



was almost too much for me, and I came up here in a palkee. I am still weak, and regain strength very slowly.

Our late journey was a very interesting one in every way. I see some notices of it in the papers—all lies, or at least many lies and many errors. Sir W. Macnaghten has reported of me in terms of praise too strong, more than I deserve. Burnes also is on the same side, but I hear some newspapers are going to assail me; why, I know not, but such is the fashion in these parts. If I can find time, I mean to draw out a short account of the journey I intended it for Col. Cullen, whose good opinion I desire to retain. I can then mention what duty requires me not even in self-defence to mention in a newspaper (not, however, that I am going to answer any of the threatened attacks), and this I shall send open to you that you also may see it. We have with the kafila a Dr. Thomson,² a very excellent young fellow, a chemist, botanist, and geologist, the son of the Glasgow Professor of Chemistry, and not a degenerate one. William has been dangerously ill, and still is very ill; a rush of blood to the head. Only yesterday did he take the favourable turn, and now the least thing would throw him back. It arose from exposure in riding out several marches to meet me when ill, the sun here being very hot. Alas! this is dismal work, nursing him in a room full of all that belonged to poor James. He [J.] has left the reputation of extraordinary talent and extraordinary bravery. It is to me quite affecting to hear the Afghans and others speak of him. 'The young Broadfoot that spoke our language,' they call him, and to compare small with great, the impression left by him on all classes of natives is of the same kind (though less in

² Dr. Thomas Thomson was born on December 4, 1817. He gave proof of unusual talent and observation in science at the early age of seventeen. He joined the medical service of the E.I.C., arrived in Calcutta in 1840, and was appointed Curator of the Museum of the Asiatic Society. He was soon transferred to the medical charge of a party under orders for Afghanistan, and accompanied the convoy under the command of Capt. Broadfoot. In 1841 he was appointed to the 27th N.I., and, with the rest of the officers of that regiment, was made prisoner by the Afghans on the capitulation of Ghazni.

In 1845 he served with the army in the Sutlej campaign. Two years later he was appointed a member of the com-

mission to define the boundary between Kashmir and Thibet. The other members were Major Cunningham, B.E., and Capt. H. Strachey. He took every opportunity of collecting information about the flora and physical geography of the various countries he saw, and did much work in after years in conjunction with Sir Joseph Hooker. In 1854 he was appointed Superintendent of the Botanical Gardens in Calcutta, and professor of botany in the Medical College. He retired in 1861, returned to India for a short time in 1871 with the party sent there to observe the eclipse, and died in 1878. He was the author of *Western Himalaya and Tibet* (London, 1852).



degree) as that left by Elphinstone, which is altogether extraordinary even now.

Sir W. Macnaghten's report to the Government of India of the arrival of the convoy is as follows :

To the Secretary to the Government of India, Secret Department.

I have the honour to report, for the information of the Right Hon. the Governor-General in Council, the safe arrival at Cabul of his Majesty Shah Shoojah's family.

This event has been a source of much gratification to his Majesty, and it will, I trust, have a beneficial effect throughout the country. To the energy, tact, and judgment displayed by Capt. Broadfoot, who had the superintendence of the family, must mainly be ascribed their having overcome the formidable obstacles opposed to their progress, and their having escaped the serious dangers to which they were exposed throughout a long and harassing march.

I introduced Capt. Broadfoot to the Shah yesterday evening, and his Majesty was pleased to express to that officer, in the most flattering terms, his gratitude for the kind, judicious, and considerate treatment which had been shown to the Royal Family, and as a mark of his approbation his Majesty conferred a horse, a sword, and a dress of honour upon Capt. Broadfoot, which I trust, under the very peculiar circumstances of the case, he may be permitted to retain. I have &c.

W. H. MACNAGHTEN,

Envoy and Minister.

Broadfoot's conduct of the convoy, though highly approved by Government, was attacked in certain newspapers, and in a subsequently written history of the Sikhs is unfavourably criticised. He took no notice of the attacks ; but, fearing lest some paragraphs might be copied into English newspapers, and cause pain or anxiety to his friends, he wrote the following letter to Mr. Loch, a director of the E.I.C., in which will be found a favourable opinion as to his management expressed by Gen., afterwards Sir Harry, Smith, as well as some other matters of general interest :

Cabool : August 4, 1841

My friend Mr. Thomason,³ the Secretary to the Agra Government, lately sent me a note to him from Mr. Robertson, the Lieut.-

³ James Thomason, of the Bengal Civil Service, an eminent member of that distinguished body of public servants, was appointed a writer in 1821,



Governor, inclosing one from Gen. Smith, the Adjutant-General of the Queen's troops, to whom I am altogether unknown. The General had just received accounts of the early part of our journey, and of the suppression of a mutiny of part of our little force near Lahore, and he expressed himself of me, as a soldier, in terms which, though I could hardly feel I deserved [them], yet I confess gratified me exceedingly; for, as Mr. Robertson said in writing to Thomason, it was indeed 'Laudari a laudato,' Gen. Smith being reckoned one of the first men in the Royal Army. It was he who finally put down the Caffirs in the late war at the Cape, and, widely as opinions differ as to the justice of that war, they were unanimous among professional men as to the ability and vigour of Gen. (then Col.) Smith's operations.

There is much to interest one in this country. I am still too superficially acquainted with what is going on to have any positive opinions, but I cannot help thinking we leave the financial part of the business too much out of view.

One good effect from this occupation of a poor country by the Bengal Army will be, that a searching economy on a large scale will be forced on the Supreme Government. They will have to do throughout the system what Col. Cullen, under so many diffi-

and held a variety of offices of the usual description till 1840, when he took leave to England.

On his return to India in 1841 he was appointed Secretary to the Government N.W.P.; next year he became a member of the Sadr (Sudder) Board of Revenue, and in 1843 he was promoted to the important position of Secretary to the Government of India in the secret, political, legislative, judicial, and revenue departments.

Mr. R. N. Cust has favoured me with the following remarks: 'James Thomason was Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department under Lord Ellenborough, and succeeded Sir George Clerk as Lieut.-Governor of the N.W.P., and occupied that post ten years, when in 1853 he was appointed Governor of Madras, but he died at Bareilly before he took up the appointment.

He carried out all Robert Bird's reforms in the Revenue Department

—settlement and collection. Under his guidance John Lawrence, Robert Montgomery, Donald Macleod, John Thornton, George Edmonstone, and many others learnt their lesson, and introduced the same system into the Punjab. Mr. Thomason started the Ganges Canal in concert with Cantley. He reformed and improved every department of government, and introduced a high tone into the service.'

Lord Dalhousie's estimate of his value may be gathered from the following extract from the order in which his death was announced: 'Conspicuous ability, devotion to the public service, and a conscientious discharge of every duty, have marked each step of his honourable course; while his surpassing administrative capacity, his extended knowledge of affairs, his clear judgment, his benevolence of character and suavity of demeanour, have adorned and exalted the high position which he was wisely selected to fill.'



culties, and with such signal success, accomplished in the Madras Commissariat. The more I see of the service in different parts of India, the more highly do I estimate his services to the State.

Herat is occupying much attention at present in consequence of the late news from Persia. Our error was in at first guaranteeing its independence. During the siege our succour should have been given on condition that, on the death of Kamran, it should revert to Cabool as a lapsed appanage; such terms would then have been thought liberal. It is now a great difficulty, for, as Sir J. McNeill justly says in one of his printed letters, 'the case of Herat involves that of all Afghanistan.'

But this difficulty, and the many others arising from our advance beyond the Indus, should be fully looked in the face, their cost estimated, and their solution provided for. The greatest caution should be used, precipitation would be very dangerous, but delay in commencing is equally so; the present makeshift policy is ruinous in its expense, and leaves us at the end of the year nearly where we were at the beginning, only poorer.

Major Todd has just left; he is about to memorialise your Court, and he has certainly a strong case. I know too little to judge between him and the Government of India, but the latter seem to me to have committed the grievous mistake of punishing an error of judgment as they would a crime. In distant situations much discretion is necessarily left to the local authorities, and in critical circumstances the necessary self-possession and nice balance of judgment are hardly to be looked for where the fear of ruin for life is felt, if the opinion formed does not coincide with that of a superior a thousand miles off. It is to be regretted, therefore, that the Government did not transfer Major Todd, if his judgment proved unequal to his situation, to a post where he would be more a mere executive officer. That such precipitation should have been suffered by so just and temperate a man as Lord Auckland, is another proof of how essential to the welfare and good government of India is a body such as the Court of Directors. It will be long before India can be safely committed to a minister; a changing, party-riven House of Commons is no check, or rather would pervert a well-intentioned minister.

Affairs at Kabul at the end of September 1841 were in miserable confusion. Gen. Elphinstone was in a pitiable state of health, absolutely unfit for duty. Sir W. Macnaghten, already appointed Governor of Bombay, was anxious to go, but unwilling to leave whilst existing disturbances made it



impossible that he could say he handed over to his successor a pacified country. The delay about this, and the apparent increase rather than decrease of disaffection, seem to have induced a state of nervous irritation (by no means soothed by orders for retrenchment from India), which was fatal to the harmony essential to good government.

Sir Alexander Burnes was anxious for the Envoy's departure, and thought he would easily quell the disturbances which had arisen, and reign in his stead.

The following description of the efforts made by Broadfoot to obtain some strictly necessary information and instructions, respecting an expedition on which he had been ordered, affords a sad picture of irritable incapacity and feebleness :

On October 7, 1841, I received a note from Brigadier Anquetil, desiring me to prepare for immediate field service 100 sappers, and directing me, as there were no other officers available, to proceed in command. (Orr and Cunningham, with about 250 men, were absent on service in Zoormut, west⁴ of Ghuznee, the other officer was sick.) I rode into cantonments to obtain detailed orders, and was told that Tezeen was our destination, to punish the Ghilzi chiefs, who had stopped the *daks*, and that I should have to destroy the forts. I was directed to receive further orders from Lieut.-Col. Monteath, who was to command the expedition. I passed the night at Burnes's, sitting up till near daylight in discussions that, as matters have turned out, were very curious, for he and I differed widely in our views, and he was just then much shaken as to his own opinions, though he seems to have relapsed.

I had sent to the artificers (armourers and smiths, numerous in Cabool) in the city to make some mining tools not in the magazine. (All ours gone to Zoormut—no others), and the armourers refused to work for the 'Feringees.' Burnes sent an order without any effect, and I took down a party of our men, gave each smith his work with men to keep him at it, and next day got the tools, the best they had ever done for us in the city. They were busy forging arms, for what purpose we have since learned ; Burnes said, for the wandering tribes about to migrate.

Next morning, the 8th, I waited on Lieut.-Col. Monteath, whom I did not before know. He said he could give me no orders, having received none himself, except to move towards Jelalabad ; that he did not even know I was to go, but should be glad of my company.

⁴ Probably a mistake for east.



He declined to apply for information, saying he knew these people too well,⁵ admitted all the dangers of going on service in the dark, but said it was not the custom here to consult, or even to *instruct*, the commanders of expeditions. He spoke bitterly of sending officers and troops on wild-goose chases, bringing them into scrapes and letting them get out if they could, for the Envoy's credit, but if his politicals failed, to their own discredit. He again refused to refer for instructions, saying he had too much experience of these people, but permitted me to go to the General, the Envoy, or anyone I pleased. I went to the magazine to learn what preparations the Commissary of Ordnance was making. I found he was making none, or rather that none had been ordered, though he had been in hourly expectation of orders. He (Lieut. Eyre⁶) and I put in train the preparation of all *he* could furnish, in case I wanted things, and I sent men to the city and cantonment bazaars to procure what the magazine did not afford.

Eyre and I went over to see if Major Thain (Gen. Elphinstone's aide-de-camp) knew anything of the proposed service, but he was not at home, so I sent up my name to the General, who was very ill. He received me, however, with his usual cheerful kindness; insisted on getting up, and was supported to his visiting room. This exertion so exhausted him, that it was half an hour before he could attend to business, indeed several ineffectual efforts to do so had excited him so much that I was sorry I had come at all. He knew, no more than Col. Monteath, the nature of the service, having merely received an order to send him and so many men. He did not know the number or strength of the forts, nor whether anyone to act as engineer was going, and said he would leave the provision of tools and stores to me; and he did not know whether sending Col. Monteath was a measure of precaution or of hostility.

I pointed out that I could not prepare for a service the very nature of which I knew not; and as to taking, as he suggested, enough to meet any possible emergency, that, in such a country of mountains, rivers, and innumerable forts, would require so much carriage as to delay the expedition greatly to collect it, all *public* carriage being sent to Zoornut; while it would, from the enormous rates of hire given by our Commissariat, entail on Government a great expense, of which part, perhaps nearly all, would be useless.

He admitted all this fully, but said he could give me no orders, and expressed himself unwilling to refer to the Envoy on a point which ought to have been left to him to arrange. At last he gave

⁵ The Envoy and his staff.

⁶ Afterwards Sir Vincent Eyre.



me a private note to the Envoy, begging him to listen to me, and saying he considered what I wanted was reasonable; viz. to know whether there were to be hostilities or not, with whom, and the strength and position of the enemy; and especially whether forts were to be taken and destroyed.

The Envoy seemed to be annoyed, said the General expected him to turn prophet; how could he predict whether there would be hostilities or not? and, finally, he desired me to state all my wants to the General, and promised to sanction whatever the latter proposed.

I mentioned the necessity of knowing something about the forts, and he said he would send to the Wazeer and learn.

He gave me a note to the General, which the latter read to me. The Envoy used the phrase of being asked to turn prophet, and said he could not say whether there would be hostilities at all, though he thought a force should perhaps still go, but not so soon as lately ordered; not, indeed, till the Zoormut force returned; but in the mean time we are to be ready.

The General was much hurt and agitated on reading this note, and complained bitterly of the way he was deprived of all authority and reduced to a mere cipher. He was so evidently too weak and excitable for business that I changed the subject, and soon after would have taken my leave, but after leaving him was recalled, the business having returned to his recollection. He said, as I had been thrown on his hands, he would not shirk the job.

He made me go over again my reasons for declining to estimate for tools and stores in ignorance of the nature and extent of the work to be done. He took them down in writing, saying he could not otherwise remember them; they were those above mentioned, only I added that, if I did not estimate to meet all possible exigencies, any failure would be charged, without further inquiry, to my incapacity, or to the inefficiency of the corps, not to mention the public injury or dishonour from a failure a little forethought might have obviated. He said I must not be made to decide in ignorance, and neither was it fair he should, but he recoiled from again applying to the Envoy.

After much discussion, he asked me to go to Sir W. Macnaghten. The latter was peevish, and spoke of Gen. Elphinstone's being fidgety. I said I was in this case to blame, having declined to be responsible without requisite orders. This led to a long discussion, and he seemed to see the reasonableness of what was said; he mentioned again the Wazeer, and asked me to come back and hear the reply. He said there was no one who had the required information but Capt. Macgregor, the Political Agent, who



knew all these parts intimately, and that till his return nothing could be done.

I stayed with the General until it was time to return to the Envoy. On going back, I found him apparently irritated at something. He gave me the Wazeer's information, which was that a force ought to be sent to Tezeen, but that the rebels were about to quit. As to their forts, they were very weak.

I said information so vague was useless. The Envoy called in the Wazeer's man and some other Afghans, and told me to examine them myself. They said they knew only the fort near the road at Tezeen, which I had seen myself from the road; another at Tezeen, on the hill, they could not describe; they said the enemy had other forts, some very strong, across the river; on which the Envoy said we were not to go there. The men then said there were other forts on this side, but the number, situation, and strength, they knew not; only they were all weak, and there was no occasion for us to fear.

The Envoy interrupted me impatiently, saying there would be no fighting; that he had resolved on sending Col. Monteath to Bootkhak as a demonstration,⁷ and that immediately—to-morrow morning; that he expected the submission of the rebels that evening. If it came, Col. Monteath would go on to Jelalabad; if it did not come to-day, his march to Bootkhak would so terrify them that it would be sure to arrive to-morrow. The Colonel was only to have his own regiment, two guns, a squadron of cavalry, and 100 sappers.

I asked what was to be done if the submission did not arrive. Was Col. Monteath to return?

He said, 'No; in that case he will halt at Bootkhak till the Zoormut force comes in: it will be a *demonstration*; that will be sure to terrify the Ghilzi chiefs.' He asked me if I did not think this plan would answer.

I, of course, stated the obvious objections to it as a military measure—that any alarm produced by the march to Bootkhak (ten miles) would be turned into confidence by finding we went no farther, which would be ascribed to fear; and that, if Monteath was to wait for the Zoormut force, he had better remain in cantonments than move to the skirts of the plain, near all the passages into the hills, a situation which invited attack, for the enemy could arrive unseen, and Col. Monteath was too weak to pursue, even if able to beat them. All this would strengthen the cause of the rebels. Our course was to prepare diligently, and when the troops could be

⁷ A military operation in great favour with political officers.



spared, to move in full force, and never to stop for a moment till the enemy were utterly destroyed.

These reasons I gave to the Envoy late in the day, but now he interrupted me on my saying they might be tempted to attack Monteath. He became angry, said these were his orders, and the enemy were contemptible, the Eastern Ghilzis the most cowardly of Afghans (a foolish notion he and Burnes had); that as for me and my sappers, twenty men with pickaxes were enough; it was a peaceable march to Jelalabad, and all that we were wanted for was to pick stones from under the gun-wheels.

I asked if these were his orders; he said no, only the opinion given at the General's request and mine, that the General was responsible, and must decide on what sappers and tools must go.

Soon after I rejoined the General he received a note, ordering Lieut.-Col. Monteath's immediate march, and containing almost the above words as to the sappers and the enemy, but declining all responsibility.

The General was lost and perplexed, though he entirely agreed in the objections as to the move, yet he did not feel himself at liberty to prevent it. He asked me to follow my own judgment as to reducing the number of sappers, and what quantity of tools I would take, but made me give my reasons, which he took down in the form of a memorandum addressed to himself. The Adjutant-General, Capt. G——, came in, and to him the General referred. This officer, after abusing the Envoy, spoke to the General with an imperiousness and disrespect, and to me, a stranger, with an insolence it was painful to see the effects of on the General, who yet tried only to soothe him. He advised the General not to have anything to say to Macnaghten, to me, or to the sappers, saying Monteath had men enough, and needed neither sappers nor tools. At last he took a newspaper, went to a window, and would no longer speak to the General on the subject, saying, 'You know best.' This man, I have since heard, was the poor General's evil genius during the subsequent troubles. The General's health threw all business into Capt. G——'s hands; he fancied him indispensable, and in his feeble state of health could not contend against his insolent blustering. G—— despaired from the first, and kept the poor General in a state of continual and fatal irritation.

The General at length resolved to adhere to his own opinion, and made me go back to Macnaghten to tell him of it with the reasons, and so gave him the opportunity of countermanding it. The Envoy would hear no reasons, saying he had given his opinion, and the General was responsible; but he approved of the General's having told me not to join Monteath till the Zoormut force came,



unless hostilities broke out, as I had much to do organising the corps, and was pitched in sight of Bootkhak.

He resumed the subject of my objections to his demonstration plan, hearing them, though impatiently, as well as what I had to say of the Eastern Ghilzis. He lost his temper, however, in answering them, and said if I thought Col. Monteath's movement likely to bring on an attack, I need not go, I was not wanted; if I were, there were others. I rose at once, and, saying a word or two as to what had brought me there, declined to listen to such language (he denied all intention to offend), and made my low bow. He seemed very angry, though half sorry, but said nothing. As I was mounting my horse, however, he came out, and held out his hand in evident kindness, though still ruffled; and so we parted, never again to meet.

I went back to the General, and found him in bed and quite worn out. He made me stay some time, however, and told me once more how he had been tormented by Macnaghten from the first; reduced, to use his own words, from a General to the Lord Lieutenant's head constable. He asked me to see him before I moved, but he said, 'If anything occur, and in case you have to go out, for God's sake clear the passes quickly, that I may get away. For, if anything were to turn up' (he alluded once again to the Candahar and Herat quarter), 'I am unfit for it, done up body and mind, and I have told Lord Auckland so.' This he repeated two or three times, adding that he doubted very much if ever he would see home, even if he did get away.

Nothing can be more unlike Macnaghten's general demeanour than what is above described, and it altogether astonished me. He was always courteous to everyone, and, to me, kind in the extreme.

Burnes, whom I saw for the last time after leaving the General, however, told me he had occasionally seen the Envoy behave in the same manner, and that he was really a passionate man. From what Mackenzie has told me, I infer that during the last few days of his life he must have been in much the same temper. When the Ghilzi insurrection broke out, he had heard of his appointment as Governor of Bombay, and was on the eve of setting out. He and Burnes were on anything but cordial terms, and he could not suffer the idea of his leaving the country disturbed for Burnes to have the merit of pacifying it. Both he and Burnes treated the insurrection with contempt (Burnes called it, to me, a tempest in a teapot), and the rebels, absurdly enough, as less formidable than any other Afghans. Burnes had loudly exclaimed against the policy which caused the insurrection, though not till the insurrection occurred. He was not, however, even consulted, before it, nor even after,



by Macnaghten and his party, as he was thought to be pleased at it.

I was very intimate with Burnes, and believed to hold his opinions; an error, however. (I thought both Burnes and Macnaghten grievously wrong, and in the same way, though Burnes would have managed the bad system better than Macnaghten.) And my seeming to overrate the untoward events, and even predict their increase from the measures taken, was naturally irritating to a man already provoked.

Broadfoot's memorandum to the General on the subject of the tools and stores is an excellent one, showing foresight and caution, but it need not be reproduced. He learnt to his astonishment that, though the bulk of the troops were sent every winter to Jalalabad, where they were virtually cut off from communication with Kabul by the snow, yet there was no magazine either at Gandamak or Jalalabad. When he pointed out the necessity, Macnaghten remarked that he spoke as if he were in an enemy's country!

As it was, when the troops moved out under Col. Monteath, a severe reprimand was sent after Broadfoot for taking so many tools, although he had obtained the General's sanction. This reprimand was crossed on the road by a demand *for still more*, the necessity for them and the wisdom of Broadfoot's arrangements having been forcibly demonstrated. The reprimand was cancelled in a very handsome way, and Broadfoot was allowed *carte blanche*. He made large demands, which could only be partially complied with; but the tools and stores were mainly instrumental in saving Sale's force in Jalalabad, and even the regular sappers of Pollock's relieving army had to indent on Broadfoot for tools.

He remarked, when considering the matter some time afterwards: 'When at length the Cabool insurrection broke out, it seemed as if Providence had stiffened my neck on that occasion; for Burnes strongly advised me not to take the tools or I would make enemies; and he held the enemy in contempt. He thought me on that occasion, and on one or two others, a sort of professional pedant.'



CHAPTER II.

1841.

Night attack at Butkhák—Letter to Mr. Prinsep—First fight, Sappers engaged—Scarcity of officers with N.I. regiments—Service with Sale's brigade—Khurd Kabul pass—Advance to Tezin—Attack between Jagdalak and Surkháb—Distinguished conduct of Broadfoot, F. Cunningham, Wyndham, Coombs, and Sergeant-Major Kelly—Broadfoot's opinion of officers with the force—Outbreak at Kabul—Death of Sir A. Burnes and W. Broadfoot—Of Sir W. Macnaghten—Letter to Dr. Malcolmson—Arrival of Sale's brigade at Jalalabad.

THE expedition, referred to towards the end of last chapter, which was designed to overawe the Ghilzis, marched from Kabul to Butkhak on October 9, 1841. It consisted of the 35th N.I., a squadron of the 5th Cavalry, two guns under Lieut. Michael Dawes, and a company of sappers under Capt. Broadfoot, with Col. Monteath in command.

In the following letter from Broadfoot to Mr. Henry Thoby Prinsep a detailed account of the night attack by the Ghilzis will be found. The demonstration was a failure, and Sir Robert Sale with the 13th L.I. joined Monteath on October 11 with orders to clear the passes.

It should perhaps be explained that Butkhak is the camping ground one march from Kabul in the direction of Jalalabad; It is mentioned by Burnes¹ as the place where Mahmud of Ghazni buried the rich Hindu idol from Somnath.

Jalalabad : January 2, 1842.

My dear Mr. Prinsep,—In yesterday's letter we reached Bootkhak on the afternoon of October 9. On being ordered to remain, I sent back to Cabool the two Wazeer's men, and a small party (twelve) of my own men, who had escorted stores &c. Of the twelve, one was a prisoner, and handcuffed, and one was an unarmed orderly. The remaining daylight passed in preparing the men's arms for use, and in examining narrowly our position, and even pacing the distance

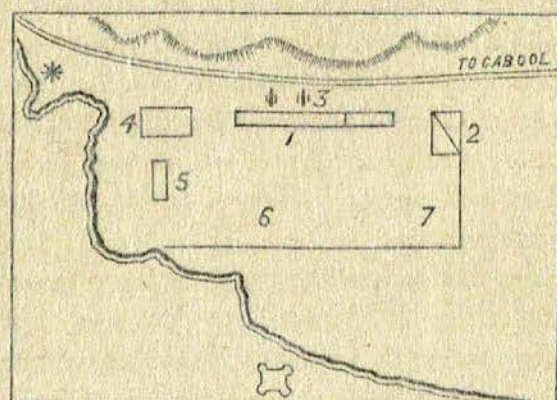
¹ *Travels into Bokhara &c.* p. 130.

to cover for enemies ; for the ground was so unfavourable to us that it seemed as though chosen by an enemy. At dusk, word was brought that our returning party was attacked, and with some hesitation leave was given me to take the company out to their aid. After a march, or run, of two or three miles, we arrived just in time to save our party, who after a gallant resistance were about to disperse, being surrounded and reduced to five cartridges among them all. We pursued the enemy about a mile, to recover the body of one of our men who had been killed, and brought it in. This was the opening affair of the present war, and gave a good earnest of what I might expect from the men of the corps, and nobly have they justified my hopes, and rewarded all trouble I have taken : for, though forgotten, I see, in the General's despatches, they have literally borne the brunt of every action of importance, being first in every assault, and last in the retreat, and standing firm when all others present (*none* excepted, Europeans or natives) shrank from the fight. Their not being noticed is, I believe, accident. The General was in his dooly, others commanding did not chance to be where the fight was hot, and I was afterwards too much occupied (even if inclined) to bring my own doings to the notice of those who ought to have seen them. But as it has gone even the length of ascribing to others (by implication at least) what the Sappers did, I shall perhaps occasionally enter into more detail than I should otherwise have done, and mention a few things I should not otherwise have alluded to.

Soon after our return to Bootkhak, the outposts sent notice of sounds from the hills as if they were occupied. I again went partly up one and observed the direction &c. of the objects noted by daylight. The Afghans with me thought they heard people above us, and foretold an attack before morning ; but all was so silent that I returned, and was just entering my tent, when the crash of musketry from the front, and both flanks, turned us all out, and set every sentry and guard round the camp firing. Our camp was on a level spot, with rocky hills along the front ; on the left separated only by the road to Cabool, and on the left and rear a deep and wide water-course. These our small force could not occupy while they gave cover to the enemy up to our sentries ; especially the left, and there were placed the Sappers, with a large magazine containing twenty barrels of powder. In the ravine, however, on the left, was a picket of the 35th, and Col. Monteath immediately sent a company to support it, but this was thrown into confusion by meeting the picket just running in in disorder pursued by the enemy, and the very young officer (Norton) with them could not rally them.

Another company was sent to their support under another officer, a little senior ; but matters did not mend, and at length they were

driven in on the cattle and magazine of the sappers. These last I had taken a little to the front of the line, and made to lie down without firing behind a slight swell, which sheltered them from the shot which fell thick on our *regular* place. On learning a fire was going on among our powder barrels, I went and removed the disorderly troops, and with the consent of the two officers (both of whom I had commanded as cadets when orderly officer at Addiscombe) took charge of their men, and rallying them behind the sappers, who were all this time steady as veterans, never firing a shot, at length restored order and made the enemy draw off a little. In the mean time the front and flanks were enveloped in fire, and Col. Monteath was making excellent dispositions, so good that, notwith-



CAMP, BOOTKHAK. OCTOBER 9 AND 10, 1841.

1. 35th N.I. Col. Monteath.
2. Squad. 5th Cav., Capt. Oldfield.
3. 2 guns, Lieut. Dawes.

4. Shah's Sappers, Capt. Broadfoot.
5. Sapper Magazine.
- 6 and 7. Camp.

standing our vicious position, the enemy was fairly baffled, and, after four hours of incessant firing, gradually withdrew without penetrating our camp. Col. Monteath in this affair showed himself a good soldier, and the bad position was not, I believe, his fault. He was sent out expecting to move quickly on to Tezeen, and finding his camp misplaced did not think it worth-altering. The loss fell chiefly on the 35th, and mainly on the two companies thrown into disorder. The enemy, too, suffered, for we found blood in the wells and heard the wounded call out to be carried away; but they would have suffered still more heavily but for the premature fire of the two companies on the left and some others of the 35th which drove them back to their cover when advancing to rush in on the place where the sappers lay. I had fixed bayonets, and only waited for them to round a bank of about four feet which would impede their flight, to make the sappers rise up and give them a volley, and charge. They were within forty yards (46 paces) of the sappers; we had wheeled up (crawling) to face them; once down the bank, nothing



could have saved them, for they were doubtful of our being there (we heard their conversation) from our not being betrayed by white belts, and standing up like the rest.

The main body of the 35th were very steady. It is a fine regiment, but greatly injured for want of officers, and especially of old officers. The natives are peculiarly unmanageable by griffins; otherwise, one of the young officers (Norton) would have rallied his men, for he is a fine promising young soldier, but it was his first action, and the circumstances trying to an old officer. All Col. Monteath's old officers present were employed in important places, and could not be spared. The accident of my being there saved our camp being entered, or disaster would have followed, partial if not total. Some method must be devised to remedy the scarcity of officers, and I am not sure that the financial difficulty is a real one; for the efficiency of the native army would be so increased that fewer European regiments would do, and fewer native troops would be required, as they could do more work: there would also be less for any troops to do, the turbulent lacking the encouragement to fight which arises from partial success.

The enemy were discouraged by their failure, but this good result was diminished by their getting the bedding &c. of the picket and a few camels on the skirts of the camp, for so closely did they pursue. Had their failure been *complete*, who knows what it might have prevented?

Here also I first had proof of the value of our own Afghan troops, when raised as mine are, i.e. subject to as rigorous discipline as the rest, and with no man of influence among them, but the promotions made for personal merit by the commander. The *gradual* introduction of discipline is an error. These men are a bolder race than the Indians, more European and like Europeans, and require a sterner discipline. Their commander must be feared, though he must also know and manage their prejudices, and provide for their wants. I found the same with the Burmese. On October 10, Col. Monteath objected to my returning to Cabool till the service was over, that is for a week; and on the 11th Gen. Sale with other troops arrived, and I was joined by Colin [Mackenzie]; but what followed must wait till to-morrow.

On October 12, 1841, the force under Sale marched towards Khurd Kabul through the pass. Every step of the way was disputed. The enemy held the heights, fired on our troops as they advanced, and retired whenever attacked. Early in the day Sale was wounded, and the command devolved on



Col. Dennie. The sappers were actively employed, some under Capt. Broadfoot reconnoitring; others under Colin Mackenzie, who had accompanied the 13th in order to be present.

Mackenzie led the men well, and had the good fortune to come up in time to help Michael Dawes when he and his guns were in considerable danger. Broadfoot, in describing the action, pointed out that chance threw on the sappers under Mackenzie, and on Dawes, the task of forcing the pass. He added: 'Mackenzie commanded in a way few officers could have done; the success was rapid and complete, and the day was gained. Unquestionably great credit was due to him. Dawes showed the coolness he ever showed.' Mackenzie, remarking on this, said, 'He was the only man, except Broadfoot, whom he ever saw wear a natural smile in battle.'

The 13th returned to Butkhak, and Monteath and his force encamped at Khurd Kabul in the valley outside the pass. Our loss was six killed and thirty-five wounded. Negotiation was tried, and Capt. Macgregor was sent to Monteath's camp as Political Officer to make the desired arrangements. The result was unsatisfactory; a night attack was repulsed, but the little force lost eighty camels.

Meanwhile Sale was reinforced from Kabul; and having joined Monteath on the 20th, orders to advance on Tezin on October 22 were issued.

The force here detailed marched on that morning, the wounded General being carried in a litter:

H.M. 13th L.I., Col. Dennie, C.B.
35th N.I., Col. Monteath, C.B.
37th N.I., Major Griffiths.
Squadron 5th B.C., Capt. Oldfield.
Artillery, Capt. A. Abbott.

Shah's Sappers, Capt. G. Broadfoot.
„ Mountain train, Capt. Backhouse.
Troop 2nd Cavalry, Lieut. Mayne.
200 Jezailchis, Jan Fishan Khan.

The march was not well managed; Lieut. King of the 13th was killed, and his men, having been led too far in advance, had to retire, a movement which soon degenerated into flight, with the Afghans in pursuit. Eventually the force reached Tezin and there in the fort, most providentially, forage for the cattle sufficient for two days was found. It is difficult to believe, but it is true, that this force with from 3,000 to 4,000 cattle was sent forward into a country where forage was scarcely to be found, without any arrangement for its supply.



It was intended next day to assault and take the various forts in the neighbourhood; Col. Dennie with half the force was to command, with Broadfoot as engineer. But instead of this, negotiation with the chiefs was commenced by Capt. Macgregor. There is some obscurity as to why the change was made; Durand, generally well informed, has said that the chief, not relishing the prospect of a fight,² 'determined to open negotiations and again to overreach Macgregor;' Backhouse thought it was plain, and to none more so than to Macgregor, that the disinclination to fight was rather on the part of some of our troops. Mr. Cameron, legal member of Council, collected and sifted the evidence on this point.³ He concluded that Macgregor at that time became aware of the serious and widespread nature of the conspiracy, and thought it better to negotiate than to attack the fort. Great courage in going unprotected to meet the Ghilzis was shown by him; terms were discussed, and agents were sent to remain with Macgregor.

Subsequent events made it amply clear that the chiefs had no intention whatever of keeping faith; they instigated their followers to attack our troops, the agents or hostages being simply spies. Colin Mackenzie when a prisoner made the acquaintance of one of these agents, who openly boasted of circumventing the British on that occasion. An agreement was made, and forage was supplied; Sale, however, appeared not to value the compact highly, for he wrote in orders: 'Though the enemy have given hostages, it would be both imprudent and unsafe in us to relax our vigilance,' &c.⁴

A discussion took place subsequently at a critical moment as to whether or not hostages on this occasion had been given: Broadfoot asserted that they had been given and were of no value, Macgregor denied that we had taken hostages.⁵

On October 26, Sale sent back the 37th N.I., three companies of Broadfoot's Sappers, and half of the mountain train, to Kabar Jabar, between Tezin and Khurd Kabul, to await the arrival of a regiment expected from Kabul. His object was to take their carriage for the use of the rest of his brigade; a proceeding not easy to justify when the country was in so dis-

² *First Afghan War*, pp. 336, 337.

⁴ *Sale's Brigade*, p. 96.

³ Notes from Mr. Cameron's minute on the Afghan disaster.

⁵ Compare p. 73.



turbed a state. He marched that day to Seh Baba,⁶ and next day to Kata Sang: the rear guard on both days having been pretty constantly engaged. On October 29 they marched to Jagdalak,⁷ escaping an ambush laid for them in the Pari darra, or Fairy's Glen, by avoiding that route and marching by the high land.

On October 29 the brigade marched from Jagdalak to Surkháb. In expectation of trouble the rear guard was strengthened: it consisted of two companies of the 13th L.I., two companies of the 35th N.I., Lieut. Dawes and two guns, the mountain train, and a company of sappers. It was nominally under the command of an officer of the 13th, but was virtually commanded by Backhouse. The sappers being the last of the rear guard were first engaged: they were, indeed, in action before they had quitted the camping ground at Jagdalak.

The first three miles of the road are up a steep incline, difficult for guns and laden camels, commanded by the heights on either side till the top is reached; after that the pass becomes more open with a descent to Surkháb.

The plan adopted for protecting the march through was that the advance and main body should detach parties right and left to ascend to suitable posts, hold them till the baggage passed, and then come on with it. An excellent arrangement provided the main body halted at the top of the pass to give the baggage and these protecting parties time to join. Unfortunately this was not done; the main body moved off, 'leaving the posts referred to and the rear guard to withstand the pressure of the whole strength of the enemy now concentrating at the exit of the pass.' The parties sent to protect the baggage, seeing themselves abandoned by the main body, with one honourable exception, quitted their posts, and the whole force of the enemy came down on the rear guard, which fell into the greatest confusion and panic. The exception here mentioned was a party of Broadfoot's Sappers commanded by Lieut. F. Cunningham,⁸ 'who stuck to his duty and obeyed his orders.'

⁶ Baba Isa's tomb.

⁷ The accent is on the second syllable, and all the vowels are short; it

used to be written, Jugdulluk.

⁸ Francis Chantry Cunningham, the youngest son of Allan Cuning-



The panic-stricken companies of the 13th and 35th hurried forward in confusion to get out of the pass. The Ghilzis, occupying the cover on either side, fired into the mass of fugitives, and the villagers pressed up the pass after them knife in hand.

At this juncture and amid this confusion 'most fortunately a few intrepid British were found to face the enemy, headed by Capt. Broadfoot: these were Capt. Wyndham and Lieut. Coombs of the 35th, Lieut. Cunningham and Sergeant-Major Kelly of the Sappers, with five or six sepoy of the Sapper corps who had remained with Broadfoot and Cunningham as orderlies (the Sapper company had been again sent up the hills to skirmish); these ten or twelve charged the Ooloos, or villagers above referred to,' and held them in check until they reached the exit of the pass. Poor Wyndham, who was so lame as to require support from two sepoy of his company, could not retire with the others, and fell into the hands of the merciless mob; both the sepoy, to their infinite honour, stuck to him to the last and shared his fate. 'During this scene of terror all who fell wounded were of course abandoned; the enemy as they came up falling upon them in heaps, and, as Capt. Broadfoot describes it, "like hounds on a fox."'

Our men were rallied 'by the dispositions made at the outlet by Captains Backhouse and Fenwick, and covered by the bold front ever maintained by Capt. Broadfoot.'⁹ Reinforcements were sent back from the main body, and the rear guard arrived at Surkhah just about dark. Next day, October 30, Gandamak¹ was reached without molestation.

ham the poet, was born in 1820, and entered the Madras Army in 1838. He served with distinction in Broadfoot's Sappers, as quartermaster, in Afghanistan during the years 1840-42; and received medals for Jalalabad and Kabul. He was afterwards appointed to the Mysore Commission by Lord Ellenborough, and retired on December 31, 1861, on account of bad health. From this time till he died in December 1875 he wrote a good deal, and was a frequent contributor to the *Saturday Review*. He had two brothers in the

Bengal Engineers: Joseph Davy Cunningham, for some years an Assistant to the Governor-General's Agent for the N.W. Frontier, and author of a *History of the Sikhs*; and Sir Alexander Cunningham, K.C.I.E., still living, who was for many years head of the Archaeological Survey of India.

⁹ Letter to the *Friend of India*: 'from the pen of one who was on the spot:' the previous quotations are mainly from Backhouse's diary.

¹ Gandamak: accent on the second syllable, and all the vowels short.



Some interesting remarks by Broadfoot will be found in the following letter to Dr. Malcolmson :

Sale's Camp, Gundumuk: November 4, 1841.

... I would fain give you a history of the last month, but must defer it. Suffice it to say we have had military operations far more serious than was expected; instructive professionally by showing that against even Afghans no rules of military science can be neglected with impunity, and interesting to those much employed from the difficulty of the country and the boldness of the enemy.

On ten days we were more or less engaged with the enemy, and in four of the more considerable affairs I had no reason to find fault with the share allotted to me. In fact we have been at the post of danger always. In a fifth I had it all to myself, having had an excursion of about three hours, during which we recaptured 800 camels and demolished a good many of the enemy. One day, a hot one, I had Colin Mackenzie with me, and a famous second he is: another time William was with me, also stout in fight.

Now I suppose you think I am loaded with honours. Nothing farther from the case. I have never been mentioned in orders till the very last occasion, and then in a way subordinate to others who had not my luck. Colin Mackenzie was furious, and there has been a great uproar on the subject, caused by an artillery officer at a big dinner here (I was not present) attacking poor Col. Dennie about the matter.

The truth is, Gen. Sale was wounded in the second action; he was not at the first or third, and goes in a dooly: he is entirely unacquainted with what happens at the chief fighting places. One occasion of our doing something arose from a blunder of Dennie's, another from the misconduct of the troops. No one likes to report such things, and the General, who treats me most kindly, and I am sure considers me a tolerable soldier, continually mentions to me things as done by others which they did not do, and I do not undeceive him, as it would seem boasting, and might lead others, who left their posts, into trouble. But all will come right: this country will give more work, and I cannot but perceive a feeling to have arisen that I may be turned to use.

Broadfoot then proceeded to remark on the qualifications of the officers with whom he was associated. He considered—and the opinions of the ablest of his companions were, for the most part, the same as his own—that Col. Dennie was wholly unqualified for command. Among the senior officers



he reckoned Sale and Monteath to be the best soldiers. He then said :

We must then come low for good officers, and first comes Capt. Havelock of H.M.'s 18th Regiment. It is the fashion, especially in his own corps, to sneer at him ; his manners are cold, while his religious opinions (Baptist) seclude him from society ; but the whole of them together would not compensate for his loss. Brave to admiration, imperturbably cool, looking at his profession as a science, and, as far as I can see or judge, correct in his views.

All our artillery officers are above the average : two, Backhouse and Dawes, greatly so ; Backhouse a hero, though a mad one. Capt. Abbott a superior officer too. Then we had Capt. Paton, Quarter-master-General, a very brave and sensible man, now gone to Cabool. The rest are all below those named.

Among the young hands are many fine, gallant, and intelligent lads ; none surpassing, only one (Coombs) equalling, my two Mulls,² Orr and Cunningham. The former was wounded severely in his first action, but is doing well.

And now do not wonder if the papers teem with stories, true or false, on these matters, and if my name be taken in vain, for we had an awkward business for a short time in the last considerable affair, and a handful of sappers saved several hundred infantry, chiefly European, from being destroyed by Afghans ! I would have hushed the matter up, but it was impossible, and all are talking of, and lying much about, what really occurred.

I ordered a charge of bayonets, and on getting among the enemy—whom, however, we for the moment dispersed—found myself followed only by two officers, Cunningham (Sappers), and Coombs (35th), wounded, also Wyndham, a poor lame Gilchrist chum of mine, since killed, our sergeant-major, and five Afghans of the Sappers, of whom one fell. The rest of the Sappers were engaged on the hill above, and of the infantry, European and native, only a part charged, and they stopped short before getting halfway, fearing to close with our enemies, who were destroying our wounded !

You may imagine the talk this has caused, and will understand the papers ; but the thing was after all a trifle, and by means which I must give you hereafter we got the panic-struck rogues off without disaster till they rallied, inflicting heavy loss, far exceeding our own, on the enemy.

The country from this to Cabool is the strongest we have yet operated in, and a little confusion for a few hundred yards, in a fight of eleven and a half hours—such it was to us of the rear guard—over

² Madras officers : Mull is an abbreviation of Mulligatawny, a Madras invention.



a dozen miles of rocky mountains, covered with bushes, is nothing but what might be expected.

I grieve to say that with all but old Havelock, not to be daunted, and Sale, who does not know the details, and is a bold man moreover, except Monteath also, and some of the 35th officers &c., a strong feeling of depression has been produced among men and officers of the European and native infantry, and the regular cavalry.

Give the news to Col. Cullen, and he to whom he pleases.

Broadfoot finished his letter by ordering a pipe of Madeira for the Sapper mess, and after his signature is the following postscript:

Bengal sepoy's are good troops.

My corps Sappers, 600, is :

300 Hindoostanees	brave
200 Goorkhas	braver
100 Afghans and Hazaras.	heroes

And all from emulation beyond their several unmixed countrymen.

Meanwhile at Kabul our evil system of administration had borne fruit. On November 2, 1841, the outbreak occurred; Sir Alexander Burnes, his brother Lieut. Burnes, and William Broadfoot, were killed in Burnes's house in the city. The treasury was sacked, and the mob was rewarded to the extent of 17,000*l*. The only serious effort to relieve Burnes and put down the mob was made by the Shah, and not, as might have been expected, by the English officers in the cantonment.

The Envoy turned to the General for assistance, but the latter was wholly unfit from illness to meet the crisis. Incapacity and imbecility among the senior officers was naturally followed by demoralisation and cowardice among the troops. The Envoy in these days of humiliation showed a better spirit than the military chiefs, but to no purpose: he was obliged to negotiate with the enemy, and became involved in transactions regarding them which, if the Afghan account may be trusted, cost him his life.

He was, as all know, killed by Akbar Khan at an interview, and before long the Kabul force capitulated.

That army paid dearly for the error; with the exception of the prisoners and hostages in Akbar Khan's hands, and of



Dr. Brydon, who escaped, they were utterly destroyed in the passes through which Sale's brigade had fought its way. The Envoy had summoned Nott and Sale to his assistance. The former was prevented by the season of the year and by other considerations from compliance. When Sale received the orders he consulted his officers and decided that he could not obey. This decision has been much questioned. Durand has stated that 'it was regretted by some of the ablest officers in his force, foremost among whom was Broadfoot.'³ Sir Herbert Edwardes on the same subject has said:

Of course it will always remain a moot point whether Sale could have returned or not; and if he had returned, whether it would have saved the Kabul force. From Sale's own account it is probable he could not have returned in a state of efficiency; but there were at least two men with Sale's brigade who would have made all the difference: one—Henry Havelock—who would have recalled the discipline and spirit of poor Elphinstone's subordinates, if mortal man could do it; the other—George Broadfoot—who, in the last resort, would have dared to supply the army with a leader.⁴

Whilst Sale's force was at Gandamak rumours of the Kabul outbreak reached them: they are thus alluded to by Broadfoot in a letter to Dr. Malcolmson, dated Gandamak, November 8, 1841:

. . . For a good many days we have had no communication with Cabool, and it is of course clear from this that the country we fought through is again, in whole or in part, closed against us. We have rumours of the most extraordinary and contradictory nature as to occurrences at Cabool, all agreeing that there has been an outbreak there, but differing as to results; some saying we were besieged, others that the enemy were defeated. Burnes, too, is asserted to be murdered or a prisoner, besides other officers, and these latter reports are credited in camp. They interest me most deeply, for the few officers living in the city, all of whom are said to have been destroyed, are: Burnes and his brother, William Broadfoot, Colin Mackenzie, Capt. Johnson, paymaster, Brigadier Anquetil, Capt. Troup, and Capt. Trevor of the cavalry. William lived with Burnes in the heart of the city, far from succour; they had a havildar and twelve men as a guard. Next door, Capt. Johnson's treasury was guarded by a native officer and thirty men. . . . The

³ *First Afghan War*, p. 360.

⁴ *Life of Sir H. Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 285, note 4.



rest were near succour. Now some attempt at Burnes's house is possible; but unless surprised, or unless Burnes might be weak enough to listen to terms offered and surrender, I believe they would hold their own, small as their party was, even for twenty-four hours, *if they had ammunition*. I know what William is as a soldier, and from Burnes's confidence in him, I know, too, that he would command, and surely a first effort of our troops would be their relief. . . .

As for us, though short of ammunition and nearly without money, we may laugh at all Afghanistan *if our troops are rightly managed*, otherwise we have already had proof that the finest troops may be discouraged to a degree painful to think of. Nay, further, if we are true to ourselves and manage decently, we can hold out famously, till relieved from India, even if the whole country rise against us and our communication with India be closed. But we must rectify some great errors in our military arrangements; we must not be without battering guns in a country studded with mud forts, and we must have district magazines; one, for example, at Jelalabad, which during half the year is, in a military sense, deprived of communication with Cabool by the snow, and at all times separated from it by mountains over which it is difficult and frightfully expensive to carry stores.

I believe something has been written on the subject, for I spoke to Havelock yesterday and formerly about the measures of precaution we required, and he concurred and went immediately to move the General about it. You know from former letters how high my opinion is of Havelock, though it is the fashion here to sneer at him.

When I last wrote I alluded to the *discouragement*, to speak mildly, prevailing among all the troops except the Shah's people, who are but few here; an opportunity has occurred to get rid of it, and again we have the satisfaction of hearing men and officers speak as they ought of our enemies and themselves. On the 4th, word was brought in that one of the great lords at court had rebelled. Meer Ufzul Khan, the Urzbegee, and his son had occupied a fort about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from our camp, and was going to raise the country on us. Capt. Macgregor, the Political Agent, was at dinner with us, at the Sapper mess, when he got the final and certain news, and after a consultation between him, Backhouse, Dawes, and myself, he went off to urge the General to attack at once; but returned late, having totally failed, though he had cited Backhouse's and my formal opinions; nay, one staff officer (not Havelock) actually proposed retiring to Jelalabad! There were then thirty men in the fort! but, of course, likely to increase every hour. Backhouse and I went, though it was midnight, and turned out Havelock. I pledged my character as a soldier to find the means of taking the place, even



if, as was said, the artillery (which Backhouse and Dawes, excellent officers of artillery, denied) was too weak to do its part properly. Havelock held the same views, but had been overborne. He saw, however, the necessity of stopping the discouragement, especially after talking over our Jugduluk adventures, and said he would do what he could. We wanted a strong advanced guard to move at three o'clock and invest the place at daybreak; but it then came out, the General had decided (!) on not attacking, and was listening to some half-caste, who assured him the man⁵ might perhaps not be hostile; or, rather, this was the excuse. Col. Dennie came in on hearing (he never sleeps, I believe) us in Havelock's tent, and was—but I must not give you all details; suffice it to say, the immediate move Havelock could not accomplish, but he got us off in the afternoon of the 5th. The enemy fled, firing a few shots on Abbott and myself reconnoitring; and though from mismanagement they were allowed to pass under our noses with slight loss, yet the benefit is incalculable. Our own men once more in spirits for anything, and the enemy, as well as our own Afghan troops, undeceived as to our being afraid to come near them. Macgregor, too, has good information that only the next day a large reinforcement was to have come in, and the country would have been up.

So now no fear of us: never mind the newspapers. In spite of what has happened, a finer brigade than Sale now has I would not desire to see; and if the worst comes to the worst, we shall be discovered here, unable perhaps to do much from want of ammunition, but not to be hurt by the enemy. More likely is it, however, that all will blow over, and then if the Calcutta people act prudently, and are seconded by good management here, a little vigour in spring will make us all the stronger for this outbreak; and then for a careful revision, or rather the formation of a definite system for the retention of this country on the cheapest terms.

Now send this to Col. Cullen with my kindest regards. Send, if you can, a copy to England to Mr. Loch with the same message; and send all or part to Col. Sim, or any friend at Madras; but remember there are in this opinions not to get into the papers, and you know how easily these things go there. Do you know Lord Elphinstone? I think not. If so, ask Col. Sim to give him the news. Col. Cullen will, I dare say, do so, but the route is circuitous. I would have written to Lord Elphinstone myself, but, to say the truth, I am worked like a horse, putting up defences to remedy in some degree the vices of an abominable position they have thrust the force into, and must to work. G. B.

⁵ The man in charge of the fort.



It may be as well to put a paragraph in the papers to counter-act the desponding private letters sure to go down. Do not name me, but say, on authority, we are well; and having well thrashed the enemy, are ready to do so again.

On November 11, Sale's brigade resumed its march towards Jalalabad. As carriage was deficient, a quantity of baggage and stores was left in charge of Capt. Burn, of the Khaibar corps. This proceeding appears to be inexcusable when it is remembered that there was then a general rising among the Afghans, that the Khaibar corps was wavering, and that Capt. Burn protested strongly against the additional temptation to mutiny and plunder thus supplied.

Nevertheless he and one or two other officers were left to take their chance, as also were Lieut. Cunningham and a party of sappers who had been sent to destroy the Mamu Khel fort.

The brigade showed a disposition to march towards Jalalabad with more haste than was either becoming or consistent with the safety of the small detached party.

Backhouse, looking back from the main body, which had reached Nimla, saw smoke in the direction of Mamu Khel, and indications that Cunningham was engaged. He told Broadfoot, who requested him to apply to Col. Monteath for assistance from the rear guard. First Backhouse and then Broadfoot went and pointed out the danger of the detachment and the ample strength of the rear guard, but without result. The rear guard proceeded on its way, leaving Cunningham and his few men to shift for themselves.

Late that evening Capt. Burn with some Khaibaris arrived in full flight, guns and baggage having been abandoned. Along with them Cunningham's party came in with ammunition exhausted and having suffered severely. Even on arrival at Sale's camp their danger was not over, for not being recognised in the dark they were received by a volley from the guard. Capt. Burn, with ready presence of mind, made his bugler sound 'Cease firing;' the order was recognised by Sale's men, and the fugitives got safely into camp.

For a long time Broadfoot failed to get Cunningham's services on this occasion properly acknowledged. He at last

succeeded so far as to get Sale to publish the following garrison order.

(Extract.)

December 27, 1841.

The Major-General has also to express his best thanks to Lieut. Dowson, who ably assisted Capt. Gerrard, and to Lieut. Cunningham of the Sappers and Miners, whose perseverance and resolution in effecting the demolition of the fort appears to the Major-General deserving of the highest commendation.

On the margin of this order Broadfoot added :

Lieut. Cunningham was sent with Sergeant-Major Kelly and thirty sappers to demolish the fort by mining. In the mean time Gen. Sale marched for Jelalabad. The janbaz horse deserted, and the enemy attacked the party at the fort under Capt. Gerrard. The fort was set on fire, yet Lieut. C. and his party persisted till they blew up the towers, though often obliged to make new mines from the flames approaching. On their retreat the jezailchis were thrown into confusion ; and the little party of sappers and the sowars standing firm till they rallied alone saved them.

Next day, November 12, the brigade marched from Fatehabad to Jalalabad. Col. Dennie commanded the rear guard, in which, on this occasion, were the mountain train and all the sappers. The enemy collected before the advance had left the ground, notwithstanding which Sale marched off as usual. The account of the passage of the rear guard through Fatehabad was written by Backhouse, and is excellent.

The village was crowded with people on the walls and on the roofs of the houses as the rear guard passed ; and although these apparently unarmed villagers were bent upon having at us immediately they could, without being particularly noticed, join the other body of savages hanging on our rear, still they sat as quiet as conscious innocence itself while the rear guard passed by and amongst them. My native officer wished to know why these scoundrels were not pitched into, for, says he, ' they will all fire upon us in less than five minutes after we get past the village.' Everyone knew this ; still our British forbearance will never allow us to fire upon an enemy before he has openly declared himself to be such.

The expectation of attack was immediately fulfilled ; the enemy followed the rear on to a plain and opened a brisk fire. It is said that Capt. Oldfield asked permission to charge, but was refused. Lieut. Mayne's troop was sent back with



ammunition by Sale; and Backhouse has recorded that Broadfoot, seeing the opportunity, got Mayne's detachment to join Oldfield, persuaded the latter to charge without orders, and promised every support with the sappers. The cavalry drew up facing the enemy and immediately charged, 'Broadfoot and the sappers endeavouring to keep their pace. . . . The cavalry soon came to close quarters with the foe, who evidently little expected such a movement on our part, as they threw away their firearms *instantly*, and bolted clean; not, however, unscathed, for some sixty or seventy at least bit the dust to rise no more. This . . . created a fine stirring feeling, and, moreover, put a sudden and most complete stop to any further annoyance during this march. . . . Broadfoot and his Sappers, seeing the cavalry in no need of support, took a line of his own to his right, and completely routed the parties on the hills whom Dawes had opened fire upon. . . .'

The official account of this affair agrees mainly with the above description, the chief divergence being that in the former it is stated that Col. Dennie ordered the charge. He at any rate thanked Capt. Oldfield for it, and Capt. Broadfoot for his soldierlike and intrepid support of the cavalry.

Jalalabad was reached without further molestation; but during the night the enemy burnt the cantonments, and in the morning Sale moved into the town, so hastily and in such confusion as to encourage our enemies and discourage our friends.

CHAPTER III.

1841-42.

Defence of Jalalabad—Capt. Broadfoot's report as garrison engineer—Sorties by the garrison—Extracts from diary: from letter to Dr. Malcolmson—Defensive measures—Letter to Thoby Prinsep—Extracts from diary—Dr. Brydon—Wild's failure to force the Khaibar pass—Council of war—Letter to Havelock—Letter from Havelock—Havelock to Durand—Broadfoot's memorandum—His opposition to the proposed capitulation ultimately successful.

THE town of Jalalabad is on the south side of the Kabul river, a little more than halfway between Kabul and Peshawar. It was a place of considerable importance with a very fluctuating population; though used as the winter residence of the Shah, its defences were in a state of disrepair and dilapidation.

The following extracts from Capt. Broadfoot's note on the defensive works will give an idea of the place as it was when occupied by Sale:

On November 12, the Major-General commanding, having resolved to occupy Jellalabad, directed me with a committee of officers to examine and report on the works of the place.

The committee reported unanimously that they were not then defensible against a vigorous assault.

As will be seen in the accompanying plan, the town is an irregular quadrilateral, having half of the western side salient and the southern side broken by a deep re-entering angle. It was surrounded on every side with gardens and houses, inclosed fields, mosques, and ruined forts, affording strong cover to an enemy; these were everywhere close to the walls, and in many places connected with them. Beyond these on three sides (N. E. and W.) at from 400 to 500 yards run the ruins of the wall of the ancient city, on which the sand has accumulated so as to form a line of low heights, giving cover to the largest bodies of men. . . .

Two very solid walls,¹ 300 yards apart, run from the place to this bank, thus inclosing on three sides a space probably occupied

¹ W. W. on the plan.



originally by the Mogul Emperor's palace, but found by us to contain a large mosque, and numerous gardens and houses occupied by fakeers: one of the gates of the town opens into it, and it was traversed by a watercourse about ten feet wide, which entered the town by a tunnel under the rampart, large enough to admit several men abreast; a similar tunnel allowed it to pass out of the town on the eastern side.

The walls of the town extended about 2,100 yards, without reckoning the bastions, of which there were thirty-three. The works were of earth and in the usual style of the country, viz. a high thin rampart, but in a state of ruin, without parapets and without ditch, covered way, or outworks of any kind.

To give some idea of the state of the works, I may mention that, of the committee sent to inspect them on November 13, not one except myself succeeded in making the circuit; large gaps cut off the communication, or insecure footing compelled the officers to descend among the adjoining inclosures, from which it was difficult to find the way [to the rampart].

Salé consulted the officers commanding regiments or corps on three courses which were then open. First, whether to hold the whole town; or, second, merely the Bala Hissar and such part of the town as was necessary; or, third, whether it might not be better to withdraw from the town and form an entrenched camp outside.

It was eventually decided to hold the town, and Broadfoot, as garrison engineer, was required to make it defensible.

This consultation has in some books been erroneously referred to as a council of war; it was merely a consultation as above described.

The position of the garrison was serious; they were partially surrounded by the enemy, were short of provisions, and had on an average only 150 rounds of musket ammunition for each man. The Afghans kept up an irregular fire on the walls, and occupied the rocks opposite the south-west bastion, on which they executed a dance to the tune of a bagpipe. These rocks were afterwards known as 'Piper's Hill.' A sortie was arranged, which, though rather mismanaged, was successful. The cavalry killed about eighty men, the Afghans disappeared, and on November 16 supplies were received from the other side of the river.



Broadfoot was busy repairing and improving the works, ample use being found for the tools which he had insisted on taking with him, which, indeed, had to be supplemented by more made on the spot. Food was supplied mainly by means of the exertions of Capt. Macgregor. That officer, in a letter to Capt. Mackeson, dated November 30, 1841, mentioned that the Afghans avoided the open plain, but kept up a desultory fire on the defences. Whilst this was going on at one side of the town, grain, flour, and other supplies were brought in unopposed at the other. Such was the Oriental method of conducting a siege.

The enemy returned to close quarters on November 28, and a second sortie, commanded by Col. Dennie, was organised. Again the infantry were mismanaged, with the exception of Broadfoot's Sappers, who drove the enemy from the inclosures along the Kabul face of the fort, and took Piper's Hill, killing eight or ten of them. The cavalry, as before, did well, and had they been supported by the infantry the results would have been more decisive. As it was, the garrison was unmolested for a long time, and the enemy applied to Kabul for a reinforcement of 1,500 cavalry; 'a tacit but very handsome compliment to our 200 horse under Oldfield and Mayne, although the General saw no necessity of mentioning their services in his order of thanks.'²

The entries in Broadfoot's small diary kept at this time are for the most part dry records of work done, but occasionally there are references to other matters of interest. On December 14 he appears to have heard from Macgregor of William Broadfoot's death. The entry is: 'Alas! my fears were true; he fell with Burnes on November 2. My noble and beloved William. On that day twelvemonth James was slain. Bitterness of heart is my portion, and, alas! for home.' On the 16th he recorded:

The General still interfering with parties about loopholes, for which his mania continues. A report in to-day that our troops at Cabool have been driven from the cantonment to the Bala Hissar. Another by a man sent on purpose to spread it, that a capitulation has taken place, and our troops are in full retreat on this place. The latter absurd; but if true we are bound by no capitulation they make.

² Backhouse's diary.



December 18.—At the works as yesterday. Heard from Cabool, the letters dated the 10th, from Sir W. Macnaghten and Lady Sale. All inactive since the 23rd, only three days' supplies: rumour said the Candahar reinforcements were near, but no certain accounts.

More details of the events of the 23rd ult. Colin Mackenzie again wounded. The cavalry charged through our infantry. The loss of our troops was very small, not enough to account for their torpidity. The Envoy complains of their inaction: the General urges the Envoy to capitulate.

It would be insanity to do so. They would inveigle our troops into the passes, and on the horses dying of hunger and cold would attack them, seize the guns, and starve or massacre the men reduced by want of food, shelter, or fuel.

The Envoy wishes to postpone capitulation to the last. It is wrong to judge on insufficient information, but grievous errors seem to have been committed; may they not be fatal!

Why were not the troops concentrated from the first, and a pitched battle fought with all our strength? On November 23, it seems, eighteen companies of infantry and some cavalry sallied under Brigadier Shelton. Cavalry, 5,000 it is said, charged and rode through their ranks and back again. A fresh troop of the 5th Cavalry charged the enemy's horse and recovered the gun. We pursued the enemy, who rallied, and forced us to retire to the cantonments. Since then nothing has been done: the numbers of the enemy are less, but their boldness is greater.

Capt. Woodburn was on his way to Cabool with about 100 men when the insurrection broke out. He was attacked, but threw himself into a fort, which he defended till his ammunition failed, when he capitulated, on the enemy swearing on the Koran to keep faith. He and his men were no sooner in the enemy's hands than they were murdered. Woodburn was reckoned the best officer in the Shah's service. Macgregor considers it probable the military will drive Sir W. Macnaghten to grant Mahomed Acbar the terms we heard of, viz. Shah Shooja to reign, with Dost Mahomed as his minister.

December 19.—Heard of Sir W. Macnaghten's answer to the enemy on their proposing Dost Mahomed's recall, our departure for Peshawar, and on news of that being done, their returning to the provinces under a Barukzye escort: our people to lay down their arms at once, and give up the married men and their families as hostages. Sir William replied, 'Death is better than dishonour: we trust in the God of battles, and in His name bid you come on.'³

³ It is said that this reply was suggested to Sir W. Macnaghten by Colin Mackenzie. *Storms and Sunshine of a Soldier's Life*, vol. i. p. 235.

With this spirit they will do well yet; but, unhappily, the military authorities are said not to share it.

December 23.—Among the people the report is rife that the Envoy has capitulated. Altogether improbable—incredible; it would be insanity; but all reports seem to concur as to some accommodation having taken place. Macgregor probably guesses rightly that Mahomed Acbar Khan, finding himself but a secondary person, has made his own terms with us, and that *thus* the rebellion is broken up, or at least disunion produced.

Was asked by some officers of the 13th, whether I saw any of the fighting in the Khoord Cabool pass! This from men whom we preceded; who were not even in sight while the Sappers and Dawes's guns (the latter unable to act) were alone dislodging the enemy from his principal positions! This is indeed the *bubble* reputation.

Received 160 pounds more of country powder. I am promised some sulphur and saltpetre by a Hindoo, but it must come from Balabagh, and Meer Ufzul, Nazir, with a few horsemen, is stopping the road. Everything is difficult for want of money. Macgregor complains bitterly of Mackeson, but is now, happily, beginning not to lean on him. Hard frost, weather delightful.

December 24.—The road across the town, from the Cazee bastion, is a great improvement, or will be if finished. One side can now support the other with reinforcements in a moderate time. A few hours' work will finish the right flank and face, but to-morrow is Christmas Day and a general holiday. Seventy-five camel-loads of barley and Indian corn arrived for the cattle; they are very ill off for forage. There is a good deal in the country, but we want money.

Gool Shah and Uslum Khan, with others, urging me to commit to them the revenge of William's death. The former wants leave to go as soon as he can be spared to murder Ameenollah Khan, Logaree. Alas! poor William, just are their praises of thee—valiant, generous, and gentle wert thou indeed.

December 25, Christmas Day.—A holiday for all hands. Dined with the 13th L.I. No news in. Wrote to Malcolmson.

The following extracts are from this letter:

Since I last wrote, little has occurred here, and we have had no news from Cabool, though rumours of every kind abound. . . .

In the mean time, we are busy putting up defences, and, though executed very roughly, they are already becoming formidable against such enemies as are likely to oppose us. The work has been, and continues to be, a great one. The walls were ruinous, and, in a great portion of the circumference, more accessible from



the outside than the inside. This is already all changed. Nothing can be more admirable than the cheerfulness and goodwill with which the troops labour. Never was a finer body of men assembled. Confidence, too, is greatly restored, and we are tolerably well off for provisions. Had we but money we should be all right, but we have *none*, though some, I hear, has at last been despatched from Peshawur.

We have also got a small quantity of powder from the neighbourhood, and are getting houses [built] for the troops. Altogether, we are getting into that state which would render it clearly our duty to hold our ground here, whatever may be determined on at Cabool. But I trust they will submit to no unworthy terms.

My health is good: the work from the first day till now I have taken great interest in; in fact, were it not for the bitter loss of William, I should be happy, for I am actively employed, and cannot but feel myself, or at least hope, I am useful.

I have some thought of publishing a short statement of our operations (that is this force—not the Cabool people), at any rate I shall draw one out, and you shall see it. Havelock is going to publish also, and I shall give him plans, sections, &c., and show him the paper I write.

People seem to think here I am one of those sure of the brevet-majority and C.B. It may be so, and I should certainly be gratified exceedingly were it so, for I should feel conscious of at least trying to deserve it; but the want of William, and the thought of the sorrow at home, embitter every thought of the future. How he would have shone in the present gloom at Cabool!

I hear there is an 'Englishman' paper in (I have not seen it), saying we must have succumbed before succours can reach. Do not fear for us. This force if rightly managed will hold its own. It was indeed once in a bad way, but, as I wrote you at the time, it would have been our own fault had it been destroyed. We could always, if we had not got provisions, have fought our way to meet our reinforcements; and now, if we manage well, we could sustain *here* the attack of all Afghanistan. Despondency has been our chief danger here. Do not let it extend to India, or evil might indeed befall. And make them keep off a Burmese war. But I forget you are out of the way of all these things in the far West.

December 26.—At work as before. Opened a road from the new bastion to the Cazee bastion, a most useful work. Newspapers in from India—the General's despatches—the Sappers never mentioned! General indignation thereat—spoke to Havelock and Wade pretty freely regarding it.

December 27.—Trying to make the best of the vicious tracing



of these old works. Treasure 25,000 rs. arrived from Peshawur at last, brought by horsemen in the service of Torabaz Khan. More on the road. The horsemen seemed much astonished at the works we have put up.

The first brigade of the reinforcements arrived at Peshawur on the 24th. Clerk's sending on these reinforcements was a vigorous and wise measure. The objects to be gained justified risking them in the Punjab. We have to a certain extent saved ourselves, but we owed much to the knowledge the Afghans had that these troops were on their way. It encouraged our friends, and gradually disheartened the enemy.

Have had no time to write to anyone. No news from Cabool.

Cunningham and Gerrard at length noticed in orders⁴ for the Mamoo Khel affair. This is in consequence of a letter (official) sent in by Backhouse, remonstrating on the neglect of it hitherto. The General uses my words regarding Cunningham persevering in the mining when the place was on fire. It was paid no attention to formerly.

December 28.—At work as usual. Lost the morning in going round the place with Col. Monteath to choose an encamping ground for the troops coming up. The Colonel does not willingly adopt suggestions, as I found at Khoord Cabool, where it required poor Jenkins's death and the loss of many men to convince him how faulty was the position of the right picket. He agreed to occupy the rocks, but declined placing the troops so that the fort and they could help each other; and gave reasons which told more strongly against his position than the other.⁵ However, I obeyed orders in going. Rain fell, and I got wet: not very well at night.

The entries regarding the next few days refer as usual to the progress which was being made with the defensive works. A report, afterwards confirmed, of the murder of Sir W. Macnaghten is also noticed. With reference to the effect this news might have, Broadfoot wrote: 'All I fear is panic in our leaders, and consequently in the troops. We are strong if that be kept off; strong enough to do great deeds. Reinforcements are at Peshawur. In a week or ten days they should be here, and if my voice can do anything to urge our leaders, we shall then resume, what with such enemies should seldom be abandoned, the offensive.'

⁴ See p. 45.

⁵ Means apparently that the reasons given by Monteath told more against

the position he wished to put the troops in than against the one advocated by Capt. Broadfoot.



January 1, 1842.—Little doubt seems to be now entertained of Sir W. Macnaghten's fate. They must have had very hard work at Cabool; we shall no doubt hear of great suffering and much heroism when the communication is reopened. Poor Trevor was a fine fellow. Wade spoke to-day of a report of the state of the works, and mention of the Sappers. . . . Spoke to Havelock about it. Wrote to Thoby Prinsep.

The first part of the letter referred to has already been quoted; ⁶ the second, with the exception of a long postscript, may now appropriately follow.

You of course know all our news from Macgregor's communications. The reinforcements are soon expected; and as to the Khyber, if they cannot force that they are hardly worth having, or rather their commanders might be spared; but the Khyberees will, we hope, not oppose. The rumours of poor Macnaghten's murder are confirmed from every side, and the details reported you of course know. I am truly sorry for him; he was a kind man, and specially so to me as a friend of yours. His late firmness, too, redeemed many errors. They have had a severe struggle at Cabool, and still have; but if they are only well handled, and in each effort exert *all* their strength, they will deliver themselves. If they continue in jeopardy, their relief must be our care. A winter march is an undertaking of great difficulty; but nothing is impossible with forethought, due preparation, and calm obstinate courage. But these are rare qualities, *all* wanting here; gallantry and right-heartedness we have, but not the nerve to look the very worst in the face, and by preparing, or even unprepared, to meet it unshaken. I have crossed the Alps twice in different parts in winter, and have travelled in German mountains in snow, and once had to travel on foot the Apennines also, and I was born in the latitude of St. Petersburg. The dangers, and the means of meeting them, of a winter expedition I have therefore some notion of; scarcely another man here has, and while the majority speak of the attempt in a way unbecoming men called to a struggle like ours, others consider it so easy that its unavoidable difficulties will, as we have already seen in other cases, scare them at the moment when vigorous perseverance alone can save. An attempt to relieve Cabool at once should be made, if we find any tolerable prospect of success in doing so, but ought not to be risked unless absolutely necessary. With arrangement we might do it; even with such moderate share of it as we are likely to have, we might get through if the weather was

⁶ See p. 30.