



fine; but if snow storms come on and we are vigorously opposed, we should have to strain every nerve to avoid signal disaster. I am now glad Colin is wounded, or he would have been with poor Macnaghten.

What a tragic history is this we are making, but yet how noble a struggle to be engaged in! Enough to make men of women.

One good, a great good, will arise from this evil: no treaty is now possible till it be dictated by us as conquerors—by us, here, together with the reinforcements we will hope; but even should it be by a new army of the Indus, our destruction would be a less evil to the State than any treaty impeding what ought now and easily can be achieved, the conquest of this country. Recede from it we never can, or it ceases to be in our interests, or even neutral. We must regard it as a fortress to be held for the security of India; a certain expense, indeed, but an inevitable one, and one to be diminished to the utmost. This diminution can only be effected by *governing it ourselves*, not introducing Indian regulations more than English law, by wholesale, but administering and improving its finances, and tranquillising it by breaking all military power but our own, and, to the extent necessary to secure these objects, administering justice.

Never mind these fellows gathering, we have made this place now defensible against an attack *de vive force*; formerly we could not have kept them out if they had tried to get in, they could have forced us to a street fight; but our true line of defence is going out and fighting, and if that be rightly done, no fear of them; let the worst come, you may have an army round by Candahar before they have succeeded in demolishing us.

G. B.

Macgregor is a good man; it is not with him the aversion to previous preparation lies. As I was carrying this to the postmaster, I learned the afflicting intelligence that poor Colin *was* with Macnaghten, and is now a prisoner in Cabool. Most deeply do I sympathise with you all and with all his relations. But there is yet hope, and good hope; they have not yet murdered any of the prisoners, nor is it likely they will now do so, for it would defeat their end in saving them at first. In the mean time, their deliverance must be our aim; and if I have hitherto never ceased to urge preparation on our leaders for every emergency, and to make it, as far as concerned me, my efforts shall not slacken now that private affection joins with the sense of duty and the call of honour. Doubly needful is it now that a blow should be struck the moment the reinforcements arrive; and while the disheartening news is still spreading among the enemy, let it be followed up each day by accounts





of a fresh blow inflicted on them. This will spread dismay and disunion among them at Cabool. Should they carry off their hostages, we must follow them wherever they are harboured, be it in Herat or Bokhara.

Think not these are mere opinions founded on feeling. If we mean, among a warlike and hitherto never perfectly subdued people, to avoid incessant rebellions, with all the expense of repressing them, and continually being ready to meet them, it must be by showing them once for all, that much as we have borne, it is not from weakness; that no combination is beyond our power to crush, and that from our power there is no refuge. Nothing but showing beyond all doubt that insurrection is hopeless, will effectually prevent it; but that *will* do so, and now is the time to secure ourselves for the future.

But what are we to say to Pottinger's communications: a retreat on us, to evacuate the country! and this the defender of Herat! the most fortunate man at this moment in Asia! Filling a situation insuring a harvest of glory, a man would part with ten years to have so fair a trial. There must surely be circumstances we know nothing of to bring this on.<sup>7</sup> If they do agree to abandon the country, it will fearfully complicate our evils for a time, for we here are in no way bound by such convention till the Government of India ratifies it, and that of course you will never dream of. Nor can they include us in any convention. A general, not the absolute ruler of a state, can only capitulate for those under his own orders, for the instant he capitulates he ceases to command; abdicates, *ipso facto*, all authority over all not in the same straits as himself. He yields to force; those not subject to that force are not bound to yield to commands he, no longer a free agent, is compelled to give.

But will they not revenge our resistance on the retreating force? They will, perhaps, try to do so, but that breaks *their* truce also, and, united, we can be at them. In any case let us fight to the uttermost to rescue our brethren or make them victorious, but not sell our country as the price of saving them from attack.

What a change from the unvarying glory of the last half century, when such questions are seriously discussed. But all will yet be right, if you and we acquit ourselves like men. We shall soon know of the retreat commencing, if ever they attempt it, for the whole country will rise, and then, come what may, our duty is to prolong the struggle till able to conquer.

<sup>7</sup> When Broadfoot wrote these lines he did not know that Pottinger had to the best of his ability endeavoured to

rouse the chief military officers to a sense of duty and of honour—without success.





But younger, or at least more energetic, men must be employed. Seniority will not answer. Brevet rank should remedy the evil. Rank given for service no one can grudge or envy. This brigade has done more than many forces where the brevet has been given; and as I feel injustice done to me, and the public voice before the despatches appeared in print had pointed me out for anything given, I shall ask the General to remedy his injustice; and if he does not, shall send you a statement of the case, to show how matters really stand.

If Pottinger attempts to capitulate and retreat, they will probably inveigle them into the passes and attack them, and heavy indeed would be their loss without cattle, fuel, or food, assailed night and day amidst the snow. Consider that our brigade (mismanaged certainly, but will they do better?) lost 250 killed and wounded between Cabool and Gundumuk.

As to Shah Shooja, the partner of the Kafirs, the country will regard his fate with indifference. Pension him liberally, but do not govern through him: either you make him such a cipher that he and his, being the scorn of the country, will hate and thwart us, who make them so; or else, power in his or any other Asiatic hands, so situated, will be exercised alternately with feebleness and tyranny, but always clumsily, odiously to the people, and expensively to us. Nor is there any breach of faith in this. We set up the Shah at our own charge that he might keep Afghanistan friendly to us, but he cannot perform his part of the contract; he cannot hold it for himself; and the same necessity of self-preservation that justified our sweeping away the *de facto* rulers to make room for this experiment, justifies us in resorting to other means when these fail. Especially as the Shah could not fail to be an enormous gainer compared with what he was at Loodhiana. Our choice rests between this course and re-enacting, without the same excuse of novelty of situation, the Carnatic history of Chunda Sahib and Mahomed Ali and Wala Jah down to the forced abdications of Lord Wellesley's administrations. Clamour of injustice there will be in either case: in the one, once for all, and a drain on our finances permanently limited, and brought under our own control; in the other, for a generation or two, with the accompaniments all that time of misgovernment and its results, discontent, revolt, and waste of our resources.

Now this is pretty well from me to a member of Government; but a report is just in that the enemy are gathering again at Balabagh; likely enough; we shall probably have hard work before you read this, and some, if not many of us, be for ever at rest, and none more likely than myself, for my escape hitherto has gone





beyond the chances, for though forgotten in the despatches, no fear of our being omitted in the hour of danger. So be it. But if angry at my presumption, be appeased by the reflection that the offence may never be repeated. Should this happen, the truth will then out, and what little bubble of reputation I ought to have will be accorded to me dead, and I trust please my friends, and in time soothe my heartbroken relations at home, for such this fatal 2nd of November must have made them. . . .

If I fall, pray inquire as to the services of the Sappers, and do not forget my two officers Orr and Cunningham, and two sergeants Kelly and Bruen. They have done good service to their country, and do not forget the corps at large. But, to turn before parting to something better, give my kindest regards to all your circle, and say I fully expect yet to take the place in it once more I so greatly valued, and should it be minus an arm or a leg, the ladies will have pity on the *pauvre estropié*. And Colin, too, I mean to bring with me.

Believe me &c.

G. BROADFOOT.

Extracts from Capt. Broadfoot's diary are now continued ; they serve to show much that was passing in his mind, and illustrate some of the difficulties with which he had to contend. The continued exposure to the glare of the sun had brought on severe inflammation in one of his eyes, and the hard work and bad food seem to have made his general state of health unsatisfactory. He had urged that plans of operations in case of certain eventualities should be prepared, and that officers should be made familiar with them, so that when the time came no delay in taking action might occur. But this, like much else which he urged, though wise and prudent, was opposed.

Recommended once more that a plan should be fixed. Macgregor objects the uncertainty of events. True, but let us fix with reference to probable or even to all conceivable issues, and see what answers in all cases, and be ready to execute that at once when reinforcements come.

*January 7.*—Bastion finished before breakfast. Some grasscutters destroyed by the enemy near Khoosh Goombuz ; our cavalry pursued them in vain. Hindoo merchant has sulphur at Killa e Bukhtan on this side of Chahar bagh. Urged Macgregor to get the General to let me take out a detachment to bring in that, and Macgregor suggested forage also. An excellent hint, but the General told Macgregor that





he did not want powder! but would see about forage. Nothing has been done—deplorable imbecility! exposing us to the contempt of the country, and encouraging [our enemies].

I had arranged to get materials for gabions, but the native [who was to go out and collect them] wanted a guard. On asking for it the General could not see the use of gabions! I said in case of going out to attack these forts in the neighbourhood they would be required for batteries. He did not see the use of batteries. I told him he would not get his artillery to do much without them, and on his denying this mentioned Abbott's refusing to continue firing at Tezeen under a musketry fire. He denied this! I reaffirmed and said it was this that made me attack the fort. He denied my attack, and said Col. Dennie and the 13th took it. I told him they did not; and that the Sappers alone did so. He said then it made very little resistance, and was open! I said the resistance was little, but I had to force an entrance, and blow off the bolt of the wicket to get in. He seemed ashamed, and thought, I fancy, of his despatch.

He has also prohibited the removal of the huts on the ramparts, declaring them useful as the men are on their posts! forgetting that so much parapet is lost and the rampart rendered impassable except by narrow doors through huts encumbered by bedding &c.

Wrote to Thoby Prinsep.

Macgregor doubtful, I grieve to find, about holding out.

*January 9.*—Three Achikzye horsemen brought in a peremptory order from Gen. Elphinstone to Gen. Sale to quit Jelalabad for Peshawur. The order was 'to be delivered by the new Governor.'

Answer: that it is of an old date, and not delivered by the person named; and as Mahomed Acbar Khan's proclamations are about, calling on the people here to attack us, what security have we that we shall have a safe passage to Peshawur?

In the mean time the reinforcements are at Jumrood, and rumoured to be farther on.

Our duty in every case is clear—to stand fast to the last, unless our Government resolve to abandon the contest, an unlikely contingency.

Wrote a few lines to Malcolmson and Thoby Prinsep. Hear Colin Mackenzie and the others are released; I fervently trust it is true.

Referring to the refusal to obey Elphinstone's order, Broadfoot wrote to Malcolmson:

... The General declines acting till further advices are received. This is all right, but the trying time will be when the force (if ever)





comes down.<sup>8</sup> We must then encourage the old General by every means to hold out, for this place is more defensible now against Afghans than many places held out against better troops for very long periods at the earlier epochs of our Indian history. I for one protest against yielding; but I must close.

In a postscript he complained about the omission in despatches of mention of the Sappers, and said he was about to address a remonstrance to Sale.

They are the only corps omitted, and I the only commanding officer, and you may print if you like that they have been scandalously used in burking their exploits and even ascribing what they did to others, as the capture of a fort at Tezeen.

*January 10.*—Eyes too much inflamed to write. News from Cabool of the 4th. Lawrence writes for Pottinger, and such a letter! contradictory and absurd. Sturt writes the General—the King's party looking up unaided by us—and we! I blush to think of it—such terms as we have made.<sup>9</sup>

Attempts made to corrupt our men reported to me by themselves, hitherto unsuccessful; but not so, I fear, with the Juzailchees.

At this very critical period a part of Capt. Broadfoot's diary has been lost. From January 10 to February 1 the leaves have disappeared, and all endeavour to trace them has been fruitless. When Major Broadfoot was killed in 1845, the diary was in the hands of the late Sir H. Havelock, who sent it to Broadfoot's successor in office, Sir H. Lawrence, from whom it was received some years after by Major Broadfoot's family without the pages referred to.

On January 12, Backhouse recommended that the camp followers should be armed to increase the number of available defenders; and on the 13th, Dr. Brydon, severely wounded and clinging to an exhausted pony, was seen from the walls and brought in. He was, with the exception of the prisoners and hostages in Akbar Khan's power, the sole survivor of the unfortunate Kabul army.

His dreadful story still further depressed the Jalalabad garrison, already in sufficiently low spirits. But they hoped much from Wild's force at Peshawar. These hopes were not

<sup>8</sup> Refers to the Kabul force.

from Kabul and the terms under which Kabul was evacuated.

<sup>9</sup> These remarks refer to the news





shared by Broadfoot ; he divined correctly the probable failure of assistance from that source, and on learning the destruction of the Kabul force, he, as garrison engineer, laid the facts regarding the state of Jalalabad before Major-Gen. Sir R. Sale, and pointed out that unless he were prepared to hold the place to the last extremity, he should retreat that night, and fight his way out of the country. A plan of operations was prepared ; the retreat was to be conducted as a military measure without convention or agreement with the enemy. But Sale, believing in Wild's assistance, decided to remain, and wrote to the Commander-in-Chief that he had resolved on the most determined defence of the place, relying on the promise of early relief, the necessity for which he again strongly urged.<sup>1</sup>

Wild's brigade failed to penetrate the Khaibar, and Sale, on learning this, seems to have been appalled by a situation which a few days before he declined to contemplate.

With the assistance of Capt. Macgregor he devised a scheme for the evacuation of Jalalabad under a convention with the Afghans, and on January 26, 1842, he summoned a council of war to listen to and approve of proposals in which the honour and safety of the garrison were involved.

Broadfoot, as has been stated, had foreseen the danger, and when confronted with it was differently affected. The following extracts from a letter written on January 25 to Mrs. Bayley show the line of conduct which he considered should be followed before he was aware of the proposals about to be recommended to the council. It should be mentioned that the news of the Kabul disasters appeared to have completely paralysed the Governor-General and Council in Calcutta. Instead of putting forth all their strength and using every resource at their disposal to relieve the Jalalabad garrison, the Government seemed unable or unwilling to give them prompt assistance.

By labours rarely equalled we have given time to the Government to relieve us and retrieve the national fortunes ; they have not used the opportunity, but sent battalions instead of armies, and we shall perhaps, nay *probably*, perish. But we shall fall with honour, with the consciousness that history will acquit *us* of failing in our duty, and acknowledge that even though destroyed we have given time for the first dangerous terror to subside,

<sup>1</sup> Major-Gen. Sir R. Sale to Major-Gen. Lumley, January 13, 1841.





and rendered the conquest of this country still possible, though with a difficulty and national effort tenfold greater than if advantage had been vigorously taken of our resistance. Gen. Pollock is approaching, but he has with him two battalions only, and will find but four, defeated and dispirited. If he succeeds (and four battalions would have easily succeeded at first), we may yet hold out here till the army for Cabool arrives; but if he fails (and every obstacle will now be accumulated against him), none of us may live to tell the tale of our fall; but glorious, or at least honourable, rely on it, it will be.

The proceedings and decisions of the council of war, when it first met and afterwards reassembled, are of all the events connected with Sale's brigade the most memorable and important. For in that assembly the question whether to defend the place to extremity and maintain untarnished the honour of their arms, or to negotiate with the enemy for capitulation, was discussed and eventually decided.

The council consisted of Major-Gen. Sir Robert Sale, president, with the following officers as members: Col. Dennie, C.B., 13th L.I.; Col. Monteath, C.B., 35th N.I.; Captains Abbott, Backhouse, and Macgregor, Bengal Artillery, the latter being the Political Officer; Capt. Oldfield, 5th Bengal Cavalry; and Capt. Broadfoot, of Broadfoot's Sappers, garrison engineer.

Captains Havelock and Wade were present as members of the General's staff, and recorded proceedings; but they had no vote, and consequently could not directly influence the decision. The records connected with the proceedings were in Havelock's charge, and the following correspondence will explain why Capt. Broadfoot thought it necessary to draw up a memorandum on the subject and to obtain Havelock's testimony to its accuracy.

*Major Broadfoot to Major Havelock.*

Steamer 'Enterprise': April 10, 1843.

My dear Havelock,—You remember my coming to you in Ferozpoore after meeting Macgregor at Maddock's, and your telling me of your having been deprived somewhat suddenly of all the documents regarding our Jellalabad parliaments. I then, I think, told you I should draw out a sketch of what I remembered of them, and leave copies with my friends. Well, the night of my departure from Delhi, I wrote one in great haste and left it with Durand, together with what was more trustworthy, as not liable to errors of memory,



viz. such copies of documents as I had preserved. Now, in the former there was the trace of the ludicrous portion of the debates, and of what was worse, too visible; there were also omissions, &c.; so I have, in these respects, amended it, and propose sending you a copy of the amended one, and asking you to apprise Durand and myself if you found any points erroneously stated, distinguishing between what you may merely not remember, and what you know I am mistaken in.

I have not time, however, before getting out of the river to make another copy for Durand. I therefore send him this with a request that he will forward it to you. Kindly point out to him any errors you may notice; and if you think it worth while, keep a copy of the paper. If you would like copies of the documents I have, you shall have them. Among them is the French letter which made such an impression, and the copy of my own reasons for voting as I did.

Should you have copies of the Persian papers, I wish you would let me have transcripts, though, on second thoughts, your having been recently deprived of them may render it improper in you now to communicate them. You had them as in Gen. Sale's confidence, and are bound by his wish for concealment. I had them as a voting member, and am not so bound; but mind, I nevertheless desire not *publicity*.

I believe I told you it was a note of mine to Malcolmson, written at the time, which made the mere *fact* of councils having assembled known; but I find from Malcolmson it was not.

That note went with the official papers (Macgregor's) by a *cossid*,<sup>2</sup> who was killed; or, at any rate, never reached. Another man carried a line from me to Mackeson, begging him to give my news to Malcolmson; and in this I mentioned my regret at what I took for granted he knew, our having offered to capitulate; we were then waiting the answer.

I need not tell you this summary is by no means intended as a full account of the councils. Such an account is nearly impossible, as you know, from the heat and irregularity of the debates; two or three discussions going on at the same time occasionally, and the same arguments urged and answered over and over. I have merely endeavoured to give the general scope of the reasonings on both sides and the results. I think the account of the letter actually sent is something near the mark, and that is the main point.

I am going now to an old scene, but to new duties,<sup>3</sup> and have some difficulties to encounter; and I confess to you, I never before entered

<sup>2</sup> *Cossid*, *kāṣid*, courier, messenger.      missioner of the Tenasserim Pro-

<sup>3</sup> He had been appointed Com-      vinctes.





on duties with more anxiety or less cheerful anticipation. Save perhaps on first going into Jellalabad, amidst all that you remember; but then there was the stimulus of the enemy at the door. However, now as then, I shall do my best, and for the best.

I am very sorry I was not able to see Mrs. Havelock, but here is the dak-boat, and I must conclude. Let me hear from you; I shall write on this voyage, and despatch it from Maulmain.

Ever &c.

G. BROADFOOT.

P.S.—I have no time to write to Durand. I must send him this for transmission. The pencil marks were for you, but there is no harm in Durand seeing them.

*Major Havelock to Major Broadfoot, C.B.*

Kussowlee: May 1, 1843.

My dear Broadfoot,—I got some days ago yours of the 10th ult. I have perused carefully your notes on the councils in Jellalabad, and compared them with such memoranda as I have still in my possession. I consider that they contribute a fair and correct statement of that which occurred. There are certainly one or two little incidents mentioned which I either did not observe or have forgotten. I do not recollect Col. Monteath, for instance, having quoted poetry. But I might have been out of the room at the moment, or my attention might have been attracted to something else (for in all jackdaw parliaments such distractions are frequent), or the fact of the gallant Colonel's usual declamation having something of the character of prose upon stilts might have prevented my remarking that he had taken a flight bodily into the poetic region. In every material point your recollections so closely coincide with mine, that I have not thought it necessary to append any remarks to your paper before returning it to Durand. I propose to copy it to-day, and shall be most thankful to you for a transcript of your reasons for your vote, as well as of the French letter, and any other documents which you may have regarding the councils.

I was only yesterday, by a letter from my wife, made aware that you had been at Serampore at all. I share in her regret that she was in Calcutta at the time. John Marshman's numerous avocations have prevented him from sending me a line for, I think, the last two months.

I have to thank you for the copy of the 'Englishman' containing your letter respecting the Koodee Kheil affair.<sup>4</sup> Here, too, my

<sup>4</sup> This refers to the action at Mamu Kheil, shortly before Pollock's force marched to Kabul. See pp. 134-152.





recollections generally confirm yours. I did not know, indeed, that the detachment of the 9th had been formally placed at your disposal; but I saw you leading the attack which they made. I think the only man who fell was a grenadier, and, if so, Ogle, who probably was with his company, was your senior; but we know that in helter-skelter *skrimmages* (and the pursuit at Koodee Kheil was eminently such) portions of troops often act under the orders of a forward junior, whilst a senior is carried along with them, inadvertent of the circumstance, or unwilling or unable to rectify the error in the hurry of events. Col. Taylor is an active, very gallant, and intelligent officer, too, but not a man of very clear ideas or sound judgment, and has shown the defects in his character in this instance, by exposing publicly in the columns of a newspaper, the little jealousy excited in his mind by the assertion that you had commanded a part of the Queen's 9th Regiment.

I do not know what kind of difficulties you have to encounter in governing the Tenasserim Provinces, but will guess that they may be those which, in peace or war, my small experience has always shown me to be the most formidable—viz. the selfishness, obstinacy, and imbecility of those who ought to be coadjutors, but whose minds are absorbed, that of each in the pursuit of his own private ends, *et totus in illis*.

Most sincerely do I wish you success, and pray you to believe me, ever &c.

H. HAVELOCK.

P.S. May 5.—Before despatching this, your kind letter of the 15th reached me, but to it I will reply separately and at the length the generosity of its sentiments merits.

H. H.

I have taken a copy of your paper regarding the councils.

*Major Havelock to Capt. Durand.*

Kussowlee: May 1, 1843.

My dear Durand,—I have read over Broadfoot's memoir regarding the councils of war in Jellalabad, and compared it with such memoranda as I possess. I consider it a faithful account of that which occurred.

As was to be expected, some minor incidents have adhered to his memory which have escaped mine, such as Col. Monteath's quoting poetry and the like; and of course if I were to tell the story I should introduce like personal anecdotes, which he has forgotten, such as the astounding vehemence with which Oldfield exclaimed, 'I for one will fight here to the last drop of my blood, but I plainly declare that I will never be a hostage, and I am surprised anyone should propose such a thing, or think that an Affghan's word is to be taken for any-





thing.' But the account of the debates as given by Broadfoot is so correct that I have thought it unnecessary to attach any remarks to his sketch. Oldfield and Broadfoot were the only two who voted at the first council absolutely against treating to quit the country.

As to the imputed excesses of our troops in the last campaign, a distinction is to be drawn between the punishment inflicted by authority, such as the destruction of the bazaar and mosque at Cabool, Khuda Baksh Khan's fort at Tezeen, and the conflagration of Istaliff, Lughmanee, Charekar, &c., and the irregularities of the troops and followers arising from a relaxed discipline.

The former in my opinion were far too slight, and ought to have been carried much farther, certainly to the utter destruction of the Bala Hissar, and the devastation of the valley of Logar, Tootoo, and Hissaruk; all the Ghilzie villages near Jugdulluck, and finally Teera, the Khyberree capital. The latter<sup>s</sup> of course ought to have been none at all; the previous provocation considered, they were not great. But a heretic like me can hardly hope to be listened to on this subject, seeing that I hold the ultra, and perhaps irregular, opinion of the expediency of keeping Affghanistan altogether, in the way of complete subjugation, after having once come there.

Kindly forward the accompanying to the Tenasserim governor, and believe me &c.

H. HAVELOCK.

*Capt. Durand to Major Broadfoot, C.B.*

Barrackpore: July 17, 1843.

My dear Broadfoot,—I have long kept these papers with the view of myself taking a copy of them; but finding that this remains as little advanced as on the day I received them from Havelock, I return the documents with his two notes, one to yourself, one to me. The latter you can at your convenience return to me. If you can by a confidential person have a copy made for me of your memorandum, I should be obliged.

We reached this place on the 12th, and on the 13th Lord Ellenborough resumed his seat in Council.

I hope soon to hear good news from your quarter; and send this to the Foreign Office with a request to Thomason that it may be sent with the next Government despatches for Moulmein.

Mr. Bird is continued as Deputy Governor of Bengal. Mr. Maddock is laid up with a troublesome thumb. All else much as usual in this quarter, by no means a favourite one with myself.

Yours sincerely,

H. M. DURAND.

<sup>s</sup> 'The latter:' that is, the irregularities from relaxed discipline.



Broadfoot's memorandum referred to in these letters will be found of great interest. It is printed as nearly as possible as it is written; the original is in his own handwriting, the remarks on the margin are partly in his and partly in Havelock's writing.

# COUNCILS OF WAR IN JELLALABAD.

*Notes by Major Broadfoot and  
Remarks by Major Henry  
Havelock.*

*Memorandum by Major Broadfoot on  
the proceedings of the Councils of  
War.*

Here is all I have regarding our councils of war, or at any rate all that was written at the time. The affair happened thus:

Early in January, Capt. Mackeson announced his purpose of dividing Brigadier Wild's force: of course failure was looked for. On the 13th Dr. Brydon came in. To hold Jellalabad now became of great importance, but of as great difficulty. Not expecting help from Peshawur, and not believing Gen. Sale and Capt. Macgregor equal to face a struggle such as might occur; knowing them both also to be in the habit of keeping away the belief in danger, rather than of estimating and preparing for it; I begged Capt. Havelock<sup>a</sup> to lay the case before the General, and tell him, if he found himself unequal to a defence to extremity, he should retreat that night when it was still possible. The General resolved to stand his ground, and the letter to the Commander-in-Chief was written.

<sup>a</sup> Over the Cabool gate, about half an hour after Brydon came in, Holcombe reported the massacre as going on close at hand. I took out some of the Sappers, but was recalled. On coming back I found the gates shut, and the General and all the officers over the Cabool gate; the poor General looking out with a spy-glass Caboolward. It was there our conversation took place.—G. B.

I perfectly recollect this.

H. H.

<sup>b</sup> You, I believe, kept a detailed journal, and may re-

The defeat of Col. Wild's force in the Khyber was announced.

A letter from Shah Shoojah was received asking Capt. Macgregor what his intentions were, nothing more.<sup>b</sup>

It ran thus: 'Your people have



*Notes and Remarks—cont.*

member if there was anything else.

G. B.

Nothing of importance.

H. H.

\* In this, or in the one laid before the second council of war, he intimated that if we only supplied him with money, he did not want our troops, but would hold the country—for us.

G. B.

All Shah Shooja's private letters spoke much of money, and of his not requiring our troops, but especially that laid before the second council.

H. H.

<sup>a</sup> We had previously had all the papers said to bear on the question read to us and laid on the table; but this was kept back. It had been received before Brydon came in.

G. B.

*Major Broadfoot's Memorandum—cont.*

concluded a treaty with us; you are still in Jellalabad; what are your intentions? tell us quickly.' A private letter from the King was full of professions of friendship.<sup>c</sup>

The council of war was called, and assembled at Gen. Sale's quarters.

The General said he had called us to consult on a matter on which Capt. Macgregor and himself were agreed, and which Capt. M. would explain.

Capt. Macgregor then detailed the circumstances we were in as he viewed them: he and Sale saying we had nothing to hope from Government. Capt. Macgregor, moreover, said that, though he reserved his right to do as he pleased, he was willing to hear our opinion as to offers he had from Mahomed Akbar (now in Lughman), to treat for the evacuation of the country and restoration of Dost Mahomed. The excitement in the council of war was great.

I maintained we had no grounds to think the Government had abandoned us, though their measures were weak. Gen. Sale, in the heat of dispute, quoted the terms of the French letter, and Capt. Macgregor denied they were so strong. I insisted <sup>d</sup> on its being produced, when they were found to be as Gen. Sale said. The indignation against the Governor-General (and Government, including the Commander-in-Chief, but chiefly the Governor-General) now went beyond bounds. I tried to urge that a new Governor-General was on his way out, and perhaps in India (we did not know he was coming round the Cape), while the Duke of Wellington was now in



*Notes and Remarks—cont.*

\* My eyes were so inflamed that I could not copy it, though I had all the papers for some days for that purpose. Indeed, I was obliged to employ Cunningham in the English documents. You of course had the originals, but did not Wade get from your mooftee copies of all the Persian letters, including our own assent to Cabool?

G. B.

Copies, I think, were taken of all or nearly all the Persian papers, and attached with translations to the proceedings of the councils. All these papers I had in my possession, and gave all to Sir R. Sale on our return towards India; I think in camp at Jellalabad.—H. H.

*Major Broadfoot's Memorandum—cont.*

office, and a feeble war policy impossible, but in vain; and Col. Dennie and Capt. Abbott took advantage of the vehemence of my language to damage my arguments with those who hesitated.

I therefore proposed adjournment, which was carried. Col. Monteath, as we went out, expressed his concurrence in it being our duty to hold out, and quoted some not inappropriate poetry.

I should have said that after detailing the case, Capt. Macgregor and Gen. Sale informed us that they had resolved to yield and negotiate for a safe retreat. They laid before us a letter they wished our assent to. It was Persian, in reply to Shah Shooja.

As well as I remember, it was as follows:\*

That we had received H.M.'s letter; that we held Jellalabad and the country only for him; and, of course, if he asked it, we were ready now to go back to India; but, after what had happened, we thought it necessary to propose the following terms:

That we forthwith evacuate Jellalabad and the country.

That we would give four hostages to show our sincerity.

That the King was to send a force to escort us in safety and honour to Peshawur; that is, with our arms, colours, guns, &c.; and that this escort was to be commanded by one of the princes, his sons.

That Mahomed Akbar was to be withdrawn from Ningrahar before we quitted Jellalabad.

That hostages were to be given



*Notes and Remarks—cont.*

' Not Ghilzie, but Shinwaree, Afreedee, and Mohmund, I think.

H. H.

The phraseology of this letter, in the original, was so submissive that on reading it I could not help throwing it from me, and it fell to the ground. I had forgotten this till reminded of it by an Afghan chief (Burukut Khan's brother), who heard it from Capt. Macgregor's mooftee, who was present occasionally, and with other Afghans, at the door of the room adjoining (i.e. Capt. Macgregor's room). I mention it as it made a great *sensation* among the Afghans, as I afterwards heard.

G. B.

*Major Broadfoot's Memorandum—cont.*

us as far as Peshawur, there to be exchanged for our hostages and prisoners in the Afghans' hands.

That these hostages were to be Sooltan Jan, said to be a favourite cousin of Mahomed Akbar; a son of the Nawab Zeman Khan, Barukzye; a son of Ameenoola Khan of Logur; with some<sup>2</sup> (Ghilzye, I think) Shainwaree and Khyberee chiefs.

That we were to be assisted in the matter of supplies and carriage.

At night I visited Capt. Havelock on the affair, and I found that though he thought with me, he disapproved of the warmth of my language. Next morning, therefore, I put all I had to say on paper. Capt. Havelock agreed to every word, and during the subsequent meeting occasionally intimated his adhesion to these views, but he had no vote, though present as one of the General's staff.

When the council met, Col. Dennie and Capt. Abbott employed on their side ridicule, and hints of my judgment being obscured by warmth of feeling. I obtained a hearing, however, for the paper, and argued every point, taking votes first on the propriety of treating at all, and then on some of the details.

At this meeting Col. Monteath avoided me and seemed gloomy; he sat near Capt. Macgregor, who, in a long conversation, completely gained him over. I was now alone, I thought, as to votes, but was surprised in the main point to get that of Capt. Oldfield.

To treat for a surrender on the above terms (one excepted) was carried.

Our giving hostages was not car-



*Notes and Remarks—cont.*

\* I do not think it came to a vote. Col. Dennie, I remember, treated the objection as if it were merely from a spirit of opposition, and the general feeling seemed strong against me, save Capt. Backhouse, who seemed to have but one feeling, viz. indignation at our supposed abandonment.

G. B.

<sup>h</sup> Their arguments, I think, were that it was useless to ask for them, where we ought, in fact, to give additional hostages, and that our asking for them would only prejudice the present arrangement, which would restore them to us at Peshawur.

G. B.

<sup>i</sup> I dare say you remember the plan; you and I were for a time alone, and we talked of it several times. Dennie himself became a convert after some weeks, and held forth on it after his wont.

G. B.

I recollect generally, but should like to be reminded of all its details.

H. H.

\* Save in the matter of hostages. You reminded me of his energy in saying he would fight, but *never* be a hostage.

G. B.

*Major Broadfoot's Memorandum—cont.*

ried, though Capt. Macgregor volunteered to go himself as one; he and Gen. Sale contended earnestly for this point.

\* I objected to showing fear of Mahomed Akbar by asking for his removal; but this was carried against me.

I proposed to demand all our prisoners before going, and used every argument I could. None spoke at first in reply; but at length <sup>h</sup> Gen. Sale and Capt. Macgregor opposed it, and after a sharp discussion between us three my proposal fell to the ground.

I proposed that if the country was to be evacuated, we should do it as a military operation, deceiving the enemy as to our intentions and fighting. Against this was urged our having surrendered our cattle, a measure I had a few days before vehemently opposed. I proposed <sup>i</sup> a plan for still effecting the operation; the details were listened to and no objection made till Col. Dennie observed there was *genius* in the plan, when after a short discussion all thoughts of it were given up.

\* Capt. Oldfield took little or no part in the debates. Capt. Backhouse seemed only to have the one feeling above mentioned.

I objected to certain Persian phrases in the letter as abject, and they were altered to a certain degree; when, the offer of hostages being omitted, the letter as above given was carried.



*Notes and Remarks—cont.*

<sup>1</sup> You may remember old Dennie's rather startling doctrine as to *faith* in such matters.

G. B.

Quite well.—H. H.

<sup>m</sup> You may remember his pushing this so far that I asked, 'Why then show fear by asking what we are not likely to get?' on which he *backed* a little.

G. B.

*Major Broadfoot's Memorandum—cont.*

After all the votes, on my congratulating them on the figure we should make if a relieving force should arrive just as we were marching out,<sup>1</sup> Col. Dennie protested that in such a case he would not go. I said we would make him, as faith must be kept. This caused merriment as we broke up.

Gen. Sale—or rather Capt. Macgregor, for he was the chief spokesman—argued that we were abandoned by the Government, who would send nothing save Wild's force, which had failed. That we could not hold out much longer—could not retreat—and that the plan now proposed was safe and honourable. Capt. Macgregor so confidently assured us of his belief in Afghan good faith under *this* treaty, that few at last seemed to doubt it.

He said Sir W. Macnaghten had mismanaged in not getting hostages, and that had he done so the Cabool force would have been alive.<sup>m</sup> In fact he said the securities now demanded were so great he feared they would scarcely be given. As to our prisoners, they would be got back when we reached Peshawur. He also said the treaty being opened gave us time to see if Col. Wild made another effort, and its result. But this last argument was not pressed, as we were bound by our offer. Not that we formally agreed to this, but no answer was made to me when I said so.

On the other hand I urged:

The improbability of our entire abandonment by the then Government—its still greater unlikelihood under the new one; and I remember referring to Capt. Mackeson's own ex-



*Notes and Remarks—cont.*

" Do you remember the discussion on this point, and old Dennie's exclamation, which caused the discussion to end in my being cried down? I spoke of uniting vigour with moderation. D. called out, 'Oh, yes, moderation! sacking! &c. None of your moderation! bring the whole country on us!' referring to one of the measures talked of in discussing the mode of retreat. And the old man got up and walked about in agitation. G. B.

" Hostages were announced in Gen. Sale's orders and reported to Gen. Elphinstone. I was blamed for opposing one of them in a fight at the time. And afterwards met him in charge of Capt. Mackenzie on his mission to Gen. Pollock, when he reminded me of [my] having nearly killed him when he was a hostage. These are my grounds for still thinking I was right. G. B.

I had urged that we had only a right to save the troops when so doing was more useful to the State than risking their loss, which I denied in our case. I denied also that our service was a mere compact with Government, which failure

*Major Broadfoot's Memorandum—cont.*

pression regarding the French letter, as the result of the first panic only. But Capt. Macgregor opposed all this, and urged in favour of his opinions his experience about men in high places.

I denied our holding the place for Shah Shoojah; and our right to give it up except by order of our Government.

" I maintained that we could hold out even till relieved by Candahar, in fact for any time we liked; could colonise if we liked; also that we *could* retreat.

I denied the value of hostages; asked what good Capt. Macgregor's hostages at Tezeen had done us? Capt. Macgregor vehemently denied we had ever received hostages<sup>6</sup> at Tezeen.<sup>6</sup> I mentioned several things to show we had, but as he persisted in his denial, I said I must have been under some extraordinary delusion, and that of course any argument founded on it must fall to the ground. But I still held hostages utterly worthless while the enemy had our hostages and prisoners in their hands. I asked, what would they do if attacked? Gen. Sale said, 'Fight.' I asked, 'Why invite all Afghanistan round you before fighting?' In answer to another question the General said he would execute a hostage if we were attacked. I asked if he would do this if the enemy before our faces hanged two ladies for every man we put to death.

<sup>6</sup> See p. 35.



*Notes and Remarks—cont.*

in the latter to support us cancelled; but maintained it was a duty to our country which we could not decline, however the Government (which I admitted *usually* represented our country) might treat us. In fact the discussions were carried to a depth neither usual nor safe. First principles are not to be safely approached even, save in 'fit company though few.' The notion of *DUTY to country*, however, rather than *COMPACT with the Governor-General in Council*, should be made more familiar to our officers and men. In all these views Capt. Havelock expressed decided concurrence, though otherwise taking no share in the debates.

<sup>p</sup> This was the time of Old-field's outbreak. G. B.

<sup>q</sup> Gen. Sale, Capt. Macgregor, Capt. Havelock, and myself had before discussed the obedience due to a superior officer no longer a free agent. I held none was due by those themselves free; that a general reduced to capitulate was not a free agent, and only entitled to command those in the same dilemma with himself. The discussion arose from Gen. Sale being ordered by Gen. Elphinstone to surrender Jellalabad.

<sup>r</sup> 'And well would he have acted on the deep resolve of an heroic mind

*Major Broadfoot's Memorandum—cont.*

Capt. Abbott maintained our right (being abandoned by the Government) to look to our own safety only, and ridiculed what I said to the contrary.

Capt. Abbott said if we did not go, our hostages in Cabool would be put to death. I replied, that any party which chose to kill prisoners could then gain its objects.

As to gaining time, I asked Capt. Macgregor if the enemy would delay one hour his preparations because he was negotiating; or if he would not rather quicken them on learning by this offer to capitulate, that our hearts had failed us. He did not answer, or rather (I believe) he agreed they would not delay—in fact the argument was dropped.

I opposed giving hostages as disgraceful. Col. Monteath said nobody would go.<sup>p</sup> I said I would if ordered. That as long as we were an army I should obey all orders; but once we capitulated, I should consider myself free to act as I pleased at the first shot which should violate the capitulation.<sup>q</sup> <sup>r</sup>

The letter went to Cabool signed by Capt. Macgregor. The debates appearing interminable, it was agreed that each member who chose should record the reasons of his votes.

I wrote mine knowing they would be read when people were calmer, and I added the 7th as I was carrying the paper to Capt. Havelock's office, on hearing officers at a working party talk of Capt. Abbott having spoken of

had matters come to such a point.'—*First Afghan War*, p. 398.



*Notes and Remarks—cont.*

Capt. Havelock alone supported my views; and I am not sure whether he did not wish them to be right rather than feel convinced they were. He would, I imagine, have acted as I would, but more as in an extreme case justifying disobedience than as in one annulling the leader's authority.

\* I had in former times thought we clung too closely to Jellalabad, which when we entered it was a source of weakness rather than strength. We were less assailable outside, and might besides have been better employed. But *now* the Cabool force was gone, and Jellalabad our only hold on Northern Afghanistan. To abandon it might have produced a disastrous impression in India, and would have greatly augmented the difficulty of regaining our credit as we did.

\* Did not old Dennie write?

G. B.

Col. Dennie recorded his reasons in writing. H. H.

*Major Broadfoot's Memorandum—cont.*

my being mad about the strength of Jellalabad, and not knowing the extent of our *fix*, as it used to be called.

Col. Monteath recorded his reasons; chiefly reliance on the opinion of Capt. Macgregor, Political Agent of Jellalabad.

Capt. Abbott recorded his, including a joke against the opposite views, which he said would no doubt gain us a considerable share of posthumous reputation, but our duty was to preserve the troops, &c. He dwelt also on the uselessness of holding Jellalabad, a place so weak that English troops, with heavy ordnance, would take it in a few hours,\* and, I think, mentioned the risk to our hostages.

\* I am not sure whether anyone else recorded his reasons.

Next day the ditch was begun, which greatly raised the men's spirits, depressed by seeing these councils assemble, though ignorant of what passed.

Capt. Backhouse no sooner recovered from his anger against the Governor-General, than he saw what he had done.

A few days after this Lieut. Dawes of the Artillery, who lived at the 35th N.I. mess, mentioned to me remarks of Col. Monteath which he could not comprehend, but which showed me he was returning to his first views.

I now without scruple talked to my



*Notes and Remarks—cont.*

' With this also came a long, incoherent, private letter from Shah Shoojah professing friendship, abusing the Barukzyes, and saying our misfortunes arose from neglecting his advice, &c.

*Major Broadfoot's Memorandum—cont.*

friends of the council, of plans which were all ready when the answer came from Cabool. These were, that if our terms were accepted, simply and at once, we must evacuate the place, but be ready to fight at whatever disadvantage if faith were broken with us on the way to Peshawur.

But if, as we might expect, the answer was delayed, or evasive, or clogged with conditions or reservations, we were free to do as we pleased.

The answer came in due time, and said: 'If you are sincere in your offers, let all the chief gentlemen put their seals.'<sup>t</sup>

A council was called, when Gen. Sale and Capt. Macgregor urged us to affix our seals to the former letter.

I proposed reconsidering the whole matter, as their answering our proposal by a doubt of our sincerity set us free; and I read a draft of a letter telling the Shah that as he and the chiefs had not chosen to answer our proposals even by a *yes* or a *no*, we now referred them to the Governor-General, whose orders alone we would obey.

After hot debates this was rejected as violent. An excellent and most temperate letter proposed by Capt. Backhouse, to the same effect, was also rejected.

Gen. Sale used strong language about our opposition, and high words followed, but we adjourned, and met in good humour an hour after.

Capt. Abbott and Col. Dennie had also come to the conclusion that we should hold out, and the latter, with Col. Monteath, prepared a letter which, though not very clear, was *not* a cor-



*Notes and Remarks—cont.*

" Or hoping the day might  
not come. G. B.

*Major Broadfoot's Memorandum—cont.*

tinuation of the negotiation. This was adopted; Gen. Sale and Capt. Macgregor alone continuing to think capitulation the best course; the former, however, resolving to be guided by the opinion of the council; the latter " warning us the day might yet come when we should regret having neglected the chance of such terms as he could now get for us. The messenger was sent back to Cabool.

Next day a letter came from Peshawur telling us every effort would be made to relieve us. The ditch was nearly round the place, and the men in higher health and spirits than they had ever been.

G. BROADFOOT.

Thus was the council of war led, at last, to adopt the more honourable and wiser course—to defend Jalalabad at all hazards—mainly by the exertions and strength of character of George Broadfoot.

The first to support Broadfoot, let it be recorded to the honour of his memory, was Capt. Oldfield. The next was Backhouse; then after an interval there followed Dennie, Monteath, and Abbott; and there were left in the minority, blind apparently to the lessons of the Kabul disaster, Sir R. Sale and Capt. Macgregor.

It may readily be imagined that to the majority of the members of this council of war, all brave and good men, the recollection of their having temporarily agreed to support the proposals laid before them, was anything but agreeable. Naturally they desired, especially after the crisis had passed, to bury the transactions in oblivion; and when that was impossible, to persuade themselves that the reasons advanced by Macgregor as Sale's mouthpiece were sufficient to justify the garrison in acting solely with reference to its own safety.

This was what Broadfoot denied an army or a soldier could ever do without dishonour. 'Safety was to be consulted, but





not safety only ; nor ever, except subordinately to the good of our country.'

On this occasion Broadfoot's warmth of language, want of self-restraint, and violence, have been unfavourably criticised ; and the paralysing effects of responsibility have been urged in excuse of the proposals laid before the council.

There can be little doubt that when Broadfoot learnt their nature, his expression of contempt and anger was clear and probably violent. But the crisis was one in which moderation of language and calmness of utterance might have failed. When comrades are seen hesitating between duty and disgrace, and capitulation would have involved disgrace and probably destruction, then no language which can arrest them can be too strong, and no action too violent. There are times when it is well to be angry. And Broadfoot's anger served its purpose, for an adjournment became necessary and a day's delay was secured ; 'and thus,' wrote Durand, 'for a while he obstructed the rash timidity which threatened to destroy Sale's brigade.'<sup>8</sup>

With reference to the excuse urged, it is sufficient to say that men liable to be paralysed by a sense of responsibility are unfit for supreme command.

The council may be said to have been finally dissolved on February 12. During the interval between its first assembling and final dissolution many events of interest to the garrison occurred. Lieut. Mayne captured 730 sheep and 175 head of cattle ; an important capture, for provisions were scarce, and one which enraged the enemy as much as it raised the spirits of the garrison.

At this time Broadfoot's diary is full of references to his constant endeavours, unfortunately without success, to induce Sale to sally forth and bring in forage. The following extracts refer to such matters and others of interest.

A man is said to be in with news that Mackeson is at the mouth of the Khyber treating with the chiefs. I hope not true. There should be no treating till we have force to compel without delay the acceptance of the terms most suitable to us.

Pottinger writes to Macgregor that the continuing to treat with the enemy after the Envoy's murder was against his will, and the

<sup>8</sup> *First Afghan War*, p. 394.



doing of Gen. Elphinstone, urged and supported by Brigadier Shelton.

Abdool Ghuffoor talking again of the country people laying their loss of the cattle to me—the Kafir with the spectacles and red beard who is here as Avitabile is at Peshawur. This is true, I believe—our own Afghans have trumpeted me a good deal, and I shall meet no mercy if I fall into their hands.—Amen! So be it!

The General much annoyed at the poor fugitives of the Cabool force saying Mahomed Acbar Khan's sowars prevented refugees getting in, and that Md. A. K. had ordered the destruction of the Feringees. The General seems indeed convinced of the friendship of the Surdar, at least for the future. . . . He thinks he and Macgregor are getting over him by negotiation. He also is elated by rumours of Gen. Pollock being about to force the pass, and will scarcely listen to plans of defence. He has also positively declared against bringing in forage &c. from Charbagh or any neighbouring village, and said he would never sally by night if we were besieged. Havelock and I have been urging a foray for many weeks. At least I have, and lately Havelock has earnestly joined. We are short of forage, and the neighbouring villages are open or feebly fortified. By going out at 4 A.M. we should be at say Charbagh by daylight. Take 800 infantry, all the cavalry, and six guns. The village is open on one side. Let us bring in all arms, ammunition, and clothing found; also as much grain and forage as our cattle and all the cattle of the village can carry; also all that the inhabitants male and female can carry: setting the men loose to bring in the remainder as a ransom for their females, and if resistance is made, destroy the village. We thus supply to a certain extent, perhaps to a great extent, a pressing want, and repair in some degree the error of giving up the bulk of our cattle to the enemy, while we should break the confidence given them by the disaster of the Cabool force, thus enfeebling beforehand their attacks on us, and inspiring our own men. The news of such a blow would cause hesitation and discouragement among the tribes opposing Gen. Pollock, and probably cause all, from this side of the Khyber, to return for the defence of their own homes. But the poor General is tied by the fear of retaliation on the captives in Lughman.

I hear Monteath is talking now as if he repented his vote at the council of war. But surely, after voting and leading others to vote for treating, he does not now mean to refuse to abide by the conditions he offered, if the enemy accept them. I for one will be a party to no perfidy; and though I opposed treating at all, yet





being outvoted, and the terms being offered by us, I shall give my voice for abiding by them, disastrous and shameful as I think them, for to violate faith would be worse still.

Monteath broke down sadly there ; Macgregor got hold of him, and fear is infectious.

Lance Naik Heera arrived and reported Bygrave alive, and well treated by a chief named Nizamooddeen. He truly says the want of *bundobust*<sup>9</sup> was worse than the snow, and exclaimed to me, 'Ah! sir, if we had had you to make the bundobust you made in the Punjab, we should all have arrived !'

The indignation of our men is deep and universal, and vengeance is their only thought. Their confidence in our ultimate success, too, is unshaken.

Vigorous and skilful measures will yet set all right. May Pollock well support his present character. He has a noble field before him, and much is expected of him. He is of an able family too. I hope to see him a peer, the first of our service since Clive.

A poor wretch, a servant of poor Major Ewart, reached the nearest villages, and was then cut down and left for dead, but crawled in.

Shall we never strike a blow to make these men respect us ?

<sup>9</sup> *Band-o-bast*: arrangement, plan, method, or settlement.



## CHAPTER IV.

1842.

Defence continued—Major-Gen. Pollock—Earthquake at Jalalabad—Arrival in India of Lord Ellenborough—His correspondence and policy—His endeavours to restore confidence—Defence continued, Sale's 'after orders'—Skirmish, March 24, Broadfoot severely wounded—Forage parties—Extracts from Backhouse's diary—Action, April 7, described by Backhouse—Siege raised: arrival of Pollock's force—Governor-General's orders, 'That illustrious garrison'—Lord Ellenborough to George Broadfoot—Letter to Malcolmson, recapitulation of events—Afghan cruelty and treachery—Governor-General's orders on Pollock's arrival—Colin Mackenzie's services—Letter to Mrs. Bayley—Extracts from other letters.

THE events of the siege of Jalalabad from the time when defence to extremity was chosen in preference to capitulation, till near the end of March, will not be recorded in great detail. There was much similarity between one day's work and that of another. Forage parties and working parties were sent out, and somewhat timidly recalled when threatened by the enemy. There were, however, a few events which deserve more prominent mention, first of which was the arrival on February 11 of the news of the birth of the Prince of Wales. It is curious to contrast the length of time occupied by the transit of the news from London, over three months, with that which would now suffice. Now, such news would be known in Peshawar on the same day as in London, and in three days instead of three months it would reach Jalalabad.

The next news of importance, received two days later, was that Major-Gen. Pollock had arrived in Peshawar to command the force which was destined for the relief of the garrison.

Pollock was the third officer nominated for this command; the other two had been Sir Edmund Williams and Major-Gen. Lumley.

The Governor-General expressed his satisfaction with the selection of Pollock, and declared his intention to invest





him with controlling political authority. Major-Gen. Pollock had seen service in Lake's campaigns at Dig and Bhartpur (1804-5); in 1824 he commanded the Artillery with credit in the first Burmese war. His reputation was that of a safe and cautious officer, who, if not in the first rank as a commander, would not at any rate repeat the errors committed by Elphinstone and Shelton. He was justly credited with correct knowledge and appreciation of the native soldier, on whom the success of his expedition must greatly depend. The orders he received were such as to limit his operations to the relief and withdrawal of the garrison from Jalalabad. When he reached Peshawar he found an enormous proportion of Wild's force in hospital, suffering from the most dangerous and infectious of all maladies, demoralisation. The officers too, it is grievous to record, were disheartened and hopeless. The new commander, with judgment and skill deserving of the highest praise, successfully combated this deplorable state of affairs, and overcame the reluctance of his force to enter the Khaibar. In this work he was ably assisted by Capt. Henry Lawrence, who had been sent to Peshawar by Mr. Clerk to facilitate Sikh co-operation.

The next event—and it might have been disastrous—was the severe earthquake, on February 19, by which 'in one moment the labours of three months were in a great measure destroyed.

'No time, however, was lost: the shocks had scarcely ceased, when the whole garrison was told off into working parties, and before night' <sup>1</sup> the fortifications were substantially repaired. Broadfoot was on the works when the catastrophe happened; he turned to a friend beside him, and said, 'Now is the time for Akbar.' His first thought was of the opportunity afforded to the enemy.

Havelock was sitting beside Sale writing a letter for him: they had just time to escape from the house when it fell in ruins.

Backhouse has recorded his impressions: 'For more than a minute the earth rolled like the waves of the sea; with difficulty one could keep his legs on level ground. Most of us expected the earth would open and swallow us. I affirm that

<sup>1</sup> Capt. G. Broadfoot's report.



this was my own and the general expectation ; and more, it struck me that the end of the world was at hand. The idea was of course momentary ; it passed ; never shall I forget it.' <sup>2</sup>

Another important event which occurred at this time was the arrival of Lord Ellenborough in Calcutta, and the departure of Lord Auckland. The new Governor-General arrived and assumed office on February 28, 1842, at a crisis till then unparalleled in the history of India. His predecessor's policy, that of the Whig Government which had appointed him, was one of intervention in Afghanistan in order to insure greater safety to British interests in India from exterior aggression. Errors of administration, civil and military, had resulted in the Kabul disasters and the paralysis of British power and influence throughout Afghanistan. At this juncture a Tory Government displaced the Whigs, and Lord Ellenborough was selected to succeed Lord Auckland.

His previous career had proved him to be hardworking, able, and conscientious in the discharge of his duties ; and as President of the Board of Control, he had acquired some special knowledge of India. Though a Tory, he was an ardent and thorough reformer ; and like others of that class he thereby incurred the hostility of the idle and inefficient. In addition to these, the preponderating class of respectable mediocrity viewed all Lord Ellenborough's measures with suspicion and dislike. They granted him talent, but denied that he had principle or stability. His more vicious enemies have not scrupled to charge him with every possible offence, and to deny him a single redeeming quality.

One thing clear to any soldier who has had the privilege of reading his letters on military subjects is, that he had a grasp of every professional detail which would have been highly creditable to one trained in the army, and which in his case was extraordinary. His letters to the Commander-in-Chief and to Major-Generals Pollock and Nott contain ample evidence of this ; whilst their correspondence with him, the letters addressed to him by the Marquis of Wellesley and the Duke of Wellington himself, bear high testimony to his military knowledge and capacity.

It is not intended, nor would this be the proper place, to

<sup>2</sup> Backhouse's diary.





enter fully into the merits and demerits of Lord Ellenborough's administration. As a principal actor in the scene, he must appear often in these pages; facts will be stated as far as they are known and relevant, and letters and despatches quoted. The deductions made from them can be tested by the capacity and knowledge of the reader.

It had been Lord Auckland's custom to correspond privately with almost every person in India who held an important position. He thus got separate opinions, which, being in a sense private though entirely on public affairs, were expressed with a freedom not admissible in official letters. This practice was continued by Lord Ellenborough, who in addition kept up a voluminous correspondence with many statesmen and men of note in England, and with many foreign diplomatists.

On assuming charge of his office, Lord Ellenborough found the Government totally demoralised by the news from Afghanistan. He found letters arriving constantly from the chief officers under him, some recommending one course of action, others another. Mr. T. C. Robertson urged him to leave Calcutta forthwith, and come nearer the scenes of action, where he could see passing events without 'the mists that ever seem to obscure the vision of those who look at the affairs of India through the medium of the Calcutta official atmosphere.' His Lordship was also recommended to bring none in his train, in situations of influence, who were in any way committed to the policy 'of which we are now reaping the fruits.' Mr. Robertson proposed a simultaneous advance from Kandahar and Peshawar on Kabul in order to obliterate the traces of the recent disaster. Mr. Clerk held the same view and advocated similar measures; when these had been effected, he considered that we might withdraw from Afghanistan with dignity and undiminished honour.<sup>3</sup>

Sir Jasper Nicolls, the Commander-in-Chief, on the other hand, expressed a strong opinion against the reoccupation of Kabul. These views had to be considered by the Governor-General, by whom a line of policy had to be declared and adopted.

On March 15, after a fortnight's experience and study, a brief period considering the issues involved, the opinions held

<sup>3</sup> Commander-in-Chief to the Government of India, January 24, 1842.



by the Governor-General in Council as to the measures to be pursued in Afghanistan were declared.<sup>4</sup>

First : 'the possession of Afghanistan, could we recover it, would be a source of weakness rather than of strength in resisting the invasion of any army from the west ; and, therefore, that the ground upon which the policy of the advance of our troops to that country mainly rested has altogether ceased to exist.'

Second : the conduct of Shah Shuja was doubtful, and not such as to compel the British Government, alone, to maintain the tripartite treaty.

Third : that military considerations alone must guide the course to be taken with the view of relieving our men in Afghanistan, and of re-establishing our military reputation.

Lastly : the falseness and danger of the position of our troops in Afghanistan were recognised.

It was pointed out to be erroneous 'to suppose that a forward position in Upper Afghanistan would have the effect of controlling the Sikhs,' or in Lower Afghanistan the Biluchis and Sindians.

That which will really and will alone control the Sikhs, the Biluchis, and the Sindians, and all other nations beyond and within the Indus, is the knowledge that we possess an army, perfect in its equipment, possessed of all the means of movement, and so secure in its communications with the country from which its supplies and its reinforcements are drawn, as to be able at any time to act with vigour and effect against any enemy.

In war, reputation is strength ; but reputation is lost by the rash exposure of the most gallant troops under circumstances which render defeat more probable than victory ; and a succession of reverses will dishearten any soldiers, and, most of all, those whose courage and devotion have been mainly the result of their confidence that they were always led to certain success.

All unnecessary risk was, therefore, to be avoided ; but the object of inflicting signal punishment on the Afghans was deemed sufficient to justify some risk, care being taken to insure success.

The advantages of entering Kabul prior to retiring from

<sup>4</sup> Governor-General to the Commander-in-Chief, March 15, 1842. The policy was also announced to Nott, Pollock, and Clerk.



the country were recognised, as also the fact that Gen. Pollock, not being then strong enough to force and keep the Khaibar without the first reserve brigade, could not be permitted to occupy an advanced position beyond the pass. The despatch is an admirable one, and leaves nothing to be desired, if the propriety of a policy of withdrawal from Afghanistan be conceded. Considering that the Punjab was independent, and liable any day to be actively hostile, it would seem that the only alternative to withdrawal was the conquest of the Sikhs and annexation of their country, a measure absolutely out of the question at that moment.

The native army was then greatly demoralised, and the reputation of the English as invincible was lost. Lord Ellenborough's early endeavours were to restore confidence and to encourage the troops. To this task he devoted himself with characteristic energy.

Necessarily ignorant of the abilities and character of his generals in the field, Pollock and Nott, he endeavoured by inquiry, by correspondence with them, and by noting their actions, to ascertain how far he might safely trust them in the very responsible positions they occupied.

And now to return to Jalalabad: it does not appear that during the early part of March 1842 the duties performed by Broadfoot's Sappers were in any way exceptional; nevertheless on the 11th Gen. Sale, enlightened, it may be hoped, as to the injustice he had done them in despatches, issued the following 'after orders:'

The Major-General, having had reason to believe, from the nature of the information given to him yesterday, that the enemy was attempting to drive a mine under some part of our northern defences, considered it to be expedient to order a sally to be made, to ascertain this point, and to destroy any works that might have been commenced.

He was fully satisfied with the manner in which the details placed under the command of Lieut.-Col. Dennie performed that duty.

It fell to the lot of the detachment of the corps of Sappers under Capt. Broadfoot to be the most actively and closely engaged with the enemy on this occasion; and these troops, under their commander, fully maintained the character for boldness, and steadiness under fire, which they have fully merited from the commencement of the operations of this force in the pass of Khoord Cabool.



Everywhere, and at all times, in the judgment of the Major-General, they have done the duty both of useful sappers and valuable light infantry soldiers; and never has their conduct in the latter capacity been more creditable than this morning.

The skirmishers of the detachment of the 35th N.I. and as many of the 13th as were thus employed were equally worthy of commendation.

Broadfoot remarked on this:

Lieut. Orr, Lieut. Cunningham, and the two sergeants very conspicuous. We were much in advance of the 13th and 35th, and on the force retiring, were in close action. The other two corps did not wait for us, and we were charged by the cavalry as soon as the 13th and 35th disappeared. We repulsed them, and retired over bad ground followed by their whole force, which we had to repel. The above officers and non-commissioned officers were most useful, and showed the greatest coolness and bravery.

Sale's tribute to the services of the Sappers and of their commander is in its way sufficiently handsome. For the benefit of non-military readers, it is proper to explain that orders of this kind are not forwarded to Government nor made known to the public. The injury, therefore, done to Broadfoot and his corps by omitting to mention their services in despatches, was a public injury likely to affect him in his public capacity; the amende here made was solely an acknowledgment of Sale's error, not a public correction of it.

The skirmishing on March 24 was on a larger scale than usual; and as on this occasion Broadfoot was severely wounded, and as the references to the subject in his letters are brief, the following description is borrowed from Backhouse's journal.

Forage parties attacked this morning on the river side. . . . At the west wall the action between our parties there and the enemy in the ravines was closer and warmer. One of the 13th and two of the Sappers were killed, when they were ordered in.

On seeing our parties retire, the enemy rushed in a body of some hundreds from the ravine, and, under cover of the old bank of the river, up to the post our troops had just quitted, and two of them, sword in hand of course, actually ascended to the top of the bank.

Capt. Broadfoot, who was retiring with his Sappers into the place, seeing this, rushed back followed by his men, and regained his old position, and immediately after ran down the bank, and with two or three men attacked the foremost of the enemy hand to





hand. He cut one down with his sword, while one of the few close to him bayoneted another. The whole body of the enemy immediately turned, *en masse*, in utter confusion, back to the ravine from which they had emerged, while the sapper party pitched in a fire of musketry from the end of the west wall, which they had re-occupied. Broadfoot now ran up the bank to call his men down to charge the flying enemy with the bayonet; but in the act of doing so, most unfortunately received a shot through the hip.

The Sappers, shortly after, were again called in; but the enemy did not attempt a second time to follow them from the ravine.

Capt. Abbott, writing of the same affair, said that on the enemy annoying our covering party, Capt. Broadfoot attacked them, and drove them back with loss. That then they collected in force, and Broadfoot retired towards the old walls, and much skirmishing followed. At length, the Sappers being called in from the walls, the enemy rushed valiantly on their rear. Broadfoot turned with a few men, charged, and killed three with his own hand, driving back the whole body in confusion. He was wounded in the hip; one European and one sapper were killed, and two or three wounded.

Either description shows that the affair was a gallant one, and the wound received was severe.<sup>5</sup>

The occurrence is referred to in the following extract from garrison orders of March 24, 1842:

2. The Major-General regrets extremely that the severe wound received this morning by Capt. Broadfoot, garrison engineer, will deprive him of that officer's valuable services, he hopes but for a short time; and at his request, Lieut. Orr is appointed to perform the duties of that office.

3. The Major-General was highly gratified this morning by the spirited manner in which a detachment of H.M.'s 13th L.I. under Capt. Fenwick, and of the Sappers and Miners under Lieut. Orr, the whole led by Capt. Broadfoot, drove the enemy in confusion

<sup>5</sup> Sir John Campbell Brown, K.C.B., a surgeon who joined Sale's brigade with Capt. H. P. Burn from Gandamak, was standing on the wall watching the skirmish. He suddenly noticed Broadfoot, supported by two men, making his way towards the gates, and sent out a doolee for him. When brought in he was very pale, and his face was

bathed with perspiration. His sword, covered with the blood and brains of an adversary, was still in his hand. The doctor looked into the doolee, expecting to be told about the wound; but Broadfoot's first words were, 'Well, Brown, I had no idea a man's head was so soft'!





and with loss from a work attached to the north-western wall, which they had temporarily taken possession of upon our working and foraging parties retiring.

On this Broadfoot remarked :

Lieut. Orr very forward on this occasion. His party immediately supported me, and was hotly engaged.

This caused for a day or two a little more respect on the part of the enemy for our foragers and working parties. But soon the old arrangement prevailed : a dozen or so of Akbar Khan's men drove in our people ; or, to be more correct, our people were recalled on the appearance of this formidable body, and scarcity of forage as a natural consequence followed.

Sale gravely discussed how many seers<sup>6</sup> of grass and of grain were required to keep horses and ponies in health. He asserted that grass cut one day was hay three days afterwards, and that 10 lbs. of it were enough for a horse. He preferred useless argument of this kind to the practical measure of sending out a party sufficiently strong to protect the grass cutters and foragers. It is melancholy to contemplate. But it has a humorous side also : witness the following description by Backhouse :

These forage parties are quite farcical ; they are either so posted as to afford no protection to the grass cutters, or the grass cutters invariably stray beyond their protection. Then down come a few of the enemy : in run the grass cutters, and the General immediately orders the forage parties to run in also, no matter what their strength may be : and so our troops are, daily, drilled to run before a twentieth part of their own numbers ! The enemy, after beating our troops in, then go home to chaff about it ; and shortly after, out again go the grass cutters, *without any forage parties at all*, except perhaps half a dozen dismounted troopers, and cut a good day's supply.

The enemy, having gained one victory in the morning over our troops, do not trouble themselves about the grass cutters a second time, but merely send a few footmen to fire long shots at the unfortunate squatters ; and there they now sit, some hundreds, in the marshy ground opposite the river gate, while ten or twelve of the enemy are every minute sending a shot amongst them from a distance of about 400 or 500 yards. But blacky moves not : these Hindustanis are capital *sitters* under any circumstances.

<sup>6</sup> A seer is a measure equal to two pounds.





It should, perhaps, be explained for the benefit of the uninitiated, that our black fellow-subjects in the East generally do everything in a way precisely contrary to that which obtains in this country. They usually write from right to left, we from left to right; in speaking of parents they say mother and father, we say father and mother; as a mark of respect they uncover the feet, we uncover the head; when at work, cutting grass for example, they sit down, or squat, in a manner to us unattainable, while in this country the mower or reaper stands.

Just before the end of the month, Backhouse from the walls saw one of his guns, which had fallen into the enemy's hands in the Kabul disaster, paraded by them with pomp and circumstance, and was not allowed to go out and retake it. Full of indignation he went to his tent, 'after witnessing about as disgraceful a sight as it has been, hitherto, my lot as a British officer to behold.'

A large number of Akbar's people were on their way to the Khaibar, and one 'of my former guns (which was lost with the Kabul force) has just been drawn past this place, within three-quarters of a mile, and about 200 of the enemy's horse and foot, who were scattered about, its only protection. In less than twenty minutes the gun might have been in this fort. . . . The General is worse than I have hitherto called him.' And the writer proceeded to supply the omission. Nothing could persuade the General to sally out.

'I much fear that there are a good many other officers, besides the General, who wish to have as little to say to the enemy as possible; amongst them Lieut-Col. Monteath, C.B., appears to be very much against anything like an active defence. . . .' He added that he was glad to be able to say that Col. Dennie was now 'quite on the other tack.'

It will be seen how completely Backhouse had recovered from the state he was in at the first council, when he voted against Broadfoot. Even when Pollock wrote announcing the postponement of his advance to the relief of Jalalabad, and when suspicion was still in his mind that Government did not intend to exert its strength to save them, but to procrastinate 'in the sure and certain hope that time must ultimately floor us all, and that there the matter will end,' he counselled vigour.