the great paralysis of authority which had made crime so easy and so profitable. From the Cantonment the great harvest of rapine stretched out into the surrounding district. There was no respect of persons, races, or creeds. All who had anything to lose and lacked





strength to defend it, were ruthlessly despoiled by the marauders. Travellers were stopped on the highway; the mails were plundered; houses were forcibly entered and sacked, and sometimes all the inmates butchered.\* And so entirely had all semblance of British authority disappeared, that it was believed that the English in Meerut had been slain to a man.†

Meanwhile, with the proverbial rapidity of evil tidings, news had travelled up from Delhi, which left no doubt of the total defeat of the English, the Proclamation of the Padishah, and the concentration of the rebel troops, who, it was believed, would soon return to Meerut with all the immense resources of the great magazine at their command. And presently fugitives came in with the sad details of mutiny and massacre, and exciting narratives of their own providential escapes.‡ All this increased the

\* Take the following illustration from the Official Report of Mr. Commissioner Williams: "Ram-dyal, a prisoner confined in the Civil Gaol under a decree for arrears of rent, hastened to his village, Bhoj-poor, during the night of the 10th, and the next day at daybreak collected a party and attacked a money-lender, who had a decree against him, and murdered him and six of his household."

† See description of the state of Meerut after the outbreak given by Major G. W. Williams in his "Narrative of Events." "I found the whole of the station south of the Nullah and Begum's Bridge abandoned, for here the storm that was to shake India to its basis first broke out, and the ravages there visible were, strange to say, not accomplished by bands of soldiery formidable from their arms and discipline, but by mobs of wretched rabble (hundred of whom would have been instantaneously scattered by a few rounds of grape), and this in the face of an overwhelming European

force. The General of Division, with several officers, inhabited one of the Horse Artillery barracks, whilst most of the residents occupied the Field Magazine, now universally known as the far-famed Dum-Dumma, an enclosed space of about two hundred yards square, with walls eight feet high, a ditch and four bastions at each corner. Thus strengthened, it was defensible against any number of rabble insurgents unprovided with heavy guns or mortars. So completely were the rest of the cantonments deserted, that many Natives believed that every European had been exterminated, and their power being unseen, unfelt, was readily supposed to have been subverted."

‡ Among those who escaped from Delhi, but perished on the way, was the gallant leader of the little party that defended the great Delhi Magazine. It is stated that Willoughby was murdered, with several companions, by the inhabitants of a village near the Hindun river.





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general consternation. It was plain now that there was wide-spread revolt. All civil authority was practically suspended; so Martial Law was proclaimed in the joint names of General Hewitt and Mr. Greathed; and the first who tasted the ready justice of the improvised gallows was the butcher from the bazaar, who had brutally murdered Mrs. Chambers in her house. But this seems to have been an isolated act of vigour, due rather to the energy of an individual than to the joint authority from which the edict had proceeded.\*

The Sappers  
and Miners.

On the 16th an incident occurred which increased the general consternation. Sixty miles from Meerut, on the banks of the Jumna, lies Roorkee, the Headquarters of the Engineering science of the country. There the great Thomason College, with its famous workshops, was in all the bustle and animation of its varied mechanical industry. There was the centre of the Irrigation Department, whence issued the directing authority that controlled the great system of Canal Works which watered the thirsty land. There, too, was posted the regiment of Sappers and Miners—trained and educated native military Engineers under European officers. It was a great thriving bee-hive; and that month of May found the workers in all their wonted peaceful activity, with plans and projects suited to the atmosphere of quiet times, and no thought of coming danger to disturb the even tenor of daily life. "No community in the world," wrote one, who may be said to have been the chief of this prosperous colony, "could have been living in greater security of life and property," when

Baird Smith.

\* *Aule*, page 73.





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Major Fraser, who commanded the Sappers and Miners, received an express from the General at Meerut, ordering him to proceed by forced marches to that station, as the Sepoy regiments were in open revolt. When intelligence of this summons reached Colonel Baird Smith, he at once suggested that the regiment should be despatched by the route of the Ganges Canal. To this Fraser readily agreed; and within six hours boats were prepared sufficient for the conveyance of a thousand men. The regiment mustered only seven hundred and thirteen, who were equipped and ready for the journey, when another express came ordering two companies to stand fast at Roorkhee, for the protection of that place. So eventually some five hundred men set out, under Fraser, for Meerut.

Then came to Roorkhee the news of the Delhi massacre. And as the Sappers were moving down to Meerut, Baird Smith was making admirable arrangements for the defence of the great engineering dépôt, in which he took such earnest and loving interest. Officially, he was Superintendent-General of Irrigation in the North-Western Provinces; a most useful functionary, great in all the arts of peace, and with a reputation which any man might be proud to possess. But the man of much science now grew at once into the man of war, and Roorkhee became a garrison under his command. Not an hour was lost.\*

The Defence  
of Roorkhee

\* "It was at daybreak that I received the first intimation of the Meerut mutiny and massacre. When I went to the porch of my house to mount my horse for a morning ride, I found Medlicott, our geological professor, sitting there, looking oppressed with some painful intelligence, and, on my asking what the matter was, he then told me that about an hour before, Fraser, the

Commandant of the Sappers and Miners, had received an express from the General at Meerut, ordering him to proceed by forced marches to that place. I immediately suggested the Ganges Canal route instead of forced marches, which would have fatigued the men much, and made them unfit for service."—*MS. Correspondence of Col. Baird Smith.*





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Those indeed were times when to lose an hour might be to lose everything; and Baird Smith knew that there was no emergency against which he might not be called upon to provide. Even the companies of Sappers, which had been left for the defence of Roorkee, might soon become a source of infinite danger. It was soon settled that the workshops should become the citadel, to which women and children might be removed; and there, on the 16th of May, all these helpless ones, little less than a hundred\* in number, were comfortably accommodated in the several rooms, whilst to each of our male people some fitting duty was assigned. Their number was not much greater than that of the women and children; and half of them were non-combatants, clerks attached to the establishment, and little accustomed to the use of arms. The trained soldiers were but about fifty† in number, with eight or ten good officers; and of these Baird Smith took the command, telling them off into different guards, and organising different departments, so that nothing was omitted or neglected that could add to the defence of the place.

The Sapper companies, suspected of disloyalty from the first, were placed under their officers in charge of the College buildings. Baird Smith had talked to some of their leading men, endeavouring to allay the obvious excitement among them by friendly explanations and assurances; and after that, he said, "I could do no more." The wretched story of the bone-dust flour was rife amongst them, and there was a vague fear, as in other places, of a meditated attack

\* There were on the 28th of May fifty women and forty-three children, according to the Disposition List of the Roorkee Garrison of that day.

† Baird Smith, in a letter dated

May 30th, says that the trained soldiers were only about thirty, but the numbers given in the text is on the authority of the nominal roll of the garrison.



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by the British, taking them by surprise, disarming, and then destroying them. In such a state of feeling every circumstance of an exceptional character is misinterpreted into an indication of offence, and when it was known to the Sappers at Roorkee that the Sirmoor Battalion—a regiment of Goorkahs commanded by Major Charles Reid—was coming down from Dhera, on its way to Meerut,\* a terrible suspicion took possession of them; they believed it was a hostile movement against themselves. When this became known to Baird Smith, he sent an express to Reid requesting him not to march upon Roorkee, but to make straight for the Canal, and at once to embark in the boats that were waiting for him. Reid grasped the position at once, and acted upon the suggestion. Pretending that he had missed his way, he asked for a guide to lead him straight to the banks of the Canal, and so they marched on to the boats without increasing the general alarm. And, said Reid, Baird Smith “was right beyond doubt, and his good judgment and forethought may have been—indeed, I feel pretty sure was—the means of saving the place and the lives of the ladies and children.”†

Meanwhile, the main body of the Sappers, under

Mutiny of the  
Sappers.

\* Immediately on receiving intelligence of the state of affairs at Meerut, Baird Smith had written to Major Reid, warning him that his services would most probably be required at that place, and offering to provide boats for the regiment. A day or two afterwards the summons came from Head-Quarters.

† Major Reid has recorded that whilst he was embarking his Goorkahs—“almond-eyed Tartars,” as Baird Smith described them—several men of the Sappers came from Meerut and entered into communication with them. “I took no notice at first,”

he adds, “but as soon as they moved on, I called up a couple of my men and asked them what the Sappers had said to them. One little fellow replied, ‘They wanted to know if we were going over to Meerut to eat the ottah (flour) sent up especially for the Goorkahs by the Governor-General; that the ottah at Meerut was nothing but ground bullocks’ bones.’ ‘And what was your reply?’ I asked. ‘I said,’ was the answer, ‘the regiment was going wherever it was ordered—we obey the bugle-call.’”





1857.  
May 15.

Major Fraser, had marched into Meerut. Not without some feelings of suspicion and alarm, they had moved down the great Canal; but their behaviour had, on the whole, been orderly, and when, on the 15th, they arrived at their destination, there was no reason to doubt their fidelity. Brought, however, into the immediate presence of a large body of European troops, who had the blood of their slaughtered countrymen to avenge, they were in that excitable, inflammable state, which needs only a single spark to draw forth the latent fire. It soon fell. It seems that the Commandant had promised them that they should retain charge of their own ammunition. He had no intention of breaking faith with them; but he desired that, for greater security, it should be stored in a bomb-proof building, which had been placed at his disposal. If the object of this had been carefully explained to the men, they would probably have assented without a murmur. But when, on the day after their arrival, the ammunition was being conveyed to its destination, the Sepoys suspected treachery, resented the removal of the magazine, stopped the laden carts, and broke into open mutiny. An Afghan Sepoy fired his piece from behind the Commandant, and Fraser fell, shot through the back. Others fired at Adjutant Mansell, but missed him; and the Native non-commissioned officer who was in attendance on Fraser was killed in the affray. Having done this, the mutineers broke and fled, but their victory was but short-lived. A troop of the Carabineers and some Horse-Artillery guns were let loose upon them. The greater number escaped; but some fifty of the fugitives were overtaken outside cantonments among the sand-hills, and were killed. And so the Sappers and Miners, as a regiment, ceased to





exist. Two companies, however, which were at work in another part of Meerut, were disarmed, and set to work on the fortification of the Dum-Dumma. 1857.  
May 15—24.

After this, there was, for a time, a lull at Meerut. The destruction of the Sappers was, perhaps, regarded as a cause of congratulation and a source of confidence, and as the advancing month brought with it no new alarms, and it seemed that the mutineers were resolved to concentrate their strength at Delhi, and not to emerge thence—as people whose fighting powers were greater behind walls—things began gradually to assume a cheerful complexion, and the inmates of the Artillery School ceased to tremble as they talked of what was to come. But there was vexation in high places. The telegraph line between Meerut and Agra was sometimes, if not always open; and Lieutenant-Governor Colvin, who never could lose sight of the fact that there were a battalion of English Rifles, a regiment of English Dragoons, and two batteries of English Artillery at Meerut, was constantly urging them, for God's sake, to do something. Thinking, after a while, that it was quite useless to exhort General Hewitt to put forth any activity in such a case, Colvin addressed himself to Brigadier Wilson, thus virtually setting aside the General of Division. Nettled by this, Hewitt telegraphed to Agra respectfully to request that the Lieutenant-Governor would transmit through him orders to his subordinates when such a step could cause no delay. But the Lieutenant-Governor still continued to telegraph to the Brigadier, beseeching him to go out in force so as to keep open the main road and to prevent dangerous combinations of revolted troops throughout the Doab. "What plan," he had asked, "does

Inactivity at Meerut.





1857. May 15—24. Brigadier Wilson propose for making the Meerut force actively useful in checking an advance down the Doab? If the mutineers leave Delhi in force, it is plain that no wing of a corps, or even a single corps could stay their march. Therefore a move in strength to Bolundshuhur seems to be the right one." And now the Agra authorities continued to urge these movements, but were met by protests that it would be inexpedient to divide the force. "The only plan," said Wilson, "is to concentrate our European force, and to attack Delhi. He had consulted," he said, "with all the European officers in the force, and they were unanimously of opinion that any movement of the force from Meerut would be highly imprudent without the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, as it might counteract any movement that he might be forming." "To move in full strength," he added, "would involve the abandonment of all the sick, women and children and [            ]." Then came the inevitable story that "the Commissariat report that they cannot supply carriage for a force of half the strength;" and yet it was, numerically, but a small force that would have taken the field.\* So Colvin yielded the point, and no longer looked to Meerut for assistance

It has been shown that, as one result of the inactivity of this beautiful force of all arms, a belief gained ground in the adjacent country that the English at Meerut had all been killed to a man. Although the surrounding villages were swarming with robber-clans, who had murdered our people and sacked our

\* In this telegraphic message it is stated that the force consisted of—Rifles, 700; Carabineers, mounted, 380; dismounted, 100; Artillery recruits, undrilled, 364. As some portion of the efficient, and all the inefficient men would have been left in Meerut, the number for field-service would not have exceeded 1000.





houses, it was not until the 24th of May, two weeks after the great tragedy, that a small party of our Dragoons was sent out to chastise the inmates of one of these nests of plunderers. On that day, for the first time, the English magistrate, Mr. Johnston, obtained the assistance of troops to enable him to suppress the overflowing crime of the district. The village of Iktecapore was then burnt, and the people learnt that English soldiers were still alive in Meerut. But the demonstration was an ill-fated one. For Johnston, who had gone out with the troops, riding homewards in hot haste, when the work was done, eager to be again actively employed, was fearfully injured by the falling of his horse, and three days afterwards expired.

1857.

May 24.

Death of Mr.  
Johnston.

But the Meerut Brigade had now done with in- action. The "orders of the Commander-in-Chief," for which it had been waiting, had arrived.\* It had been supposed for some time that the road between Kurnaul and Meerut was closed; but in the camp of the Commander-in-Chief there was an officer, equal to any difficult work, who volunteered to carry despatches to the latter place, and to bring back the much-needed information of the state of Wilson's Brigade. This was Lieutenant William Hodson, a man of rare energy of character, who was then serving with the First (Company's) Fusiliers. He had been, years before, one of that little band of pioneers who, under Henry Lawrence, had cleared the way for the civilisation of the Punjab, and he had afterwards risen to the command of that famous Guide Corps, the institution of which had been one

William  
Hodson.\* See *ante*, p. 158.





1857.  
May.

of the most cherished and the most successful projects of his accomplished chief. But, amidst a career of the brightest promise, a heavy cloud had gathered over him, and he had rejoined his old regiment as a subaltern, chafing under a sense of wrong, and eager to clear himself from what he declared to be unmerited imputations upon his character.\* This gloom was upon him when General Anson, discerning his many fine qualities, offered him a place in the Department of the Quartermaster-General, and especially charged him with the intelligence branch of its duties, in prosecution of which he was to raise a body of a hundred horse and fifty foot.† This was at Umballah, to which place he had marched down with his regiment from Dugshai. He was soon actively at work. He hastened down to Kurnaul, and there picking up some horsemen of the Jheend Rajah's Contingent, rode into Meerut, a distance of seventy-six miles, delivered his despatches, took a bath, a break-

\* It would not consort with the nature of this work to enter into an elaborate inquiry into the justice or injustice of the treatment to which Lieutenant Hodson was subjected by Lord Dalhousie's Government. It is right, however, to state that some misapprehension appears to prevail as to the alleged offence on account of which the Commandant of the Guides, who was also a Deputy Commissioner in the Peshawar district, was remanded to his regiment. He was not removed from the command of the Guides in consequence of any irregularity in his accounts, but he was removed altogether from the Punjab on account of his treatment of an influential Eusofzye chief. It was the Court of Directors that decreed him to be unfit to hold any office of trust. And I must protest strongly against the charges brought by Lieutenant Hod-

son's fraternal biographer against certain high Punjabee officials, including Sir Herbert Edwardes, who has gone to his rest whilst this volume has been growing under my pen. It is impossible to believe that such men were influenced by feelings of envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness. Indeed, Mr. Hodson in no small measure furnishes his own refutation of such charges, when he says in one sentence that his brother was disliked because he was a protégé of Sir Henry Lawrence, and in another that Sir Herbert Edwardes was his chief opponent. Edwardes was the last man in India to be prejudiced against a favourite of Henry Lawrence.—See a further note in the Appendix.

† This order was subsequently extended to the raising of "an entire new Regiment of Irregular Horse."



1857.  
May 27.

fast, and a little sleep, and then rode back with papers for the Commander-in-Chief. Meanwhile, the bulk of the Meerut brigade was in the bustle of preparation for an advance, under Wilson, to join the column which was moving down from the hills to the attack of Delhi. Many then, who had chafed under the restraints of the past fortnight, took fresh heart, and panted with the excitement of coming action. In high spirits, the troops marched out of cantonments on the night of the 27th of May. The column consisted of two squadrons of the Carabineers; a wing of the Sixtieth Rifles; Scott's light field-battery; Tombs's troop of Horse Artillery; two eighteen-pounder guns, all manned by Europeans; with some Native Sappers and Irregular Horse. Brigadier Archdale Wilson commanded the force, and Mr. Hervey Greathed accompanied it as civil officer. And with them rode, at the head of an improvised body of Horse, Jan Fishan Khan, the Afghan chief, who, unlike most of his countrymen, thought that he was bound to do something in return for the British pension, which supported him and his house.\*

The marches of the two first days were uneventful. No enemy appeared, and Greathed believed that the rebel force would not attempt to give us battle except before the walls of Delhi. But when, on the 30th of May, Wilson's force reached Ghazee-ood-deen Nuggur,† near the river Hindun, there were

May 30.  
The battles  
on the  
Hindun.

\* The feeling generally, at this time, and in some instances the conduct, of the Afghan pensioners, of whom there was quite a colony in Loodhianah, denoted the ingratitude of the race. See Mr. Ricketts's interesting Loodhianah report, "Papers relating to the Mutiny in the Punjab, 1857."

† The position is thus described

by Baird Smith in the unpublished fragment of history, to which I have above referred: "This town, of respectable size, and with some ancient traces of walls, stands on the left bank of the Hindun, about a mile from that river. A long causeway carries the grand trunk road across the broad valley, within which the stream, shrunk during the scorching





1857.  
May 30.

signs of a coming struggle. Flushed with success, and confident in their strength, the mutineers had left their stronghold, and had come on to give battle to the Meerut Brigade before its junction with the force from Umballah. They had planted some heavy guns on a ridge to the right of their position, and from this point they opened fire upon our people. Then the eighteen-pounders, under Light, and Scott's field battery, made vigorous answer, and under their cover the British riflemen advanced, and moving along the causeway, came to close quarters with the enemy. For some time a stubborn conflict was maintained; but our Horse Artillery, under Henry Tombs, supported by the Carabineers, dashed to the right, crossed the Hindun, making light of its rugged bank and dangerous bed, and successfully turned the left flank of the enemy. Under the galling fire then poured in upon them the mutineers reeled and staggered, and presently broke. Some took refuge in a village, whence they were driven by our Riflemen, and soon the whole body of the enemy were in ignominious flight towards the walls of Delhi. Five of their guns fell into our hands, and they left many of their fighting men behind them. Our own loss would have been small, but for the explosion of an ammunition-waggon; not by an accident of warfare, but by an act of resolute and sacrificial courage on the part of one of the mutineers. A Sepoy of the Eleventh Regiment deliberately discharged his musket into the

heats of May to a mere rivulet, wanders in a channel of extreme tortuosity, fordable both by infantry and artillery, though, from the prevalence of quicksands, the process is not altogether free from risk of mishap. A suspension bridge spans the stream, and on the right bank the causeway is covered by a toll-house,

capable, if need were, of some defence. Villages, furnishing considerable means of resistance in their mud-walled houses and narrow lanes, are scattered at intervals along the road, and the ground in ridges of sensible magnitude on both banks, but especially on the right."



1857.  
May 30.

midst of the combustibles just as a party of the Rifles, under Captain Andrews, were gallantly seizing the gun to which the cart belonged. The explosion cost the man his life; but Andrews and some of his followers were killed by it, and others were carried wounded from the scene.\* It taught us that among the mutineers were some brave and desperate men, who were ready to court instant death for the sake of the national cause. Many acts of heroism of this kind brighten up the history of the war, and many more were, doubtless, performed, of which History has no record.

May 31.

The mutineers fled in hot haste to Delhi, where they were reviled for their disgraceful failure, and sent back reinforced, to try whether Fortune would help them on another day. Stimulated by promises of large rewards to achieve a great success in honour of the restored monarchy, they again marched to the Hindun. That day was our Whit-Sunday. There was no Church parade. But the morning was ushered in by the most solemn and beautiful of all our Church services—that of the Burial of the Dead. There was genuine sorrow for those who had fallen as they were laid in unconsecrated ground, “a babool tree and a milestone marking the spot.”† Little space was then left for mournful reflections. It was soon known that the Sepoys were returning to the attack. About noon our bugles sounded the alarm. The enemy had taken up a position on the ridge to the right of the Hindun, about a mile from our advanced

\* “The officers that night drank in solemn silence to the memory of the brave departed; and from the manner in which the toast was proposed by Dr. Innes, the surgeon of the regiment, and received by every officer and member of the mess, I am

sure, from his gallantry and other estimable qualities, that the memory of poor Andrews will be long and fondly cherished by them.”—*The Chaplain's (Mr. Rotton's) Narrative.*

† Chaplain's Narrative.





1857.  
May 31.

posts on the bridge. Pushing forward his guns, he opened a heavy fire upon Wilson's force. This was a signal for our advance. The Artillery were sent forward to reply to the enemy's fire—the Rifles, with two of Scott's guns, occupying the head of the bridge. The battle, which then raged for some two hours, was almost wholly an Artillery fight.\* But Cavalry and Infantry were exposed both to the fire of the enemy, and to the more irresistible assaults of the sun. It was the last day of May, one of the hottest days of the year. The fiery blasts of the summer were aggravated by the heat thrown from the smouldering embers of the burnt villages. The thirst of our people was intolerable. Some were smitten down by sun-stroke; others fell exhausted by the way; and there is a suspicion that some were destroyed by water poisoned by the enemy.† But, in spite of all these depressing circumstances, Wilson's troops drove the enemy from their position. When the fire of the mutineers had somewhat slackened, the Brigadier ordered a general advance of his force, and the Sepoys recoiled before it. But although they felt that they could not hold their ground and continue the battle, they did not fly, shattered and broken, as on the preceding day. Having discharged into our advancing columns a tremendous shower of grape-shot, they limbered up their guns before the smoke had dispersed, and fell back in orderly array. Exhausted

\* "The conduct of Tombs's troop yesterday was the admiration of every one; for a long time they were engaged on two sides with the enemy's artillery. Light then got his two eighteen-pounders down to the river-bank and drew off the fire upon himself, and paid it back with interest."—*Hervey Creathed's Letters*. Lieutenant Perkins, of the

Horse Artillery, was killed by a shot from one of the enemy's guns.

† This is stated by Mr. Rotton, who says: "Some were sun-stricken, some slain, and a few, whose cruel thirst induced them to slake it with water provided by the enemy in vessels containing strong corrosive poison, were thus deprived of life."



1857.  
May 31.

by the cruel heat and suffering agonies of thirst, the English soldier could not improve his victory by giving chase to the retiring enemy. The mutineers carried off all their guns and stores, and made good their retreat to Delhi. But they had been thus twice beaten in fair fight by inferior numbers, and had nothing but their disgrace to carry back with them and to lay at the feet of their King.

In the English camp there was great rejoicing; and, as the news spread, all men were gladdened by the thought that the tide now seemed to have turned, and that retribution, which, though delayed, was certain, was now overtaking the enemies of our race and the murderers of our people. The old stern courage had been again asserted, and with the old results. Success had returned to our ranks; and there was special cause for congratulation in the fact that Wilson, with a portion only of the old Meerut Brigade, had been the first to inflict punishment on the rebels, and among them upon some of the very men who had prevailed against us so grievously a little time before. But the situation of the little force on the Hindun was not without its perils. It was doubtful whether our troops, exhausted as they were by the work that they had done under that fiery sky, could successfully sustain another attack, if, as was probable, the enemy should come out again from Delhi, and in increased numbers. But the month of June came in, bringing with it no fresh assaults, but a welcome reinforcement. The Goorkah regiment, nearly five hundred strong, having moved down from Bolundshuhur, marched into Camp, under its gallant Commandant, Major Charles Reid. At first they were taken for a body of the enemy marching upon our rear. But no sooner were they identified than the

June 1.





1857.

June.

Movements  
of Barnard's  
force.

British troops turned out and welcomed them with lusty cheers.\*

Meanwhile the Delhi Field Force, under Barnard, had marched down to Alipore, which lies at a distance of twelve miles from Delhi. It arrived there on the 5th of June, and was halted until the Meerut troops could come up from the Hindun. There had been some want of understanding between the commanders of the two forces as to the nature of the operations and the point of junction. It had been thought, at one time, that it would be strategically expedient to move upon Delhi from both banks of the Jumna; and after the battles of the Hindun, Wilson's force had halted for orders from the chief. Those orders were received on the 4th of June. That evening Wilson commenced his march, and soon after midnight on the morning of the 6th he crossed the Jumna at Baghput. The delay was a source of bitterness to the Umballah troops, who were furiously eager to fall upon the enemy. Fresh tidings of mutiny and murder had reached them, and the blood of officers and men alike was at fever heat. The impatience, however, was but short-lived. Wilson was now close at hand. And already the waiting was bearing good fruit. On the 6th the Siege-train arrived.

June 6.

Arrival of  
Siege-train.

Orders for the equipment of the Train had been received on the 17th of May. On the morning of the 24th, the gates of the Fort were opened. The guns and waggons and the labouring bullocks were all ready. The Sepoys of the Third Regiment at Phil-

\* "The whole force turned out and cheered the regiment into Camp; but my poor little fellows were so dead beat they could not return the hearty cheers with which they were welcomed. 'Get something to eat sharp,' said the Brigadier, 'as we

may have to turn out.' Exhausted as my men were, I certainly was not anxious for a fight, and was thankful the mutineers left us alone that day." — *Unpublished Memoir by Major C. Reid.*





four had volunteered to escort the Train;\* and, with some troopers of the Ninth Irregular Cavalry, they now marched upon the Sutlej. The bridge was still passable, and the Train crossed over. Two hours afterwards the boats, which spanned the river, had been swept away by the flooding waters. But, although the Sepoys of the Third Regiment, who had then the game in their hands, had suffered the Train to cross the bridge, it was known that they were mutinous to the core.† So when the whole line of Ordnance was secure on the other bank of the river, it was quietly explained to the Sepoys of the Third that their services were no longer needed. A Contingent of Horse and Foot had been furnished by the Rajah of Nabha, and it was now ready to relieve the men of the suspected regiments. Under this guard of auxiliaries, with which the detachment of Irregular Cavalry moved forward, the Train laboured on to Umballah, which it reached on the 27th of May. But a new difficulty awaited it there; for, although the guns had arrived, they were useless for want of gunners. A weak company was, therefore, despatched from Ferozpoore by bullock-train, to be afterwards strengthened by recruits from Meerut. Meanwhile, the position of the train was not without its surrounding dangers. The Nusseree battalion, which had been guilty of such shameful defection in the

\* The train consisted of eight eighteen-pounders, four eight-inch howitzers, twelve five-and-a-half-inch mortars, and four eight-inch mortars. (*Norman*). The officer in command of the train was Lieutenant Griffith. Major Kaye commanded the whole detachment.

† This is an instance of what has been called the "inexplicable inconsistency" of the Sepoys, who so

often allowed their best opportunities to escape; but Mr. Ricketts sufficiently affords a clue to it when, in his interesting Loodhianah Report, he says that they were pledged in concert with others to a certain course of procedure, and that no temptation of immediate advantage could induce them to diverge from the programme. The later history of this corps will be found in Book VI.





1857.

June.

hour of our need, had come into Umballah, and the Sepoys of the Fifth were striving to induce the Goorkahs to combine with them to seize the guns and to march to Delhi.\* The plot, however, was frustrated, and the Siege-train passed on safely to Head-Quarters.†

June 7.

Junction with  
the Meerut  
Force.

On the 7th of June, amidst hearty welcomings and warm congratulations, the Meerut contingent marched gaily into Alipore. At one o'clock on the following morning they commenced the march on Delhi, thirsting for the battle. Their scouts had told them that the enemy were strongly posted in front of the approaches to the city, resolute to contest the progress of the British Force. Never since the first English soldier loaded his piece or unsheathed his sword to smite the dark-faced, white-turbanded Moor or Gentoo—not even when Clive's army, a century before, landed in Bengal to inflict retribution on the perpetrators of the great crime of the Black Hole—had our people moved forward under the impulse of such an eager, burning desire to be amongst the murderers of their race, as on that early June morning, when Barnard's fighting men knew that the mutineers of Meerut and Delhi were within their reach. It had been ascertained that the enemy were strongly posted, Infantry and Cavalry, with thirty guns, about six miles from Delhi, at a place called Budlee-ka-Serai, where groups of old houses and walled gardens, once the country residences of some of the nobles of the Imperial Court, supplied positions capable of powerful resistance.† On this place marched Barnard, on the early morning of the 8th of June, along the

\* The Fifth was afterwards disarmed in the presence of two Companies of the Fusiliers.

† On a requisition from Major Kaye

a detachment of Fusiliers was sent to join the escort. The artillery-men from Ferozpoore joined at Karnaul.

† Baird Smith.



1857.  
June.

Grand Trunk Road, with the river on one side and the Western Jumna Canal on the other, whilst Brigadier Hope Grant, with Cavalry and Horse Artillery, crossed the canal and moved down along its right bank with the object of taking the enemy in flank.

June 8.  
Battle of  
Budlee-ka-  
Seraï.

Day was just dawning when Barnard's columns came within fire of the Sepoys' guns. The dispositions which he had made for the attack were excellent, and they were not frustrated by any discovery of a mistaken estimate of the enemy's movements. He found the rebels where he expected to find them. Whilst Showers, with the First Brigade, was to attack upon the right, Graves, with the Second, was to lead his men against the enemy's position on the left; and Grant, on the first sound of the guns, was to re-cross the canal by the bridge in the rear of the rebel-camp, and to take them in flank. The strength of the enemy was known to be in their Artillery. Four heavy guns, Money's Horse Artillery troop, and part of Scott's Battery, were sent in advance to silence their fire, but the guns of the mutineers were of heavier metal than our own, and it was not easy to make an impression on their batteries. For some time the Artillery had the fighting to themselves.\* Officers and men were dropping at their guns, and for a little space it seemed doubtful whether they could hold their own. But the British Infantry now deployed into line; and the inspiring mandate to charge the guns went forth to the Seventy-Fifth. Then Herbert led out his noble regiment, with a ringing cheer, right up to the enemy's batteries, and the

\* "Light, Kaye, and Fagan, with four heavy guns, bore the brunt for some time, until the brigade of infantry came up and got into line."—*Hervey Greathed's Letters*.—Major Kaye was in command.





1857.  
June 8.

Second Europeans followed in support. Nothing could resist the impetuous rush of these English soldiers; but the rebels stood well to their guns, and showed that there were some resolute spirits beneath those dusky skins, and that the lessons they had learnt in our camps and cantonments had not been thrown away. Many fought with the courage of desperation, and stood to be bayoneted at their guns. It was not a time for mercy; if it was sought, it was sternly refused.

Meanwhile the Second Brigade, under Graves, charged the enemy's position on the left, and, about the same time, Hope Grant, whose march had been delayed by the state of the roads along which he had advanced, appeared in the enemy's rear with his Cavalry and Horse Artillery. Thus the programme of the preceding day was acted out in all its parts, and the enemy, attacked on every side, had nothing left to them but retreat. At first, they seem to have fallen back in orderly array; but the Lancers, under Yule, fell upon them so fiercely, and the Horse Artillery guns, though impeded by the water-courses, opened so destructive a fire upon them, that they were soon in panic flight, shattered and hopeless. All the guns, and stores, and baggage which they had brought out from the great city were abandoned; and so our first fight before Delhi ended in an assuring victory.

But the day's work was not done. Barnard saw clearly that it was a great thing to make an impression on the enemy, not easily to be effaced, on the first day of the appearance of the Army of Retribution before the walls of Delhi. The sun had risen, and the fury of the June heats was at its height. Our men had marched through the night, they had fought





1857.

June 8.

a battle, they were worn and weary, and now the fierce sun was upon them, and there had been but little time to snatch any sustaining food, or to abate the thirst of the Indian summer; but the strong spirit within them overbore the weakness of the flesh, and there was no demand to be made upon them by their leader to which they were not prepared to respond. Barnard's soldierly experiences had taught him that even a force so broken as the advance of the enemy at Budlee-ka-Serai, might rally, and that they might have a strong reserve. He determined, therefore, to push onward, and not to slacken until he had swept the enemy back into Delhi, and had secured such a position for his force as would be an advantageous base for future operations. From Budlee-ka-Serai the road diverges into two branches, the one a continuation of the Grand Trunk leading to the suburb of Subzee-mundee, and the other leading to the old British Cantonments. Stretching in front of these two positions, and forming, as it were, the base of a triangle, of which the two roads were the sides, was a long rocky ridge overlooking the city. At the point of divergence, Barnard separated his force, and sending Wilson with one division along the former road, led the other himself down to the Ridge. There he found the enemy posted in some strength with heavy guns; but another dexterous flank movement turned their position, and, before they could change their line, the Sixtieth Rifles, the Second Europeans, and Money's Troop were sweeping along the Ridge; and soon Wilson, who had fought his way through the Subzee-mundee, and driven the enemy from their shelter there, appeared at the other end, and the rebels saw that all was lost. There was nothing left for them now but to seek safety behind the walls of