W. Harding
43

COLONEL DENNIE'S

CAMPAIGNS IN AFFGHANISTAN.

MAP
OF
AFFGHANISTAN
&c. &c. &c.
Desert of Khiva
BOKHARA
Usbec Tartars
Nomadic tribes of Toorkistan
Ancient Bactria
TARTARY
BUDAKSHAN
BALKH
Khooloom
MUSHED
KHORASSAN
Western Hindoo Koosh or Ghore Mts
Ancient Parthia
HERAT
KOONDOOZ
Central Hindoo Koosh
Eastern Hindoo Koosh
R. Sinde or Indus
THIBET
Himalayah Mountains
Syghan
Bamecan
Charekar
Jellalabad
Khyber Pass
Dooranees
CABOOL
GHUZNEE
Gundamuk
Suffaid Koh
Gilghies
Salt Range
Attock
CASHMERE
PERSIA
CABOOL
AFFGHANISTAN
Khdat-i-Gilghie
KANDAHAR
Gilghie Mountains
Soliman Mountains
Dera Ismael Khan
Desert
R. Jelum ant. Hydaspes
R. Chenab ant. Acesines
R. Ravee ant. Hydraotes
PUNJAB
ARMISTIR
LAHORE
Goorkha
Simla
Loodiana
FEROZEPORE
PROTECTED STATES
L. Zurrah
R. Helmund ant. Etymandrus
SEISTAN
SHAWL
Quettah
Kakurs
Ser-i-ab
Dera Gazee Khan
R. Indus
Moultan
R. Chenab
R. Sutledge or Garra
KERMAN
Ancient Carmania
Desert
SWESTAN
KHELAT
Dadur
CUTCH
Desert
GUNDAVA
Bagh
BAHWALPORE
The Great Desert
BIKANER
DELHI
BELOOCHISTAN
Ancient Gedrosia
Larkhanu
Bukkur Id. & Mort
Roree
Kyrpoor
JESULMER
JODHPOOR
Agra
Branch of Ganges
R. Ganges
MUKRAN
Halah Mts
SINDE
INDOSTAN
MOUTH of PERSIAN GULF
ARABIA
INDIAN OCEAN
Hydrabad
Tattah
Run of Cutch
LINES of MARCH.
1 Bengal Column
2 Bombay Do
3 United Do
4 Detachments
W. E. S.
J. Ridgwood, Sc.

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

OF THE

CAMPAIGNS IN AFFGHANISTAN,

SINDE, BELOOCHISTAN, ETC.

DETAILED IN A SERIES OF LETTERS

OF THE LATE

COLONEL WILLIAM H. DENNIE, C.B.

Junior Lieut.-Col. of Her Majesty's 13th Light Infantry Regiment.
Aid-de-camp to the Queen.

WITH AN APPENDIX, CONTAINING

COLONEL DENNIE'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH LORD KEANE,
SIR HENRY FANE, ETC.

COMPILED AND ARRANGED BY

WILLIAM E. STEELE, M. D.

WITH A MAP.

DUBLIN

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PREFACE.

THIS narrative of the War in Affghanistan and the neighbouring states, appeared first before the public in the pages of the "Dublin University Magazine." In consequence, however, of the haste with which the manuscript was prepared for that periodical, some errors and omissions occurred therein, which I have endeavoured to rectify and supply in the present publication: of which latter, the correspondence between Colonel Dennie, Lord Keane, and Sir Henry Fane, must be considered as forming not the least remarkable portion.

The letters, of which the body of the work is composed, are from the pen of my

relative, the late lamented Colonel Dennie; such parts alone being omitted as are of interest to his friends only. That these extracts are authentic, and nearly or altogether verbatim copies of the originals, I pledge myself.

I have no doubt, that were my dear friend now living, he would condemn the publication of documents which were intended but for the eyes of those in whom were centred all hi hopes of future earthly happiness. However, notwithstanding the defects which are unavoidable in a publication so disjointed as the present, I feel convinced that a degree of interest will be excited by its perusal scarcely less than by more formal histories: and being written with all that faithfulness which is dictated by the occurrence of recent events, on the scenes of those actions they profess to describe; and without any object save that of satisfying the anxious cares of those near and dear to him, by minutely detailing all his proceedings—these

letters cannot but be regarded as forming valuable additions to the already published histories of our military operations in the countries west of the Indus.

WM. E. STEELE.

Dublin, December, 1842.

CORRIGENDA.

Page 7, line 21, *for* " Gilghie" *read* " Giljhie."
— 126, — 21, *for* " Goorkhas" *read* " Goorkahs."
— 129, — 2, *for* "seizure" *read* " dispersion."
— 143, — 22, *for* "their forces" *read* " the force."
— 149, — 5, *for* " was" *read* " were."
— 149, — 15, *for* " was" *read* " were."

INTRODUCTION.*

Before commencing the more immediate subject of this narrative, it may not be altogether superfluous or unnecessary to give a hasty sketch of the Affghans and their classic land; their origin and early history; and a brief view of those events which preceded, and from which, in part, originated this expedition into the countries of Central Asia.

The geographical relations of the kingdom of Cabool—of which Affghanistan may be considered a province—were, at an earlier date, of much wider extent than at

* We may here, once for all, express our acknowledgments for the assistance we have derived in compiling the following narrative, from the valuable works of Elphinstone and Burnes on Cabool, &c.; from Captain Havelock's and Doctor Kennedy's histories of this war; and from the "Asiatic Journal," and several numbers of the Monthly Summary of the "Bombay Times."

the present day. The countries lying between Persia on the west, and Indostan on the east, and stretching northwards from the Indian Ocean to the confines of Tartary, including Bokhara and Budakshan, were, until comparatively speaking a modern period, comprehended within the limits of the kingdom of Cabool. Now, however, these boundaries are far more confined: the provinces of the Punjab, Beloochistan, Bokhara, and Sinde, gradually gained their independence, until the limits of the entire kingdom became almost coincident with those of one of its provinces, Affghanistan:—a fact sufficiently indicated at the present day by the indiscriminate or indifferent use of either name, Affghanistan or Cabool, to denominate territories lying within boundaries so nearly identical. And finally *Affghanistan* itself became subdivided into the provinces of Herat, Cabool, Kandahar, Khelat, and Peshawar; the power of the chiefs of each extending but little beyond the confines of the above-named cities. Thus Affghanistan may be roughly stated to include all the high lands of Cabool west of the Soliman range of mountains to Persia, and lying between thirty and thirty-four and a half degrees north latitude.

The name Affghanistan—the origin of which is but hypothetical—is seldom or never employed by the

natives of this country. When speaking *generally*, they call *themselves* Pooshtaneh : hence Patan, the name by which the Affghans are known throughout Indostan.

In the government and social condition of this people, many striking peculiarities are manifest, when contrasted with the Indoos on the one hand, and the Persians on the other. Their independent and warlike character, their nominally monarchical, but more really patriarchal government, sufficiently distinguish them from either of those eastern races.

The Affghans are subdivided into numerous independent tribes, the organization of which is intricate and complicated. The following, however, will serve to give a clear general idea of the manner in which their social and legislative combinations are formed. The union of several families, by ties of real or supposed consanguinity, constitutes what is called an *Ooloos*. This is governed by a *Khan*, who is chosen from the oldest family in the Ooloos; in war appearing as its leader, and in peace bearing the office of magistrate and representative. When several Oolooses unite, the confederacy is termed a *Khail*—a union, however, which among many tribes is obsolete. The next combination may be termed a *Tribe*, which is formed by the union of several Khails; and the whole is under the rule of a

common Sovereign,* who obtains and maintains his throne more by the physical strength of his tribe than absolute right of possession, by inheritance, or otherwise. The Khans, uniting, form what is called a *Jeergah*, which is not only a judicial but a legislative court. Their religion is a sect of the Mohammedan.

The Affghans are intensely attached to their country and their clan, and take a pride in reciting their genealogies; counting no man a true Affghan, who cannot trace his descent through six generations at least.

Their character is thus summed up by Elphinstone:—"On the one hand, they are revengeful, avaricious, rapacious, and obstinate; on the other, they are fond of liberty, faithful to their friends, kind to their dependents, hospitable, brave, hardy, frugal, laborious, and prudent; and they are less disposed than the nations in their neighbourhood to falsehood, intrigue, and deceit." And in a rare and curious work on the Affghan conquest of Persia in the year 1722,† their character in time of war is thus described:—

"But to come to what is more the business of this

* The supremacy of the king was nearly extinct under the late rule of the Barukzyes.

† The History of the Revolution of Persia, from the memoirs of Father Krusinski, Procurator of the Jesuits at Ispahan. Dublin. 1729.

history, in the character of this nation in military affairs, it must be owned, that there is not, perhaps, a people in the world that has so much inclination to war, and that is better formed or trained up to it; their whole lives being spent almost in one continued robbery, after the manner of the Tartars, and in making incursions among their neighbours for plunder.

"As to their manner of fighting in a regular battle, they fall on thus;—they place at first in the front, in the nature of a forlorn hope, the best troops they have, which they call *Nasackci* and *Rechleuvan*—*i. e.* butchers and wrestlers; these make the onset, and fall impetuously on the enemy, without observing order or rank in the attack, but pushing forward in order to open a way for the rest of the army, which after the first shock finds much less resistance. But when they are warmly engaged, those Nasackci retire in flank to the rear of the army, where they form a rear-guard, which is only to force those who have engaged with the enemy to fight, and to hinder any body from falling back. When they perceive any one running away they fall upon him, and force him to return to his post. We may judge of their resolution and severity by a passage that happened at the attack of the bridge of Abusatbah. As a soldier, who was wounded then in his right arm, only retired to

have his wound dressed, a Nasackci came to him and drove him back to his ranks, bidding him fight with his left hand if he could not with his right; and adding, by way of banter, that if he should lose his left arm, he must bite with his teeth. By this disposition of the order of battle, an army was enclosed between two fires —that of the enemy in front, and that of the rear-guard on their backs—which quite cut off their retreat, so that they were under an indispensable necessity to conquer or die. These same Nasackci are the persons whose business it is to carry off the bodies of those who are killed in battle; but as to the bodies of those slain in the flight no care is taken of them. Besides the sword and the pike, which they manage very well, they have also pistols, which begin to be very common among them. Before they had conquered Persia they were half naked, and had no other defensive weapon but a cuirass of very hard leather doubled. But they now make use of fine cuirasses of iron, which they found among the spoils of the vanquished enemy. But one thing which contributes as much to the success of their undertakings, is the exact discipline of their troops. Perhaps there is no corps in the world where their leaders have more authority or are better obeyed. Though dispersed in the several quarters of Ispahan, the signal is no sooner

given, but they repair in an instant to their colonies; and the moment they took possession of Ispahan, the townsmen were so safe and secure that they might carry their money in their hands, or upon their heads, without fear of any violence from the soldiers.

"The treatment of those who become their prisoners of war has nothing in it of the barbarity we find among most of the eastern nations. They look upon the selling of them into slavery to be a heinous inhumanity, which they hold in abhorrence. 'Tis true, indeed, that they treat them when at home as slaves, and make them do the drudgery; but besides that, in the time even of their slavery, they treat them with kindness and care; and they never fail, if they do but please them, to restore them to liberty at the end of a certain time."

The most powerful tribe among the Affghans, and by far the most interesting in every respect, is called by the name Dooranee. These people inhabit the western and central portions of Affghanistan, from the Gilghie mountains, to the confines of Persia. Their northern limits being the western range of the Hindoo-Koosh; their south-western, Seistan and a desert; and their southern, the Kojeh-Amram mountains, in thirty-one degrees north latitude. Until about a century ago

they bore the name of Abdallee Affghans, when Amed Shah, the founder of the present dynasty, gave them the title they now possess. This powerful tribe consists of nine Khails, of which the Populzye and Barukzye are alone worthy of note here. In the former is the Ooloos of the Suddozyes, to a family of which Shah Soojah belonged, and to the latter Dost Mahomed claims kindred. The Dooranees are not only the most powerful of the Affghan tribes, but they are also the most civilized; possessing all the virtues of the inhabitants in an eminent degree, with far less of their vices. They have a deep-rooted attachment to their soil, and seldom emigrate into the neighbouring countries either for traffic or adventure. Herat and Kandahar are their principal cities.

Next in importance are the Giljhies, who border the Dooranees on the east. For a long time they possessed the regal power, but were engaged in constant struggles with the Dooranees to maintain their claim to the throne of Cabool. The right of monarchy was, however, finally wrested from them by Amed Shah, the celebrated Dooranee chief, in whose family the royal inheritance is now vested. Cabool, Ghuznee, and Jellalabad are the principal Giljhian cities.

The tribes more easterly still are included amongst

the Berdooranees, who inhabit the north-eastern parts of Affghanistan. The most remarkable Khails among them are the Eusofzye and the Khyberee, who are notorious as being the "worst of the Affghans." The latter possess all the hills and valleys under the Hindoo-Koosh, from the Suffaid-Koh to the Indus. The Khyberees are professional robbers and plunderers; which occupation the nature of their country especially favours. They levy a toll on all who may require the use of their defile, and were paid a large sum by Nadir Shah for the unmolested passage of his armies through the pass which bears their name.

These are the most remarkable tribes in Affghanistan. There are numerous others, however, who are so insignificant—at least in connexion with our present purpose—that even a recital of their names would be a superfluous task.

The remote origin of this people is obscure. However, it now appears to be satisfactorily established that Bokhara and Affghanistan were, so early as the eighth century before Christ, inhabited by the Medes; that Zoroaster here first promulgated his religio-political creed, which, spreading with surprising rapidity, concentrated and civilized all the surrounding tribes and nations in its progress, and, finally establishing

itself in Persia, it gave to that nation a faith and a monarchy.*

The traditions and records of the Affghans all assert their Israelitish origin; and although these accounts are mixed up with many absurd fables, and contain many anachronisms, yet a foundation in *fact* is not wanting to give support to the story. They maintain that they are the descendants of Saul, the King of Israel; and, like all Mohammedans, relate the Jewish history from Abraham down to the captivity; asserting that, after the captivity, part of this people withdrew to the mountains of Ghore—the western Hindoo-Koosh—and part to Arabia; and that when Mohammed appeared they became his followers. But in this relation there are many circumstances—not introduced here—which, if permitted to have absolute weight in the matter, must decide the question of their Israelitish origin in the negative. Considerable allowances, however, must be made for the inaccuracies and absurdities which appear to be the inseparable accompaniments of tradition. The Scripture account of the captivity, alluded to in the Affghan records, is given in the seven-

* Researches into the Politics, &c. of Ancient Nations, by A. H. L. Heeren, Professor of History in Gottingen.

teenth chapter of the second book of Kings, the sixth verse of which is as follows:—"In the ninth year of Hosea, (king of Israel, B. C. 721,) the king of Assyria (Shalmanezar) took Samaria, (after a siege of three years,) and carried away Israel into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and Habor, by the river of Gozan, *and in the cities of the Medes.*" Since then no definite traces of the lost tribes of Israel have been discovered, until we hear of the modern Affghan laying claim to their title and descent—a claim which, if not quite sound, rests, at least, on no slight foundation.

In the history of the revolution of Persia, before alluded to, their origin is thus given:—

"The *Aghvans*, (for such is the orthography of the name throughout the work,) who were originally of the province Szyrvan, which was anciently called Great Albania, and situate between the Caspian Sea and Mount Caucasus, were formerly subdued by Tamerlane, who, in order to keep them in greater subjection, placed them between Persia and the Indus. 'Tis said they were anciently *Christians* of the Armenian sect, but that they turned Mohammedans from want of their priests and doctors, whom Tamerlane took away from them that they might sooner embrace that religion."

To support this account, the author adds the following curious remark :—

"As to their name, that alone seems to justify what is said of their origin with respect to Albania ; for as in the Armenian tongue our letter *l* is changed into *gh*, and our *b* into *v*, so from the word *Albans* is formed *Aghvans*."

This account, however, appears to refer to a more recent period.

From these relations it is manifest that, whatever may have been the origin of the Affghan nation, they must at the present day be looked upon as a mixed people ; having among them traces, perhaps, of the seed of Abraham, and records of that favoured race ; both, however, obscured, perverted, and confused by amalgamation with the blood and fables of those gentile nations with whom either in peace or war they mingled.

It is, however, a fact, universally admitted, that the mountains of the Hindoo-Koosh and Soliman range were inhabited at a very remote period by these people, who, like all mountain tribes, preserved that independence which was so frequently lost and won by their brethren of the plains.

Little of interest is known of the history of this

country, until the year 330, B. C., when Alexander the Great, flushed with the success of his arms in Persia, turned the tide of his conquests to this country and India. A mere enumeration of the names of those provinces and towns through which he passed, and a reference, for more accurate information on this subject, to any biographical record of this mighty conqueror, are all that these limits will permit.

The first city of this country he marched towards was Artacoana, the site of the modern Herat. He crossed the Helmund to Kandahar, which, it is supposed, he founded, calling it by his own name, Alexandria. He passed over the Hindoo-Koosh amid privations and hardships, which we may believe our unfortunate troops have so lately appreciated; and in the year 329, B.C., arrived in Bactria, the modern Bokhara,* making himself master of several of its cities, at one of which—Bactra, the modern Balkh—in a drunken revel he slew his friend Cleitus. In 327, B. C., having again scaled the lofty mountains of the Hindoo-Koosh, he arrived at Alexandria after a hasty march, whence he set out on

* His memory is still preserved in Bokhara, by a priest being appointed to read in public the deeds of Iskander the Great.

his expedition to India. Crossing the river Indus at Attock, he passed through the Punjab with the intention of enriching his army with the plundered wealth of India; but in consequence of his soldiers being worn out by fatigue, famine, and disease, and such formidable enemies appearing at every step, he was compelled to relinquish this design, and make the Hyphasis, or Sutledge, the boundary of his eastern conquests; and, dropping down the Indus, he returned, subdued and mortified, through Gedrosia, or Beloochistan, to Persia.

The subsequent history of this people, until the establishment of Mohammedanism, is comparatively of little interest. During their religious wars with the Arabs, they lost the government of the country; but ultimately succeeded, after a long series of struggles, in throwing off the Ishmaelitish yoke.

In the year 1000 the brilliant career of Mahmood of Ghuznee commenced. He was son of the Governor of Khorassan and Bokhara; and, for having rendered a signal service to the Caliph, his master, was rewarded with the government of Cabool. However, gaining an increase of strength and power, he subdued the Persian provinces, and made Ghuznee his capital, which he enriched with the plunder of his annual Indian inva-

sions; and the countries from Persia to the Ganges, including Bokhara, acknowledged his sway, and paid him tribute. He died in 1030 at Ghuznee, where his tomb, at the present day, forms a striking object, and his memory is preserved by a priest reading daily the Koran over the grave of the conqueror.

In the century succeeding his death, disorder prevailed throughout the kingdom. At length a descendant of one of the Affghan princes overthrew the Guznevide dynasty, dethroned the king, and reduced his city to ashes. The Affghans now added considerably to their empire by conquest, and in the twelfth century founded the Patan or Affghan kingdom of Delhi. But while intent on extending and strengthening their possessions east of the Indus, their own land became a prey to Genjhis Khan, and his numerous Tartar hordes, under whom the Mogul dynasty was established in Affghanistan.

In the latter part of the fourteenth century the invincible Timur, or Tamerlane, appeared, to whose all-powerful arms this country soon became a prey. He conquered Persia, made numerous incursions into India, and, seizing upon the Affghan kingdom of Delhi, extended his dominions to the Ganges. Egypt bowed before him; and thence advancing into Europe, he

pushed his successful arms up to the very walls of Moscow itself.* But his power, which was so quickly established, was not destined to be permanent; and his death was soon followed by the Affghan tribes again throwing off a foreign yoke.

In the year 1483, in Bokhara, his descendant, the Sultan Baber, was born. So early as his twelfth year did his turbulent career commence; and after many vicissitudes, he was forced to fly into exile and concealment among the mountains of Tartary. He next appeared as a conqueror; and, having advanced upon Cabool, took possession of that city after a short siege, and made it his capital. Here he recruited his armies with Affghan troops, and proceeded, like his predecessors, to the conquest of Indostan. This he effected; and, having returned to Cabool, occupied the last days of his life in improving the internal condition of his adopted country. His tomb at the present day at Cabool forms an object of veneration to the natives, and of attraction to the curious.

After his death, (A.D., 1530,) the Affghans re gained their independence. But the Persians now assumed their *short-lived* possession of the country.

* See Gibbon's "Decline and Fall," &c. c. lxv.

The two great Affghan tribes, the Dooranees (or, as they were then called, the Abdallees) and Giljhies, drove them from all their cities; and, in 1722, Mahomed, a chief of the latter, advancing into Persia, seized on Ispahan, and, having expelled the monarch, mounted the Persian throne. His reign was but of short duration: he was slain by the hands of some of his own house, and his successor saw the termination of the Affghan rule in Persia:—a child was born to an obscure tradesman, a serf of the exiled house of Persia, called Nadir Kouli, who, on arriving at man's estate, devoted himself to the restoration of the monarchy. He proclaimed Tamasp, son of the deposed Persian king, as sovereign; and having, in the year 1727, raised a body of five thousand men, advanced at their head, with the determination of driving the Affghans out of the kingdom. His successes were so great, that in two years few of that people remained in Persia, and Tamasp was restored to his paternal throne. For these services Nadir was presented by his Sovereign with four of the finest provinces of his kingdom. But his popularity soon enabled him to seize the Persian throne itself, and he was proclaimed king on the 26th February, 1736. He then directed his conquests into Affghanistan, com-

mencing with the invasion of Kandahar, which he took, and, marching upon Delhi, conquered it also.

But the close of the reign of Nadir Shah was marked by extreme cruelty. His eldest son, who had frequently distinguished himself by his bravery, was blinded by his father's orders; and, on one occasion, suspecting the fidelity of his Persian soldiery, he formed the diabolical design of putting them to death. The conspiracy, however, was discovered by some Persian officers, and his assassination paid the penalty of his treachery. His army was dispersed, and the Affghans, who formed a large portion of it, under the guidance of Amed, a Khan of the Abdallee Affghans, and of the Suddozye family, returned to their native lands, laden with treasures plundered from their late masters. This man, supported by the Barukzye chiefs, was crowned king of all the Affghans, and assumed the title of Dooranee,* which his tribe have since borne. He added the Punjab and Cashmere to his dominions, subdued Khorassan and the kingdom of Balkh, and succeeded in making Sinde and Beloochistan tributary to the throne of Cabool.

* Door-i-Doorin—"Pearl of all pearls."

He died in 1773, and was succeeded by his son, Timour Shah, who, having reigned ingloriously for twenty years, died, leaving behind him a numerous progeny, of which his sons Humaioon, Zeman, Mahmood, Soojah, and Eyoob were the most remarkable.

At his father's death, the eldest son, Humaioon, Khan of Kandahar, attempted to have himself crowned king of the Affghans. But his brother Zeman, supported by the chiefs of the Barukzye khail, had already seized the vacant throne of Cabool, and, advancing at the head of a large army against his elder brother, Humaioon, routed his forces, and, having taken him prisoner, incapacitated him for ever wielding an eastern sceptre, by depriving him of both his eyes. Zeman, now feeling himself secure on the throne of Cabool, led his victorious arms into the adjacent kingdoms, overran the Punjab, and, in 1797, advanced at the head of a powerful force, for the purpose of invading the British possessions in India:—an invasion then considered of sufficient importance to arouse the Indian government into activity, and induce them to organize an army to oppose it. But circumstances occurring at home, diverted Zeman from this project, and recalled him hence without having struck a single blow:—his

brother Mahmood, Khan of Herat, had organised a conspiracy to deprive him of his hereditary kingdom of Khorassan, inducing the Persian monarch to espouse his cause. This project, however, was unsuccessful: Zeman, rushing with his hosts from his meditated invasion of Indostan, overthrew all opposition, dispersed the combined forces of his enemies, and returned, with increased power, to the Punjab. He there reduced all the Rajahs into submission, and among them Runjeet Singh, nominating him to the governorship of Lahore, and making that province subject and tributary to his crown. On his return home, however, having incurred the displeasure of the Barukzye chiefs, a conspiracy was formed against him for his destruction; but its timely discovery enabled him to seize the principal conspirators, who were all immediately beheaded. But the sons of one of his victims, Futteh, Azeem, Dost Mahomed, and their brothers, were bent on revenging their father's death. For this purpose, the eldest of these, Futteh Khan, immediately joined himself with Mahmood, Zeman's third brother, and, mustering a large army, attacked and totally routed the Cabool forces, and having taken Zeman prisoner, had him blinded and placed in confinement; he was shortly released, and has since lived in comparative ease and

comfort. Mahmood then mounted the throne of Cabool; but he was constantly employed in suppressing the insurrections raised by his brother Soojah, our late minion, which terminated in his being obliged to relinquish it in his favour.* But this position the latter was destined not long to enjoy. Mahmood, and his vizier, Futteh Khan, were again in arms, and drove Soojah from the kingdom; who, in a pitched battle with Dost Mahomed, having suffered a final defeat, fled to the court of Runjeet Singh for protection; but, imprisoned, plundered, and otherwise cruelly treated, he thence escaped to Loodiana, where he since enjoyed in peace a pension from the Indian treasury.

In the meantime, Mahmood, being now in comparatively peaceable possession of his kingdom, became a tyrant; and jealous of the popularity of his vizier, and forgetful of the valuable assistance he had so frequently received at his hands, had him blinded, and, by the express commands of his ungrateful master, was cruelly butchered.

But his death was not permitted to be long un-

* It was now (1809) that Elphinstone's embassy arrived at the court of Soojah, but left it without having obtained the object of the mission.

avenged. His brothers, Azeem and Dost Mahomed, assisted by other Barukzye chiefs, drove him from his throne, (whence he fled to Herat,) and solicited Soojah to resume the sceptre. But the conduct of Soojah being displeasing to these chiefs, the younger brother, Eyoob, was set up in his stead. It is manifest, however, that those who had the power of making and unmaking kings would not long refrain from possessing themselves of the sceptre, which was then all but in their grasp. Eyoob was unseated, and Azeem and his brothers seized upon and partitioned the kingdom into the almost independent provinces of Kandahar, Cabool, Peshawar, and Khelat.

Meanwhile, in consequence of the unsettled state of the kingdom, the chiefs of all the tributary states were enabled to sever their connexion with the Cabool throne, and recover their independence. Balkh, Sinde, Beloochistan, and the Punjab refused any longer to acknowledge the power of the King of the Affghans in their territories. Runjeet Singh became by degrees more and more powerful, and, thirsty for conquest, invaded the rich province of Cashmere; and in a final battle with Azeem and Dost Mahomed, on the plains near Peshawar, he, having totally routed their Affghan forces, added this province to his already

extensive dominions. Azeem's death soon followed this defeat, and the vacant throne of Cabool was speedily filled by his brother, Dost Mahomed Khan. Three other brothers seized upon Kandahar. Herat alone remained in the Suddozye family, being governed by the fugitive, Mahmood, who, at his death, in 1829, was succeeded by his son Kamram.

In consequence of the important part which the Punjab, or Seikh kingdom, and its rulers have borne in more recent events, a brief sketch of the rise of this important state becomes necessary.

The *Seikhs* were originally a religious sect, which was founded in the fifteenth century by Nanak, a Mohammedan priest. He preached the unity of the Deity and peace; and endeavoured, in his system, to reconcile the opposing faiths of the Moslem and Indoo. However, under one of their ruler-priests, Govind, in consequence of the persecutions they suffered from the believers in both these creeds, they relinquished their peaceful character, assuming the title *Singh*,—"Lion;" and, seizing the sword, were soon enabled to lay the foundation of an independent state, but which, until the time of Runjeet Singh, Rajah of Lahore, possessed no organization. By extraordinary talents, both in field and council,

this man was enabled to subdue all the other rulers of the Punjab, and to wrest the rich provinces of Cashmere and Peshawar from the Affghans, with whom and the Seikhs, both on religious grounds and from early feuds, there exists an irreconcilable hatred. Thus the dominions of the Rajah of Lahore were of wide extent, stretching from the eastern range of the Hindoo-Koosh to Sinde, and from the river Sutledge, on the east, to near the Soliman mountains in Affghanistan, on the west.* Runjeet, however, not content with these extensive possessions, meditated the reduction of the states east and south of the river Sutledge. In this, however, he was prevented by the interposition of the British government; but who, sensible of the value of so powerful an ally, concluded a reciprocal treaty with him, in 1809, by which the river Sutledge was fixed as the south-eastern limits of his dominions, and the territories of the Seikh and other states, on the left bank of this river, preserved from invasion.

For more than twenty years the Barukzyes had held

* The Seikh forces are well disciplined, and can boast of being commanded by some of Napoleon's officers, of whom are Generals Aritabili, Ventura, and Court. Another, General Allard, died in 1839, of a heart affection.

possession of Affghanistan, until circumstances occurring which, it was then supposed, threatened the integrity of our eastern possessions, induced the British government to espouse the cause of the exiled Soojah, and replace him on the throne he had so often lost and won.

A PERSONAL NARRATIVE

OF THE

CAMPAIGNS IN AFFGHANISTAN,

ETC. ETC.

THE brilliancy and successes which have attended the operations of our armies have given to the military history of Great Britain an imperishable interest; remarkable as forming so striking a contrast to the oblivion and apathy with which any record of a past defeat, or intelligence of a recent disaster is treated and received. To these remarks, however, the war in Affghanistan forms an exception almost singular; for, though our recent operations in the countries of Central Asia are deplorably deficient in all that should excite our pride, yet their history is replete with so many romantic and painful incidents, and so strange has been the combination of brilliant success and deep disgrace, of military skill and diplomatic error—and so terrible the expenditure of life and treasure, which have attended our campaigns among a people, to us, so novel

in their habits, and in a land of such classic recollections, that the public mind has been effectually awakened from its wonted indifference, and has evinced the liveliest interest in every detail of this lamentable war.

William Henry Dennie was born in England. His father—a member of the English bar — was nearly connected with the Irish family of *Denny*—the difference in the orthography of each name being traceable to some family pique, which induced an ancestor of the writer of these letters to adopt the former appellation. His mother was grand-daughter of Lawrence Steele, Esq., of Rathbride, in the county Kildare, through the youngest son of that house, William. Colonel Dennie obtained his commission as Ensign in the twenty-second regiment of foot on the 1st of January, 1800, and commenced his career in India under Lord Lake, with whom he served throughout the Mahratta wars ; and before he attained the age of manhood received the well-merited commendation of the Commander-in-chief for suppressing a mutiny in the twenty-second regiment. He was present at the capturing of the Mauritius in 1810, and remained in that island with his regiment during the short period it was occupied by the British. On the return of the

twenty-second to England he effected an exchange into the thirteenth light infantry, serving with that regiment as its Major during the Burmese war. During Colonel Sale's illness the command of this distinguished corps devolved on Major Dennie; in which capacity he was distinguished so highly by skill and courage—having been severely wounded therein—that the honour of the Companionship of the Bath was conferred upon him.

Being ever anxious to obtain the highest rank in the profession he had chosen, which during active service generally presents opportunities for distinction, more frequent than subordinate grades, he purchased each step as rapidly as circumstances would permit, and was gazetted to the Lieutenant-colonelcy of the thirteenth on the 6th of July, 1832. His subsequent military career may be traced in the ensuing pages.

The first letter of the series is dated "Landour, August 22, 1838," and is as follows:—

"I much fear that I shall be too late for this mail, and that the opportunity has elapsed for my being able to despatch this letter by the steamer, which is only now announced to sail from Bombay on the the 8th of September. In ordinary times this advertisement would suffice, but we are just now at the height of the rains of this country, and *you* may know what these periodical

floods or tropical monsoons mean. The whole face of the land is just now inundated, and to a stranger from Europe, wears all the appearance of another deluge. Here, in the mountains, it has rained forty-six days without intermission—what then must it be in the plains! The usual time of a letter hence to Bombay, is twelve or fourteen days in dry weather; I have now seventeen to accomplish it in, but fear the floods will detain the post till the steamer has sailed; but at all events we must try our chance. The government has, however, an excuse for not furnishing the public with earlier information (as to the starting of this mail). Their despatches are at this moment of such importance, that all other subjects become of minor interest; and the convenience of individuals cannot be consulted when the interests of an empire like India are at stake. We are on the eve of something momentous. A great army from our northern provinces is forming, and our regiment has received orders to march on field service on the 14th October. I shall at least thus (at last) be restored to the command of my regiment, for Colonel Sale will be the senior brigadier, and I have every reason to believe that it is intended to give me a brigade also.

. . . . .

"The field is to be one of intense interest and curiosity

—a classical and beautiful land, where the hostile foot of European has never trod since the days of Alexander the Great! They say we are going to fight the Persians or Russians, the latter of whom are now besieging Herat in concert with the former; and are actually not much farther from our frontier, or where we are posted, than these stations of Kurnaul, Meerut, &c. are from Calcutta. The Russians have long conceived this gigantic design: they are poor, and know that the wealth of the East, from time immemorial, has been the great object and desire of all nations in the world. They have conquered Persia, after subduing Turkey, and have really stolen across this immense extent of country, without our being almost aware of their insidious advances, till we hear of them actually besieging Herat, a fortress of Cabool, which stands on the confines of that country and Persia. The Seikh kingdom alone divides us from Cabool, and the celebrated Runjeet Singh, whose capital of Lahore is only a few days' march from our cantonments, has, either from interest or fear, been persuaded or forced to enter into a treaty, offensive and defensive, with the British, and give us not only free passage through his dominions to Cabool, but to join us in a contingent or army of fifty thousand men against our common enemy, for which he,

of course, is promised a share of the spoil, although I doubt not we shall still keep the lion's share to ourselves. The first object is to drive the present king of Cabool, Dost Mahomed Khan, off his throne: he has dismissed our envoy, and joined hands of fellowship with the Persians and Russians. We have found out, therefore, that he is *an usurper!* who expelled his half-brother, Shah Soojah-ool-moolk, from his throne. The latter has been a refugee many years in our provinces and a pensionary of the Honourable Company. We never thought much about him or his misfortunes before—our principles or politics being that of non-interference when it suits not our interest, and all kinds of intermeddling when it does. Shah Soojah is said to have many partisans in Cabool, and it is supposed that when we have restored him, he will prove a faithful ally and a sort of bulwark or outwork to our possessions in India. To insure his fidelity, and all those objects, it is intended that he shall be *honoured* with an English force, which he will pay and entertain. The Indus is to be our frontier line, and with a flotilla of steamers on that great river, it is believed we shall keep back Russian invasion for another century, or at least for our time. But these Scythian savages—Huns, Calmucs, Tartars, semi-civilized rascals—have all the propensities

of their ancestors, and the Cossacks long to leave their deserts hungry for the fat fields of Indostan.

"Now you must procure a map of the north-west provinces of India, and those which border them, that is, the Punjab, (or 'country of five rivers,' being translated,) the dominions of our ally, Runjeet Singh, which we shall pass through without molestation or difficulty; and next to that, you will come to the kingdom of Cabool, or Affghanistan, the country of the Affghans—a people who have conquered the greater part of Asia, or the old world, in their time, and founded dynasties in Persia, India, &c. They are supposed to be the genuine descendants of the lost tribes of Israel, and their Jewish features, complexion, names,* traditions, &c., as many say, prove the fact. The climate, soil,

* The coincidence of many of the names of localities in Affghanistan with those found in the sacred writings, is a remarkable fact. In the 27th verse of the 19th chapter of Joshua, and in the 9th chapter of First Kings, verse 13th, Cabul occurs as the name of a place in the promised land. And Mr. Masson enumerates Gaza, Zoar, Shinar, and many other Scripture names, frequently to be met with in this country. It is more than probable that the Canaanites were from one common stock with those then inhabiting Affghanistan, speaking with them one common language, and hence may be traced the many similarities between the Affghan and Scripture names.

and produce of this beautiful country render it the garden of the world. The latitude is only thirty-four degrees, but it is so elevated that the cold in winter equals that of England, and the people are wrapt in woollen cloth and furs. In the summer, all the fruits of Europe abound in the greatest perfection. Grapes and apples are exported thence to India, and all the neighbouring nations, together with furs, shawls, horses, and other valuable productions.

"You must also get Elphinstone's account of the kingdom of Cabool, and its dependencies in Persia, Tartary, and India, comprising a view of the Affghan nation. The Honourable Mount-Stewart Elphinstone was sent on an embassy to Cabool, from Delhi, thirty years ago, when Shah Soojah was King of the Affghans, who received our ambassador most munificently. This is the same man whom we have found it now expedient to be just or generous towards, for our own special interest. You will find this book very delightful, and it will astonish you all to find such a noble people among the mountains of Asia. You will be able to trace our course, and must show me some day or other how you have followed our route. Try also to get Conolly's account of a recent overland journey to India, through this country; and, above all,

the work of Captain Burnes, who has explored so recently every part of these territories, and whose information and inquiries have furnished us with all our present *matériel* of operations. He it is who was dismissed by Dost Mahomed, the present King, and has only within these few days returned, with Major Todd, from Herat. Our ambassador has also been dismissed by the Persians, and his personal safety endangered. The Governor-general and Commander-in-chief are here in the Himalayahs, at a neighbouring station—Simla. Thus, the government being on the spot, or so close to the field of operations, no time has been lost in organizing an efficient force, which, it is said, will consist of thirty thousand men, as the Bengal division is to be joined by an army from Bombay, and report says Sir Henry Fane will take the command of all.

"W. H. D."

It is not our intention to question the wisdom of the policy which induced our government to undertake this expedition. The *ostensible* reasons are given in the Governor-general's declaration, dated "Simla, 1st October, 1838." Suffice it to say, that whatever might have been the means adopted by another administration, the end to be obtained was, the establishment of our

influence in the countries west of the Indus. The circumstances, as stated in that declaration, by which it was sought to justify the sending an armament into the then peaceful state of Affghanistan, are briefly as follows :—

In the year 1836, Captain Alexander Burnes had been despatched to the court of Cabool, upon a commercial expedition, connected, it is presumed, with the extension of the traffic on the Indus and its tributaries, then an object of desire to our Indian government. While thus engaged, Dost Mahomed Khan, Ameer of Cabool, having made a wanton attack upon our ancient ally, Runjeet Singh, Captain Burnes was instructed to offer himself as a mediator between the contending chiefs ; a proposal which was accepted with apparent gladness by both, and a speedy termination to the dispute was anticipated. But, in consequence of the insolence, and extravagant nature of the demands of Dost Mahomed, backed by Persian intrigue, the armies of which country were then besieging Herat, in direct opposition to our repeated and urgent desires to the contrary, our envoy was compelled to relinquish the design of restoring peace, and returned baffled, and, some said, insulted to India. The government then seeing that nothing could be hoped from the divided state of Affghanistan, as it existed under the Barukzye chiefs,

formed the resolution of restoring the monarchy—then nearly obsolete—by placing Shah Soojah on the throne of Cabool.

Such are the circumstances under which Lord Auckland deemed it expedient to organize an expensive and powerful force to desolate Affghanistan. Much, however, remains yet to be known of the commencement of this war; for each Indian mail brings some fresh intelligence, to render its early history still more obscure and unintelligible; and which the discrepancy and direct contradiction recently discovered between the correspondence of Captain or Sir Alexander Burnes, and the Governor-general's declaration, of which the former was supposed to be but the echo, does not tend to simplify. Surely the appalling and calamitous consequences of this measure demand, that all doubts as to the motives and objects of the undertaking be removed by a most searching and uncompromising scrutiny.

Although not expressed in the Governor-general's declaration, yet a more formidable and rival power was supposed to be busy in exciting these divisions. The agents of Russia had no longer attempted to conceal their acquiescence, and full share, in encouraging these disunions. And not only the Affghan chiefs, but the Ameers of Sinde, with whom we had some time

before concluded a commercial treaty, were discovered to be in communication with the Persians, soliciting the aid of that empire, to enable them to destroy the hated influence of the *Feringees*, or English, in their country.

For the purpose of fulfilling the objects mentioned in the Governor-general's declaration, the following appointments were then made :—Mr., afterwards Sir William Macnaughten, to fill the office of minister and envoy on the part of the Indian government, at the future court of Shah Soojah ; assisted in other and subordinate stations by Sir Alexander Burnes, Lieutenants Todd, Pottinger, Leech, and Dr. Percival B. Lord. Lieutenant Conolly was appointed to command the escort of the minister, and its medical care entrusted to Mr. G. J. Berwick, of the Bengal establishment.

The military dispositions and appointments were as follow :—The "Army of the Indus," consisting of three divisions, (two from the Bengal presidency and one from Bombay,) was placed under the command of Sir Henry Fane, Commander-in-chief of India. The first infantry division of the Bengal force was entrusted to the care of Sir Willoughby Cotton, in which were the first, second, and third brigades : the second division, under Major-general Duncan, consisted of the fourth and fifth brigades. Brigadier Sale was given the

command of the first brigade, in which was the thirteenth light infantry regiment, commanded by its junior Lieutenant-colonel, W. H. Dennie. Major-general Nott commanded the second brigade, Brigadier Roberts the fourth, and Brigadier Worsley the fifth. The care of the engineer department was intrusted to Captain George Thompson—this, with a siege train, completed the Bengal force.

The Bombay contingent, under Sir John Keane, Commander-in-chief of that presidency, consisted of an ample and well-organized force, with cavalry, siege-train, sappers and miners, and artillery.

The force subsequently received the augmentation of another brigade, consisting of the first, second, and fourth regiments of local cavalry, under the command of Colonel James Skinner.

One portion of the army cannot be passed unnoticed. It was stated in the Governor-general's declaration, "that his Majesty Shah Soojah-ool-moolk will enter Affghanistan surrounded by his own troops;" and in order to give this mandate effect, a mass of levies was raised in *Indostan*, consisting of five regiments of infantry and two of cavalry, the whole commanded by British officers, and paid from the Indian treasury: this formed the "Shah's contingent."

The Bengal force, accompanied by the Shah's contingent, were expected to be joined at Shikarpore by the Bombay division of the "Army of the Indus," and until that event takes place, this narrative is to be considered as being more intimately connected with the proceedings of the former force.

"Camp, 'Army of the Indus,' 11th Nov. 1838.

"Rather than not write at all, it were better to send you a few lines. I am here once again at the head of my regiment; and, by the blessing of God, in good health and spirits, with the prospect before me of credit, I trust, and advancement and profit. As the senior officer in the army, too, commanding a regiment, the first vacancy makes me eligible to a brigade.

"The thirteenth is in the division of an old friend of mine, Sir Willoughby Cotton: we are in the first brigade, under Colonel, or rather Brigadier Sale. We are now four marches from Kurnaul, and as I only came down from the hills ten days ago, in time to join the regiment before it left Kurnaul, and make some necessary preparations, you may well believe how every second of my time, day and night, has been occupied. I have, in truth, been a good deal hurried and harassed, and my mind and body more than usually occupied and

exercised; but it seems to do me good. The only thing I feel, and which somewhat oppresses me, is the sudden and incredible change of climate. Living, as I have done for the last six months, in a cool and, latterly, a cold atmosphere, the breath of the plains almost scalds me. When I slept at Landour, it froze every night: in little more than twenty-four hours I was in the torrid zone. There (in the hills) the season has been unusually cold; here it is as unseasonably hot. The thermometer is now (about two, P.M.) ninety-six degrees in my tent; for of course, these magnificent pavilions are not as cool as a house; but the mornings and evenings are cool and pleasant; and on this account we usually march very early—as early as three o'clock in the morning. I took the command of my regiment on the 1st November. We have a glorious force; and the spectacle would really dazzle and delight you all; for an Indian army is truly a gorgeous sight. We are now about fifteen thousand strong, and this force will be augmented by the junction of many troops from Bombay, on some point near the Indus. All our own corps are not yet assembled in the strength I mentioned above, but we are to pick them up before we reach the Sutledge, on which river, our boundary, at a place called Ferozepore, we are to concentrate. . . . .

"I could write a great deal more, but the confusion and clamour which yet prevails in an army newly organized, render it impossible; for appeals are made to me every minute by officers and soldiers, by elephant-drivers and camel-leaders; besides those of the mob of camp followers, attendant on an Indian army, which are attached to my corps, necessarily lay their disputes before me for adjustment; it is as yet almost too much for any head to stand; but we still get into our places, and all will be in order in time, and arrange itself. The materials are incongruous and multifarious.

"W. H. D."

A few days after this letter was written, a communication was received from Lieutenant-colonel Stoddart, dated "Herat, 8th September, 1838," conveying the intelligence that the Shah of Persia had raised the siege of Herat. In consequence of this, a decrease in the strength of the force was decided upon, accompanied by changes of importance in its disposition. For the purpose of determining which regiments should go forward, and which remain behind, a lot was drawn—the injudicious nature of which arrangement soon became apparent. Among those on which devolved the lot to go forward, was the thirteenth light infantry,

a regiment the most weakly and sickly in the service; whereas the force was thereby deprived of the assistance of the third Buffs, a corps then in the finest order. Captain Havelock remarks on this, that in such an arrangement the Commander-in-chief should rather have exercised his judgment, than have left so important a measure to be decided by the capricious chance of a ballot.

These arrangements being all completed, Sir Henry Fane resigned his command of the "Army of the Indus," disgusted (as stated in a late letter signed, "H. Fane," in *The Times*) with the intermeddling of the officials in military matters; Sir Willoughby Cotton succeeding him in the charge of the entire army, until the arrival of the Bombay force should have placed the command of the whole under Sir John Keane. To Major-general Nott of the second brigade was intrusted the care of the Bengal division of the army, upon which Lieutenant-colonel Dennie was nominated to the command of the late brigade of General Nott.

On the morning of the 8th November, 1838, the thirteenth began its march towards Kythul, and arrived at Ferozepore, on the river Sutledge or Gharra—the ancient Hyphasis—on the morning of the 26th.

"Ferozepore, 'Army of the Indus,'
"December 7th, 1838.

"In all the hurry and confusion in which I am involved, and which prevails around me, you cannot expect a long letter; but it will make you happy to know that thus far have we marched without impediment—that I am quite well, in fact, in the best health and spirits—that, more than all, I am a brigadier. Can I say more, than to bid you rejoice, which I know you will do; and it is the happiness I feel it will afford you all, that constitutes my chief delight.

"I wish I had time to tell you all and every thing; but a circular has just gone round the camp, notifying that on the 1st January a steamer would be despatched from Bombay, and no time must be lost. . . .

"I must tell you, however, that one small qualification of this good news consists in my being removed altogether from my own regiment; that the second brigade I am appointed to, has even no British or Queen's regiment in it, but is composed solely of sepoys. It consists of the thirty-first, forty-second, and forty-third regiments, N. I. Of course I shall be somewhat strange at first with such troops, but with good will and an honest desire to do justice, and behave like a gentle-

man to all under me, I shall soon feel accustomed to them, and they to me, and feel confident that we shall like each other.

"We marched from Kurnaul to this place in nineteen marches, and have settled here some ten or twelve days, having been reviewed before Runjeet Singh, the chief of the Seikhs and a great potentate. We march on again, towards Shikarpore, in three or four days more, leaving half the force here. We may be six weeks reaching that place, and, after establishing a bridge of boats, &c. over the Indus, and forming our magazines, &c. there, advance upon Kandahar, in the country of the Affghans.

"W. H. D."

Their march now lay along the left bank of the river Sutledge, through the friendly state of the Nawab of Bahwalpore; but they were about entering the Sinde territory, the Ameers of which were far from evincing a friendly disposition towards the expedition. In consequence of this Sir Alexander Burnes was despatched before the army to arrange a treaty, by which we should have an unmolested passage through their territories; which permission, in form at least, was at length obtained. The army then crossed the boundary line into

Sinde, warned by Sir Alexander Burnes that although the rulers of the country had promised every assistance to our troops, yet that they must be prepared to meet with treachery and opposition. These predictions were not long unfulfilled; and even now they experienced a foretaste of those privations and difficulties, which at a later period became of such serious magnitude. Their camp followers were daily deserting in such numbers, bringing away with them the hired camels—animals so essential to the progress of the Indian army, and which, by the treachery of the Ameers of Sinde, they ineffectually endeavoured to replace—that the abandonment of a great portion of the camp equipage and soldiers' bedding became inevitable.

But to the division of the Indus army under Sir John Keane, which was moving up the Indus, this duplicity of the Sindians was attended with more serious results. Being originally less efficiently equipped for a lengthened march than the Bengal force—having to make a sea voyage from Bombay and up the Indus—they were now almost completely crippled by the want of those necessary supplies of camels and carriage, which the Sindians, for adequate remuneration, were by treaty bound to afford. Nor was this all; for every kind of petty harass and opposition were practised against this

force, delaying the junction of the two divisions of the army far beyond the period calculated upon.

The Bengal column, with the Shah's force in advance, had at length—January 27th—arrived at Roree, on the left bank of the Indus, where a bridge of boats had been constructed by the skill of the engineers, under the superintendence of the late Lieutenant Sturt, and over which the Shah, with his contingent, having crossed in safety, encamped on the opposite bank of the river.

Meanwhile Sir Willoughby Cotton, having received intelligence of the difficulty of Sir John Keane's position, from the various causes before mentioned, determined to proceed to his relief; and on the 1st February left Roree, with the first and second brigades, with cavalry and horse artillery; their immediate object being to advance on Hydrabad, to which city also Sir John Keane was approaching from the south. The expected assault of so wealthy a place as Hydrabad inspired the expedition with joyful anticipations of the golden results it promised. But in this they were soon to be disappointed, for after a march of seven days a despatch was received from Sir John Keane, ordering the force to proceed no further, as all difficulties with the rulers of the country had been arranged; that they had concluded an amicable treaty, and paid nine lakhs of rupees as an instalment

for the sum due by them to Shah Soojah, as arrears of the tribute since his deposition, and which, in part payment of the expenses of this expedition, he had made over to the Indian government. The detachment then countermarched to Roree, highly chagrined at the result of the expedition, and joined the main body on or about the 14th February. By the diligence of Sir Alexander Burnes the insular fort of Bukkur, on the Indus, had been ceded to us—an important position, which secured an unmolested passage for our troops over that mighty river. This they accomplished on the 15th, and following days; and on the 20th, the Bengal column encamped at Shikarpore.

When Sir Willoughby Cotton had moved down to the relief of the Bombay army, the Shah had advanced his force in a parallel direction along the western bank of the Indus upon Larkhanu, where, it is believed, he obtained no inconsiderable amount of treasure, and whence he had not as yet returned. The Bengal column then—February 23d—resumed its march and proceeded to cross the desert of Cutch Gundava, in Beloochistan, towards Dadur, with the exception of the second brigade under Brigadier Dennie, who was instructed to remain at Shikarpore until further orders, with directions also to superintend the depot established at that station for

the purpose of supplying the Shah's contingent with levies. It is a matter of much surprise that a post of so degrading a nature as this should have been assigned to an officer of Colonel Dennie's standing in the army. Cut off thus, for the present, from the army in advance, and apparently deprived of all chance of distinguishing himself, he could not but feel his position as humiliating and degrading in the extreme;—actually drilling the raw levies of the Shah's puppet-show troops!

To this force must mainly be attributed the many privations which was afterwards so severely felt by the army during its painful march to Kandahar. It consisted, as was before stated, of a host of undisciplined and hastily-raised levies from the Company's military stations, in order to give an appearance of reality to the mandate, of the Shah entering his dominions surrounded *by his own troops;* but which, while they added nothing to the strength of the entire force, seriously crippled the actual and *bonâ fide* actors in the drama—the Queen's and Company's forces—by depriving them of the benefit of a commissariat, in which both were so lamentably deficient, almost as large as that attached to the Bombay and Bengal divisions conjointly.

Meanwhile Sir John Keane sent Captain Stockley of the Bombay commissariat, and stripped Colonel Dennie's

brigade not only of their Godown and Bazar camels, but tents, magazines, hospital stores, cattle, &c. Feeling the difficulties of his position, by being thus at once deprived of the only means he had of advance or retreat, Colonel Dennie addressed the following letter of remonstrance to Sir John Keane's military secretary, which was not only without effect, but he thereby drew upon himself the animosity of the Commander-in-chief, which it will be seen the latter took no pains to conceal on more occasions than one afterwards.

"Shikarpore, 9th March, 1839.

"My dear Sir—I have endeavoured, to the best of my ability, to give every effect to the Commander-in-chief's instructions. I will not disguise that it has been a painful duty, but I trust not the less conscientiously and zealously performed. I cannot but lament, in common—I have no doubt—with his Excellency and the members of his *whole force*, that two regular and disciplined armies, brought together from so great a distance and at so much difficulty and cost, should, at the very moment of united action, be thus maimed and dismembered, merely for the purpose of keeping together a mass of raw levies, like the Shah's contingent, whose carriage and supplies would suffice for the Bengal or

Bombay divisions, and who would again be much better employed if left here for formation and instruction; whereas, in their present state, they must prove worse than worthless in advance. Can this be done in the vain hope of giving plausibility to the fiction, of the "Shah entering his dominions surrounded by his own troops?" when the fact is too notorious to escape detection and exposure, that he has not a single subject or Affghan amongst them!—his army being composed of camp followers from the Company's military stations.

"A necessary evil which has grown out of this has been the effort to establish the efficiency of one part of the army at the expense of the other; a measure which I fear will be attended with little permanent advantage. The breach of engagement with the camel proprietors on the part of the government, by this transfer of their services *against their consent*, will, I fear, be visited on all by disastrous consequences; and experience has taught me that no vigilance nor force can secure us against their desertions. It is not too late to suggest (if the political authorities will permit the suggestion to be acted upon) *that the Khelat chief has ample means of supplying all our wants, and if indeed a friend*, could not refuse to answer requisitions for adequate remuneration.

"I apprehend that the arrival of camels from Moultan, &c. must be considered at least as problematical (all the cattle from that country, Seikh or Punjab, having already deserted) as the season advances; it is, therefore, becoming a question whether the troops at this place should be allowed to put themselves forward, or wait an indefinite period in expectation of camels, which may never arrive, or, when available, be again employed for other purposes than forwarding this brigade.—I have the honour to be, &c.

"W. H. DENNIE,
"Brigadier, Army of the Indus.

"To LIEUT.-COL. MACDONALD,
"Military Secretary."

The Bengal contingent was now proceeding on its march through the Bolan defile, to the high lands of Affghanistan. Nothing could have been more fallacious than the ideas the Indian government had formed of the nature and number of the difficulties the troops had to encounter during this dreadful march. Little did they conceive that an incessant and harassing opposition from man and the elements would meet them at every step. The predatory warfare of the Sindians and Beloochees, the want of provisions and water, of food

and forage for camels and horses, and the difficult nature of the countries through which their progress lay, had almost succeeded in terminating this rashly-undertaken and ignorantly-conceived expedition; and in fact such were their privations, that a retreat was at one time seriously contemplated, and considered inevitable. However, they reached Kandahar at the latter end of April, nearly worn out; Sir John Keane and his body-guard, in company with the Shah's force, having joined them at Ser-i-ab, and on the 27th Shah Soojah took formal possession of the city. The Bombay force did not reach Kandahar until the beginning of May. Here they were all obliged to remain till the end of June, to recruit the strength of the men and camp followers, who had been living for some time before on half and quarter rations, which, however, were then augmented.

We must now return to Colonel Dennie, whom, it may be remembered, we left behind, in no very enviable position, at Shikarpore. Having heard that Captain Stockley had been attacked, on his way to join the army with a convoy of provisions, stores, &c., by a party of Beloochees, and that after several of his escort being cut up, and three hundred and fifty camels carried

off, he threw himself into the fort of Janneedeera, near the confines of Sinde, in Beloochistan; aware, too, of the dangerous position in which this valuable convoy was placed, and the importance it was of to the army in advance, he immediately equipped four companies of the forty-second Native Infantry, for which alone he could obtain sufficient carriage, and, advancing with this small body of two hundred sepoys, rescued the convoy out of its perilous position, and, escorting it, delivered it over in safety at Dadur.

The following hasty letter, though dated Shikarpore, was, we believe, written at the time he was escorting this convoy.

"Shikarpore, 27th March, 1839.

"I have only time to tell you that I am safe and well, but proceeding, at the instant of receiving your dear letter of the 17th December, with part of my brigade, to the army in advance, with a convoy of provisions and stores.

"The heat here is beyond all description—at one hundred degrees in my double tent; but in a few days, with God's blessing, I may hope to be in a climate more congenial to the feelings and constitutions of white men. I told you in my last, that we have been

marching and counter-marching along the line of the Indus, having gone from Ferozepore almost to Hydrabad, to relieve the Bombay army. We have been since the 12th Nov.—the day we marched from Kurnaul—almost continually on the move, and all, hitherto, has been attended with little result, except the nominal subjugation of the Ameers, or, as you would write it, Emirs of Sinde, whose extorted friendship is worse than open enmity; for the knaves practise all sorts of annoyances against us, which they disavow, of course, in words; but our unfortunate camels and servants daily declare the truth. These chiefs of bandits not only refuse us all supplies, but urge their armed retainers to rob and carry off all they can lay their hands upon.

"To give you some idea of the mode of campaigning in India, I have no less than eleven camels to carry my tents and baggage, and what are not only *termed* indispensables, but really are so in this climate, and these are not more than sufficient; for without some spare ones, we should lose all our property, and perhaps our health, if subject to exposure, which becomes a consequence.

"I pray to be at home,—home again, and with you all, never more to leave you. . . . .
I know not what may be in store for us at Cabool and Kandahar, but hitherto there has been neither

credit nor profit to recompense us for all this harass. The increase of rank and allowances, is scarcely enough to repay one for all the expense, and the wear and tear of body and all belonging to us; but still, we trust when all is over, we shall be able to live and die comfortably and happy with the objects of our love—in a word, those of my dearest and only interest in this world.

"W. H. D."

The letters which intervene between this and the subsequent date have been mislaid.

"Kandahar, June 15, 1839.

"The last letter I wrote to you was from Quettah, in the province of Shawl—the first place worthy of a name I came to after leaving the low lands of Sinde, or the countries lying on the borders of the great Indus. We ascended from Dadur to that place through the Bolan Pass, an elevation of between five and six thousand feet, having previously traversed, at its foot, a long dreadful desert plain, from Shikarpore (or to reckon correctly, from Roree on the banks of the Indus) to Dadur, of about one hundred and fifty miles. *Desert* will scarcely describe the aspect of that fearful tract, where no sign of animal or vegetable life is to be found;

which the wild beast, from its desolation, shuns, and which is neither inhabited by bird nor insect: no sound whatever disturbs the awful silence; and as for the heat —*you*, God be praised, can form no conception of it: *I have escaped*, and can only tell you that I shudder to look back at what I and those with me underwent. The tract of country above described is by the nations of India considered the hottest in the world. The Persians and other Mohammedans hereabout have a saying to this effect, 'Oh, Allah! wherefore make *hell* when thou hast made Dadur?' The burning soil, the suffocating atmosphere exceeds all credibility, and human life cannot long exist under it, but man perishes, literally *consumed!* Colonel Thompson, who commanded one of the regiments of my brigade, and who followed me a few days in the rear, died instantly in his tent, and Lieutenant Brady, of Her Majesty's seventeenth foot, fell dead in the same manner—their bodies turning as black as charcoal. Between fifty and sixty persons of another convoy were suffocated by the breath of this same deadly simoom, which sweeps across the face of the desert at intervals, during the hot season, dealing destruction to all within its influence.

"I had told you of my having been left behind, with my brigade, at Shikarpore, of Sir John Keane having

profited thereby, to relieve the Bombay army at our expense, by taking all our camels and provisions from us, which therefore kept us still longer in that dangerous position which others were anxious to fly from, and relieve themselves at our cost or expense—which was then considered as nothing less than that of our lives.

"The Bengal column felt nothing of these sufferings, for they advanced in February and March, and reached the cool and healthy table-land of Affghanistan early in April. The Bombay column, supplying themselves from us, pushed on, reckless of our fate, the plea being, *to save the Europeans;* so that my command of a 'native' or black brigade became a punishment, or misfortune. Before I could proceed, or obtain carriage or food, which latter came in by dribbles, and which I could effect for four companies only, the month of May and the dreaded period had arrived. To give you a correct notion of the temperature, the thermometer stood, in the tent of a young officer, my aid-de-camp—a smaller one than mine, and termed a hill-tent—at one hundred and twenty-five degrees; in mine, which is one of the best and largest, at one hundred and eighteen, and one hundred and twenty degrees. We were here compelled to halt for some days at certain stages, which have names in the map, but neither town, village, nor creature, to

give reality to the fiction. We dug holes, five or six feet deep, in the ground, under our tents, and fastened wet blankets to the doors or apertures. These precautions, with wet towels round our heads, saved us. It seems a contradiction, after all I have stated, but the surrounding nations, who dread the heat as much at that time as ourselves, yet in the hope of great plunder, poured down from the neighbouring hills, and, well mounted and armed, harassed our small bodies in the rear, who were escorting grain or treasure, which was the work allotted, of course, to us. In fact, from Shikarpore to Dadur, and all through the Bolan Pass, a long, continuous defile, of seven days' march, (but where I was dragging along ten days,) we had to fight our way the whole road. But here, thank God! I am at last, with my regiment, and the head-quarters, or advance, of the army, having arrived here a few days ago, with a treasure-party from Quettah or Shawl. By Sir John Keane assuming the command of the combined forces, Sir Willoughby Cotton has fallen back to the division, and Major-general Nott to that of my late brigade, (the second,) as I myself to that of my corps. Being, however, the next senior in the army, any casualty must restore me to a brigade; but pray, however, it may never be accompanied with the penalties I paid for

such distinction: to be suffocated, or burnt to charcoal, is any thing but a glorious death, or that of a soldier.

"From this (Kandahar) the army moves, on the 20th, to Cabool, This is June, the hottest season in the year; yet, even in our tents, by sinking the floor a few feet, and other contrivances, the climate is rendered endurable, even during the hottest part of the day. The mornings and evenings are delicious—the nights cold; perhaps the transition is too great; but, with a good house, this same Kandahar would be a delightful country. It is only three thousand feet above the sea, and the latitude thirty-two degrees; yet in winter, we understand, the snow lies for a long time some feet deep. The fruits are those of Europe—apples, grapes, cherries, apricots, mulberries, plums, (or green-gages, rather,) with pomegranates, &c. Their dairies are very fine, and their milk, butter, and cheese are excellent; we only wish there was *enough* of these good things; but an army like this has an *enormous maw*. The mutton, here, surpasses every thing I ever saw or tasted in any part of the world; it is, however, of a particular, or mountainous breed, and the tails weigh almost as much as the whole animal. . . .

"You will have learned long before this that Shah Soojah was crowned here, without opposition—the people

seeming to treat the matter with perfect indifference. The Kandahar Lords—brothers of Dost Mahomed—having fled without offering to defend the place, which took Nadir Shah so many months to subdue. There is little or nothing in the city to gratify the eye of curiosity, with the exception of the old palace, and a fine mosque, erected by Amed Shah, and where he and many of his race lie buried in splendid marble tombs. The people are very handsome, and in feature, complexion, limbs, &c. resemble, or rather surpass Europeans; the bloom on their cheeks being indeed quite English. A strange custom prevails here, unknown in India, as throughout the rest of Asia—the women, as *some* in our part of the world, painting their cheeks red, when they fancy themselves deficient in colour. We hear that Cabool, which has been for a long time past the seat of government, is really a fine city, abounding in all things. But the cold there is very great in winter; and at Ghuznee, which lies in our road thither, so intense that numbers of the inhabitants perish annually; and not long ago the place itself was almost destroyed by being buried in the snow. The woollen and the fur dresses of the people thence tell plainly that the cold must be severe. I know not what our sepoys and servants will do, or our camels or elephants, if exposed to it. I con-

clude that the whole, or great part of the army will have decamped before that time. It is, however, said that a portion will remain at Cabool, to secure for some time Shah Soojah on his throne, or until the country be *settled:* if they wait for *that,* it will indeed be a long time! for a more turbulent set of ruffians never existed. Their whole life is one of violence, rapine, and murder. They know no law but force and the sword; and every man among them is armed from head to foot—a state which they never quit by day or night, so insecure is life and property among them, and so little dare they trust each other! If you reckon our route from Kurnaul to Ferozepore, and thence down the Indus, to near Hydrabad, and back again, [to Roree or Bukkur,] and from Bukkur to this place, you will find we have marched two thousand miles. Try and procure two historical novels—'The Kuzzilbash,' and 'Persian Adventurer,'—they will give you as correct an account of the history of this country, and a delineation, and character of the people, their manners, &c. as can be.

. . . . . .

"We have all been subject to much expense and great loss: four of my camels have already died from fatigue and want of food; and I have been forced to buy four others; I have also been compelled to leave behind me

one of my tents, and part of my baggage to lighten the loads. We have all undergone considerable privations; the whole force having been, for the last two months, upon half rations, and our followers or servants upon quarter rations; no grain whatever served out for our horses—not even the cavalry! Numbers have consequently perished; and our cattle are very *Rosinantish*. But the harvest is reaping, and the prospect brightening; and, thank God! we are out of that dreadful heat, and in a comparatively fine climate. Still the thirteenth, I am sorry to say, have one hundred soldiers sick in hospital.

"W. H. D."

A more detailed account of this fearful march is given in a future letter, and in the Appendix, Nos. II. XII. and XIII. Services, which one would deem sufficient to have called forth the willing praise and acknowledgments of all. Conceive then Colonel Dennie's mortification, on handing in his report, to find that not only was he visited with the undeserved censure of the Commander-in-chief, (see Appendix, No. III.) but that his brigade, or even regimental allowances were refused him! Indignant at this last injustice, he addressed a letter to Major Henderson, officiating military adjutant-general,

Calcutta, (see Appendix, No. XIX.) the result of which is announced in a letter dated 18th May, 1841, of which the following is an extract :—

"My object in transcribing and forwarding *it* [that is the letter of remonstrance above mentioned] for perusal, is to convey to you an idea of the wrongs done me. . . Nor Bameean nor Ghuznee* can compete, in my estimation, with the work I performed in Sinde and the Bolan Pass. Remember that I was cut off from all communication with the army, and all support, in that desert, at such a season, with a handful of natives; that I rescued the Bombay commissariat, and saved the whole of the Shah's artillery; that I had been stripped of all the carriage of my brigade by Sir John Keane, and *left behind destitute and helpless;* that I could equip only two hundred men, therefore, to relieve or rescue those who had been left in rear of the army, and *whose destruction was considered inevitable!* and yet I achieved this miracle—for such it can only be considered, when I relate that the same attempt was made by Captain Clibborn in the same place, and at a like season, and opposed by the same enemies; that he had *one thousand men*, with *four guns*, and yet his

* Two other witnesses of this officer's skill and bravery.

whole force was cut to pieces! I overcame every difficulty, and saved the commissariat and artillery that *had been left without protection many months in the rear;* and you see they objected in return, for nearly two years, to give me either brigade or regimental allowance. This letter, you see, was laid before the Governor-general in council, and I am happy to say I *shamed* them at last out of the money; for they have just granted the regimental-command allowance—in this even ungenerous! for I had a right to that of the superior, or brigade command."

On the 27th of June, the army—now amounting to nearly thirteen thousand strong, to which were attached camp followers, in number about thirty thousand, exclusive of the Shah's force of about six thousand, with a proportionate number of camp followers, &c.—resumed their march towards Cabool, in much better health and spirits than on their arrival at Kandahar, and in little less than a month arrived before Ghuznee, where a strong resistance, on the part of the enemy, contrary to all accounts and expectations, was apparent. It had been discovered that every gate of the town had been built up, except that which looked towards Cabool. Having left their siege train behind them at Kandahar, it was manifest that the place must be taken by other means than open assault. During the night of their

arrival (on the 21st of July, 1839,) dropping shots were fired from the citadel, and signal lights displayed, which were answered repeatedly by others on the mountains around, demonstrating to a certainty that the whole population was up and in arms behind them. A religious war had been preached, and a number of Ghazees or fanatics bound themselves by an oath to exterminate Shah Soojah and all his followers. Other tribes were also in arms, summoned to the support of Dost Mahomed by one of his sons, and awaiting the first symptom of disaster to fall on the enemy, and by their numbers overpower them. On the 22nd a sharp skirmish took place between a body of the fanatics and the Shah's force, but the former were defeated with loss. Several were taken prisoners and butchered upon the spot; which barbarous act, it is right to state, was committed by the command of the Shah.

On the evening of the 22nd the general orders were issued, assigning to each brigade its post. At midnight all were to commence moving into position. The artillery were to be so placed as to attract the enemy's attention from the Cabool gate. The sappers and miners, under the direction of Captain Thompson, chief engineer, were to move down to the gate, supported by a battery and a column of native infantry—screened by the

darkness, and the noise of their advance being drowned by the howlings of the tempest. The storming party, placed under the command of Brigadier Sale, was composed as follows :—"An advance, to consist of the light companies of her Majesty's second and seventeenth regiments, and of the European regiment; and a flank company of her Majesty's thirteenth light infantry, under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Dennie, C.B." and a main column personally directed by Brigadier Sale. To Lieutenant-colonel Croker was entrusted the command of the supporting column; and the reserve was commanded in person by Sir Willoughby Cotton.

But we can no longer delay the account of this achievement, given by one of the principal actors in the scene. It is thus detailed in the following extracts :—

"Ghuznee, July, 1839.

"The great uncertainty of these letters ever reaching you, takes away almost the pleasure and comfort in relating to you, from time to time, all about my proceedings. But an event, of no common occurrence, within the last day, gives me hope and courage to relate the same. . . . . After describing a circuit of upwards of two thousand miles, through every variety of climate, . . . we at length reached Affghan-

istan. The easy occupation of Shawl, Kandahar, &c. led us to expect that we should meet with no serious opposition on our march to Cabool; and our information was so defective, that we confidently reckoned upon Dost Mahomed doing as his brothers had done, and flying before us. But when arrived at this place, (Ghuznee,) we were shortly undeceived. A fortress, of very great strength, which opened a fire on us as we took up our position in its front, told us that we had, at last, arrived at the point where resistance would be offered; and *that resistance* an earnest and a fierce one. A demonstration in force made that morning by Sir John Keane, was roughly handled, and compelled to retreat abruptly, and in some disorder. Reconnaissances, made by the engineers, reported the fort and citadel, as it truly is, a place of extraordinary strength. Our leader had left his battering train behind him at Kandahar, after dragging those guns over rivers, mountains, and awful passes, by manual labour in great part, for one thousand eight hundred miles; and when within two hundred miles of the object for which they had been carried from Indostan, they were left behind. As the light guns of the horse artillery could be of no avail against such ramparts and bastions, a bold, and perhaps a desperate measure was proposed by the engineer officer,

Captain Thompson—a man, I consider, of surpassing talent and nerve: it was to carry these formidable works by a *coup-de-main*—that is, in the dark, an hour or two before day-break, to distract the garrison with a fire of artillery and musketry against different faces of the work; a chosen party to cross the ditch, and blow up the gateway itself, by piling bags of gunpowder against it, when the storming party, drawn up outside the walls or on the edge of the causeway, should profit by the explosion and consternation of those within, and force their passage through all obstacles. I was asked to lead the advance, accepted it, and, although I resigned the command of my regiment, and the superior duties of a brigadier, yet, as being the post of honour and peril, I, as a soldier, could not but consider it a compliment. Nor would it have been becoming to have acted otherwise, although, believe me, I was not insensible of you all, and your precious claims upon me. . . . . .

. . . . We succeeded. I was at the head of all; the first man in the breach, the first to enter that gateway, and the first armed Briton that entered Ghuznee! The place is famed in eastern story, and our achievement, having been enacted on ground so classical, will thus gain celebrity. I escaped unhurt again, thank God, and was, with my party, in the body of the fort

before the main column followed. Our cheers told those without we were masters of the stronghold of Central Asia. Eight months' provisions and stores, ammunition, &c. &c. for a large garrison, were found within the place, and rewarded the victors. It appears that the Affghans had reckoned upon its holding out for at least that time. The son of Dost Mahomed was captured among the other prisoners, some time after the disgusting slaughter inevitable to a storm had ceased. A large body of cavalry were part of the garrison; the men chiefly fell; but some two thousand horses were seized, and will serve to remount our dragoons. We shall also experience no more privations for food, &c. A brother of the Dost came in here yesterday, with powers to treat, from Cabool, which is eight marches hence, which shows they must be struck with terror, and that little more resistance will be successfully offered. We march for the capital to-morrow, whence I trust to send you more good news. All the captured property is selling at preposterous prices, which, however, will increase the prize-money.

"W. H. D."

Thus fell Ghuznee, the strong and (previously considered) impregnable fortress of Affghanistan; an exploit characterised by Sir Robert Peel as the "most brilliant

achievement in the history of our arms in Asia." For this successful *coup-de-main* was Sir John Keane raised to the peerage, and obtained his pension of two thousand pounds a-year; but whether deservedly or not, or whether his honours were "thrust upon him" by the skill and gallantry of others, is now comparatively a useless question. Let the fact of his leaving behind him his battering train at Kandahar, proclaim his forethought and judgment; let the scheme devised by Captain Thompson, by which the gate of Ghuznee was blown down, and a breach effected, exhibit *his* skill, and the resources of his mind; let the entrance of the advance party into the breach attest his daring, gallantry, and courage; and, above all, let his published general order on this memorable occasion remain an imperishable monument of his Lordship's love of truth and justice to the world. The following is an extract from this remarkable document:—

"This opening having been effected, although it was a difficult one to enter by, from the rubbish in the way, the leading column, in a spirit of fine gallantry, directed and led by Brigadier Sale, gained a footing inside the fortress, although opposed by the Affghan soldiers in very great strength, &c. &c. The

advance, under Lieutenant-colonel Dennie, of her Majesty's thirteenth, consisting of, &c. &c., and the leading column under Major Carruthers, and the Bengal-European regiment, under Lieutenant-colonel Orchard, &c. &c. To all these officers, and the gallant soldiers under their orders, his Excellency's best thanks are tendered; and, in particular, he feels indebted to Brigadier Sale for the manner he conducted the arduous duty entrusted to him in command of the storming party. His Excellency will not fail to bring it under the notice of his Lordship the Governor-general."

Under feelings of surprise awakened by this acknowledgment of his daring exploit, and, conceiving that Sir John Keane was not in possession of the facts of the case, Colonel Dennie waited upon him for the purpose of informing him more fully on the subject, in order that he might rectify this erroneous statement, and give credit where it was due, as he *had done to another officer* but *the day before*. The language and deportment of Sir John Keane, during this interview, are described by Colonel Dennie in words* which, for the honour of the British army, it is to be desired are those of exaggeration; but from the repetition of

* Letter in the *Bombay Times*, May, 1842.

these *insults* in a *public document*, we are forced to the *unwilling* conclusion that in that *private interview*, the Commander-in-chief, being under less restraint, did permit his feelings to manifest themselves towards Colonel Dennie in the manner described; and which so roused that officer's indignation as to compel him to lay the whole matter before the Horse Guards, in a letter of complaint; which, however, the powers there treated with an expressive silence;—*expressive*, at least, of *his* rectitude; for had Colonel Dennie been guilty of any breach of military rule in the transaction, they would not fail to have visited him with their deep displeasure, which for obvious reasons it would have been impolitic to exhibit against so fortunate a commander as Sir John Keane. Thus, finding no grounds for condemnation in the one, they deemed it advisable to abstain altogether from censuring the other, however culpable, in the sunshine of whose successes those then in power so loved to bask, and by whom they had gained no little, though temporary *eclat*.

The Commander-in-chief, however, could scarcely venture to repeat this unjust and erroneous statement in his despatch to the supreme government, in which he has acknowledged the Colonel's services, in language more consistent at least with facts, but which even there are

niggardly and sparingly stated when compared with the profusion of praises heaped upon others, whose services, on that occasion, were comparatively insignificant.—See Appendix, No. V.

These circumstances, and others presently to be noticed, induced Colonel Dennie to write more than once upon the subject of the capture of Ghuznee; and to *assume* a tone of egotism as distasteful to his feelings, as it was foreign to his nature.

The letters from which the following extracts are made, were written at Cabool, and dated 4th February, and 20th May, 1840:—

"I received your letter, by which I see you had read the account, in England, *by the Despatches*, of the capture of Ghuznee. I have written to you constantly, and of course gave you some kind of description at the time it occurred, of the assault of Ghuznee. . . . It is not a pleasant task to talk of oneself; and I do not recollect what I said on that occasion; but I do not see wherefore, on all occasions, *truth* should be sacrificed to *modesty!* I must tell you the simple facts, which are known to the whole army, who are all, but Sir John Keane, ready to attest what I say, and much more. . . . . You must, then, know that it was the good fortune of *me alone* to *lead, direct,* and

command the *advance* of the storming party at Ghuznee; that I had *no associate* or guide with me; neither Captain Thompson, of the engineers, nor Brigadier Sale, as erroneously stated in such 'despatch.' I was followed by four light companies, selected from the four British regiments, whom I commanded, and which companies consisted of sixty picked men each, making a total of two hundred and forty. This advance, or head of the storming party, or forlorn hope, or call it what you will, was led by me, and directed *by me alone*. We forced the gate—overthrew all obstacles, animate and inanimate, and were actual, sole, and undisputed masters of the place, unaided and unsupported by the main column (as proved by the *three cheers ordered to be given by us as the signal of our complete success*, and which were heard by the whole army). All this took place *before* the main column or support—consisting of the remainder of the four regiments, of which, as I said before, I had with me a portion, a small one, but I admit the *èlite*—ever entered the fort; and perhaps an hour must have elapsed from our entrance, before they made good theirs. To explain: I must observe that I and the advance were drawn up at two o'clock in the morning, with the main column, under General Sale, *immediately* in my rear, or by a pace or two of my

party—in other words, close behind us, in a hollow, narrow road. The front of my position was abreast of a famous pillar, or minar,* about seven hundred yards from the gate of Ghuznee. When I moved off after the engineers and the party carrying the powder-bags to blow open the gates, it seems, close as we then stood to each other, we were not observed, nor discovered to be gone for a considerable time. Having proceeded to the edge of the ditch, I lost no time, after the explosion, in clearing the causeway, and pushing through the ruined gateway. Major Thompson, commanding the engineers, who remained outside, under cover, close to the causeway, perceiving that the advance had won the entrance, and hearing our cheers, followed by heavy firing, became anxious about the little band, apparently severely opposed, and sent Lieutenant Pigou, of engineers, to find Brigadier Sale, and the main column. He went back all the way to the second minar, and there he found General Sale's party, many sitting down, and some fallen out. He communicated his message, of our

* This is one of two pillars or minarets, of great beauty and antiquity, which form part of the ruins of the ancient Ghuznee. They are supposed to have been built in the age of Mahmood the Ghuznevide. The height of each is about one hundred and fifty feet.

being *in*, &c. Sale made his men fall in, and was proceeding, when Pigou went back to Thompson. Sale had scarcely got half-way to the fort, when he met Captain Peat, of the Bombay Engineers, who, stunned and bewildered by the concussion, called out—'Don't go on—it is a failure!' In other words, that the breach was not practicable. At this, Sale ordered his bugle to sound the *retire*, and the main column went to the right about, and retraced their steps. In the meantime, Captain Thompson, becoming more anxious at the non-appearance of the supporting column, ran back himself, overtook General Sale, and re-assured him, that I was positively *in*, and *that* for a considerable time; upon which Sale resumed his advance. When he arrived at the gateway, a violent rush was made by the fugitives, or part of the garrison, endeavouring to escape from the fire or bayonets of the advance, and, rendered desperate, endeavoured to cut their way through this unexpected opposition, and actually beat them back, and drove them over the causeway. Sale was cut down, at the head of this column, and, in the dark, narrowly escaped destruction. And here, by all accounts, a full quarter of an hour elapsed, before they rallied, and got into the fort. By that time we were at the opposite gate or extremity of the fortress, and in full and perfect possession, having

overcome, unhelped and unaided, all opposition. This is as notorious to thousands as the sun at noon-day. And yet, Sir John Keane, knowing, as he must have done, from all, the truth, and hearing it distinctly from me, thus stated in his general order, 'that the leading column,' &c. &c. I have long been stupidly supine; and a hundred times allowed myself to be deprived of my just due, in like manner, in the Burmese war. But delicacy, pride, horror of bragging, a shrinking from every kind of egotism, kept me scornfully silent, and permitted me to be filched of what was mine. I foolishly thought that circumstances so generally known, and about which *there could be no doubt*, would always make themselves known, and that it would be impossible to discolour simple and undisputed facts. I am, however, more than usually stung at the ingratitude practised in this business, because I know good fortune, or (if such be becoming) Providence did give me a great and important post on that day, upon which, perhaps, depended the safety and very existence of our army; who, had I failed, or even been checked, as the rear column after me was, must have all met one common fate of certain destruction. The whole country was up, and millions were at hand, and all around us, to cut off our baggage, food, and every supply, who only waited, like the obscene

birds and beasts of prey, following us, for the first symptom of disaster, and the result of our desperate attempt on Ghuznee, for their slaughter to commence. Under such feelings of consciousness or conviction it was, that I *volunteered* the command of the advance. For, was it not better to win success, and, I hoped, equivalent honour, or die the death of a soldier, than endure the lingering miseries and disgrace which, in all probability, would otherwise have ensued, and die the death of a dog? I say again, that from these notions I *volunteered* the post of danger, and a command so infinitely below my rank; for I was then not only in command of a regiment, but actually on the roster of duty, from my seniority in the army, *brigadier of the day* when Ghuznee was taken. Why my services were accepted, I leave those who profited by them to tell, ... but 'envy, hatred, and malice,' sufficiently explain their disinclination to confess the debt they incurred, or repay it in any way but in the poor and pitiful manner they have done, '*drown me with half praise.*'*

"W. H. D."

* It may be necessary to state here, that the truth of all the leading facts of the capture of Ghuznee, as above detailed, is

The army was again put in motion on the 31st of July, towards the capital of Affghanistan, and in seven days the Shah entered Cabool in solemn procession, supported by his truly valuable allies.

"Cabool, 1st September, 1839.

"At length, after a march of ten months, behold us safely arrived at this far-famed capital of the Affghans. We moved from Kurnaul early in November; and this circuitous and dreadfully lengthened route has—thank God!—at last terminated. Man and beast are fairly worn out. We have traversed great part of the line of the Indus; Upper and Lower Sinde; scaled precipitous mountains; forced desperate and difficult passes; crossed boundless wastes, howling wildernesses; endured the most intense heat—the thermometer at one hundred and forty degrees in the sun; suffered equal varieties, and extremes of cold at night; had nought to cool our burning tongues but brackish and filthy water, and that most scanty at best of times, and often not procurable at all. . . . . .

confirmed by the accounts given of this exploit in the works of Major Gough, Captain Havelock, Doctor Kennedy, and others, on the war in Affghanistan.

"Our losses in animals and property have been fearful: no less than thirteen of my own camels have perished, or been carried off by the different tribes of marauders through whose country we have passed; and who, although they never risked an open attack, yet hung upon our flanks, or plundered our baggage, and murdered our defenceless followers, or parties they found too weak to oppose them. Well armed, well mounted, and in considerable numbers, they inflicted serious mischief on us; harassed our weary infantry, and laughed at our cavalry, whose horses were quite unable to follow them, or almost to drag through their daily march: in fact, the greater part are dismounted.

"We have now seen all of these horrid countries of Beloochistan, Sinde, &c.,* and more inhospitable soils and climates cannot be imagined, or more unfit for animal life. Incredible as it may seem, it is never-

* We beg to recommend our readers, in order to acquire some ideas of the difficulties of this march, to possess themselves of "Atkinson's Sketches in Affghanistan," lately published by Graves and Gilbert, of London. Independent of the peculiar interest attached to these views, their beauty and fineness of execution, as works of art, alone entitle them to support.

theless true, that for days, weeks, and months, we have travelled over an unbroken surface of sand; at other times of rock or stone; again of a long dreary line of a hundred miles of thorns and thistles;—not a town or village, not a bird or beast to relieve this dreadful solitude. Our route across these dreary plains will never be forgotten. They are skirted by chains of mountains, the residence of our friends, the Cossacks, I before alluded to; and these bands of predatory cavalry bear the same name here as with their kindred tribes among the Russians;—indeed the name is common through the east, but whether Tartar, Persian, or Arabic, I have not learned.* One thing we have satisfied ourselves of, viz.—*that no* INVADING ARMY—*be it Russian or Persian, or of any other nation—could ever take the line we have moved along, on its road to India.* It has cost the government, no doubt, a serious sum to purchase this information.

"One amusing or absurd fact I cannot help noticing:—according to our maps, this journey is marked by names of towns and cities: they stand in large Roman capitals, as if they were not only realities, but places of

* The name Cossack is derived from a Tartar word signifying "light-armed cavalry."

great consequence. Vain, however, would prove the search to caravan or wayfarer: no solitary hovel marks the spot where a far-famed metropolis stood, or ought to stand. With as much truth and propriety might one take a chart of the ocean, and mark certain latitudes and longitudes, with names of market towns, villages, &c.

"Affghanistan differs little from its neighbouring countries, or boundaries. From Shawl to Cabool is a series of valleys, surrounded by mountains, or hills, chiefly desert, and rather thinly peopled, or totally without inhabitants. Some few exceptions may be found, as in those of Kandahar, especially Cabool. But the beauty of those favoured spots lies more, I believe, in the contrast than in the reality: our feelings, rather than our judgments, transform what elsewhere might be but commonplace into Paradise itself. Such it is that Cabool appears to me and all of us; its fruits and climate are certainly delicious; sheets of cultivation, streams of water, even rivers, and, above all, trees and shrubs—which we have not seen scarcely one of since leaving India—refresh, delight, and surprise us too. All those fruits which are considered peculiar to our climate are here larger and finer than I have ever

seen; and musk melons, which surpass the world, are in abundance and profusion. Even pomegranates, although a tropical fruit, are seen in piles beside the fruits of Europe; and in the shops, which are very tastefully laid out, are disposed large blocks of ice, and pails of snow, to cool the sherbets and lemonades all indulge in. Let me not forget that cherries, strawberries, and green gages abound, that would not be despised in our own dear home. The animals, also, are very fine—be they of whatever description. The men are striking and handsome; large, fine, noble features and limbs, and their costume extremely picturesque. Many of these people are fair as ourselves; and blue eyes and light hair are not unusual among them, and they have the same bloom on their cheeks as we see among our peasantry. Their horses are very superior; and no picture can be more imposing than these Affghans mounted and armed—as they are to the teeth—with costly matchlocks, spears, shields, pistols, and sabres. Among these troops, the Kuzzilbashes, * or

* The Kuzzilbashes are a clan, chiefly of soldiers, who were imported from Persia, by Nadir Shah, and are of that colony of Toorks which now predominate in Persia. They chiefly

Persian Royal Guard, are most distinguished: these are called so from the black Astrakhan lambskin caps, with red tops or bags, they wear.

"I have endeavoured to give you, from time to time,

inhabit the more western towns of Affghanistan, and generally live apart from the rest of the inhabitants, with whom they hold little intercourse. Elphinstone describes them as being lively and ingenious, but false, designing, and cruel. The Kuzzilbashes form the King's body-guard, and constitute an important division of the Affghan armies. The following anecdote strikingly exhibits one trait in their character :—

"After the capture of Ghuznee, Dost Mahomed had determined on retreating to a position on the Cabool river, and there giving battle to our forces. He was soon forced, however, to abandon this intention: his Kuzzilbash guards, seeing the tide of success running against him, began to waver in their attachment to their brave leader. He rode into the midst of his treacherous troop, with the Koran in his hands, and conjured them, by its contents, not to desert the true faith, or break their allegiance to him. 'Since it is plain,' he said, 'you are resolved to seek a new master, grant me but one favour in requital for thirteen years' maintenance and kindness—enable me to die with honour: stand by the brother of Futteh Khan, whilst he executes one charge against the cavalry of those Feringee dogs: in that onset he will fall; then go, and make your own terms with Shah Soojah.' But, notwithstanding these solicitations of the brave Dost Mahomed, his perfidious followers almost immediately deserted, and enrolled themselves in the now more promising service o the enemy."—See Havelock, vol. ii. p. 101.

as full and accurate an account as possible of our proceedings; but the number of our mails that have been robbed, and the escorts murdered, give me but faint hopes of these ever reaching their destination. We have been often a month without hearing even from the posts in our rear, and without a single letter or order reaching us from India. Nothing tends more to dispirit those employed on distant service than their communications being cut off. I have not heard now a long time from home. . . . . .

"I told you before of my having applied to resign the command of the second brigade, which had been left behind, at Shikarpore, as my regiment had proceeded in advance; that I left Shikarpore, before I got an answer to my application, with a detachment, to relieve a convoy, which was shut up in a small fort by the Beloochees, and which I effected and proceeded to Dadur with these. After delivering over this convoy safely, without the loss of a camel, or a single bag of grain—although, in a long march of two hundred miles, we had to fight our way the whole road—I had only four companies with me, for the purpose of overtaking the army—I volunteered to escort two troops of horse artillery—newly-raised levies of the Shahs—through the Bolan Pass. The difficulties we had to encounter were very

great. We were ten days in the Pass, and the heat beggars all description. The heights were crowned with Beloochees, our numbers small, and the road so steep and deep with loose stones or shingle, that the sepoys—for I had no British soldiers with me—were completely exhausted dragging through their guns—the water brought with us being all exhausted, and none to be procured for many days. I was fourteen hours in one part of the defile. We suffered a great deal from the rocks and stones thrown down upon us, as well as from the heavy fire we were exposed to—the enemy being under cover, while we were entirely exposed,—and of course lost many men and horses. But I brought them through, without the loss of a gun, or any of the ammunition, or leaving a single wounded man behind me. After getting all safe to Shawl or Quettah, I proceeded, with another convoy, over another and a worse pass—the Kojuk Pass; and finally reached the army and my regiment at Kandahar, in time to move on in command thereof to Cabool. Arrived at Ghuznee, although I had resumed the duty of a brigadier from my seniority, I agreed, at the request of Brigadier Sale, to lead the storming party, or forlorn hope, consisting of two hundred and fifty picked men.

. . . . . .

We blew open the gate at three o'clock in the morning, and the little band I commanded and led rushed in, bore down all opposition, and by day-break the fort, town, and citadel were completely ours: the killed and wounded, on the part of the enemy, being fifteen hundred, and nearly as many prisoners fell into our hands. We had little loss, and—thank God!—although, of course, I was most exposed, as being in front of all—the first to enter the gateway—yet was I spared by his goodness. The effect of this success has been so great, that Dost Mahomed, who came out with his force to meet us, found himself abandoned by his whole army, and leaving his guns, &c. on the field, fled with a few retainers to Bokhara, across the Hindoo-Koosh, mountains covered with perpetual snow.

"The war may now be considered at an end, the King being once again on his throne. The thirteenth with two sepoy corps have been selected to remain here on the breaking-up of the army on its return to India. The King and envoy seeking warmth and safety in the plains, retire to Jellalabad. . . .

"The winter here is very severe, so that the frost and snow will pinch us not a little after the intolerable heats we have been exposed to. I feel chiefly for the poor soldiers of my regiment, who are unprovided with

the comforts which in Europe set the elements at defiance: the officers have usually great advantages over them, but *their* sufferings will be great, I fear, with the thermometer so extremely low, after recently burning under one hundred and forty degrees in the sun. The winter, too, lasts very long, and already in our tents the water is frozen nightly half an inch thick. Furs of all kinds, however, are cheap and plentiful, from sheepskins to sables and ermine, so we must manage as well as we can. But still the corps is the most sickly and inefficient in the army, and Sir John Keane's choice of us appears a mystery.* Thank God! we have abundance to eat at Cabool!—we are no longer on half rations. Fuel is the only thing, we learn, that is wanting here. . . . . .

. . . The whole army has been without beer, wine, or fermented liquor of any kind, for months. Tea and coffee are almost unattainable luxuries. But I have kept my health, and trust, for all our sakes, it will continue; and when this service is over, look forward

* See Appendix Numbers VI. VII. VIII. for another manifestation of the Commander-in-chief's displeasure on the subject of the health of the men of the thirteenth regiment.

to a life of quiet and happiness, in the society of all I love. I am getting weary of a life of harass and exile from all that is dear to me.

"W. H. D."

After the successful assault of Ghuznee, we learn by this letter that Dost Mahomed had fled into Bokhara, taking the road leading to Bameean, a city, it is supposed, of ancient Bactria, but now insignificant. In the meantime, Captain Outram, with an ample force, was dispatched in pursuit of him. Being ignorant of the road and passes to this town, Hajee Khan, a Kakur chief, who was formerly Governor of Bameean under Shah Soojah, was selected as guide, with a division of Affghan soldiery under his command. But, in consequence of the treachery of this man, and the wavering adherence of his troops, the pursuit, although executed with the utmost skill and perseverance, over the lofty ranges of the Hindoo-Koosh mountains, arrived at Bameean only in time to learn that Dost Mahomed had fled still further, into the Koondooz territory of Bokhara, and was there organizing the Usbecs to his assistance. The pursuit was therefore abandoned, and the force fell back upon Cabool without having effected its object.

On making the military arrangements throughout the country, Sir John Keane took his departure, intending to proceed immediately to England: the command of the troops serving in Affghanistan having thereby devolved upon Major-general Sir Willoughby Cotton. His homeward route lay by the road to Jellalabad and Peshawar, through the Khyber Pass, which had just been forced by Brigadier Wade. It was determined upon that the Bombay contingent should return by the south-eastern route, under Major-general Willshire. Western Affghanistan, with Kandahar for its head-quarters, was to be garrisoned with forces under the command of General Nott, and the forces in and about Cabool were entrusted to Brigadier Sale. Outposts were established at the mountain stations of Bameean and Charekar, where it was arranged that Doctor Lord, Political Assistant to Sir Alexander Burnes, should reside.

Colonel Dennie's next letter opens a curious subject; and when read in connexion with the correspondence to which it refers, may serve to show the extent and nature of the Commander-in-chief s feelings against him, and the wanton persecution to which he was exposed.

"Cabool, 10th October, 1839.

"In my last letter from this place I gave you a long egotistical account of all our heroic doings. I shall not now weary you with more of these marvels, as in fact little more have occurred since then, at least none in which I myself figured. I will, however, just tell you that the King of Cabool, by way of rewarding those who had helped him to the throne of his ancestors, instituted, after the manner of Europe, an order of knighthood called the Dooranee order. The names of officers to be invested were of course given in by Sir John Keane, our Commander-in-chief, and I found my name among the *third class;* which not exactly suiting my taste, or—to you I may say—squaring with my notions of right, or what I was entitled to, I took the liberty of declining the acceptance of. This has given dire offence to Sir John Keane, and he testified the same in a very offensive letter, which I have taken the additional liberty of forwarding to Sir Henry Fane, Commander-in-chief of India, with one explanatory of the business. I may tell you that as having commanded the advance, or forlorn hope at the storming of Ghuznee—the most important as well as the most dangerous post in the affair—as also having been brigadier of the day, on

such occasion, I merely followed the *wishes of the whole army* in my rejection of the gift proffered; which I considered advisedly—and I speak the *sentiments of all the officers of rank present*—an indignity rather than an honour."

The letter addressed to Colonel M'Donald, military secretary, declining the acceptance of this decoration, and the extraordinary correspondence which followed it, are given at length in the Appendix, Nos. X. XI. XII.: —certainly rancour and malice could scarcely go farther.

The following extract is from a letter in "The Bombay Times." It was drawn from him in consequence of some observations which were made on this subject in an Indian newspaper. It appears to answer all objections which might be urged against the *military propriety* of his rejecting this Affghan order.

"The writer asserts that no wrong was done me at Ghuznee in awarding me the third class, that my juniors who were rewarded with the second class were not so distinguished as lieutenant-colonels, majors, and captains, but as *heads of departments*—that I was *one of nine* who commanded regiments, and received exactly the

same as my fellows. He is silent, or does not allude to the chief fact or difference between me and the other eight—viz.—what share had *they* in the service or duty performed in the assault and capture of Ghuznee, which alone was the *cause* or creation *of these very honours*, and *their being conferred on them?* and without which there would have been no Dooranee order at all. Again, it is demonstrable, and susceptible of full and complete proof, that *on my success* depended the fate of that day. Can any one deny that, on the report of Captain Peat, the bugles sounded the retire, the main column went to the right about, and the thing *was given up as hopeless?* and yet this writer sees no difference between me and other officers commanding regiments, whereas *he knows all the time* that I commanded *no regiment* at Ghuznee! my regiment, the thirteenth, being commanded by *Major Tronson;* that, on the contrary, I had a special duty, which was to *lead* the storming party, or *command* the advance, composed of the light companies of the British regiments. With regard to the second class being allotted to the heads of departments, (whatever their rank,) and refused to me, kindly ask him how many heads of departments were there to that army? Were there two quarter-master-generals? (Gorden and Campbell). Were there two commissary-generals? (Parsons

and Davidson). And were there *three adjutant-generals?* (Crajie, Keith, and M'Donald,)—for how did he, the latter, contrive to get the second class? Were Peat and Thompson both heads of the engineers? He lets out, by accident, that of that of the eight commanders of battalions *none but myself* were C. B. previously! but he *hides* the fact that *I was a brigadier*—to all intents and purposes as much a brigadier as any other who was given the second class: I was in general orders long before, and had the title, and performed the duties *of that rank*—which is *with all* a temporary one; and, moreover, on the very day of the storm of Ghuznee, I had to go round in the evening all the camp and plant the picquets, &c. tired and done up as I was!"

He addressed several letters of remonstrance to the various authorities, both at home and abroad, praying that honours—at least *equal in degree* with those which had been conferred on other officers, *not occupying* a post of higher importance than he did, at the capture of Ghuznee—might be awarded to him, and by which he might be relieved from that censure which the superficial mention of his name in the despatch indirectly implied, but in vain. It was manifest that those at the head of

affairs at home could be directed in the distribution of their favours by the words of the despatch alone; while the Indian authorities, were they ever so anxiously disposed to do so, possessed not the power of reparation. One letter, however, from the Governor-general of India cannot be omitted, being as creditable to the heart and feelings of that nobleman, as it was gratifying to the officer to whom it was addressed, and which Colonel Dennie duly appreciated and warmly acknowledged:—

"Calcutta, May 1st, 1840.

"SIR—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your lettter of the 1st of April last, and I must, in the first instance, express my regret that any circumstances should have occurred by which pain has been given to an officer who took a distinguished part in the capture of Ghuznee. You are well aware that the distribution of military honours, in such cases, is regulated by the authorities in England, and that the Governor-general of India has no direct influence upon it. I can, however, have no hesitation in transmitting the letters which you have written to me to the General commanding-in-chief, and will readily bear testimony to the reports which have reached me from many quarters, of the gallant manner in which

you led the attack on that day. I am yours very faithfully,

"AUCKLAND.

"BRIGADIER DENNIE, C. B. &c. &c."

But we shall leave this unpleasant subject, and resume our narrative.

"Cabool, 22d December, 1839.

". . . Let me now give you all the good news in my power. The troops are all to receive a donation of six months' extra batta, which will compensate us for our losses. . . . I have lost nineteen camels by death or robbery. . . . I am, and have been since the beginning of November, Commandant of Cabool; and further and finally I am a Brigadier—being appointed to the fourth brigade, which also contains a European regiment.

"On the other side—or bad news' side—I have been very ill. Soon after getting into Cabool—the rest of the army having retired to the plains—exertions were necessary to put the place into a state something like defence, and shelter those left with me. The extreme cold and exposure, and remaining in my tent rather too long, brought on a severe attack of fever, which confined me to my bed for some time. But

enough of this; for I am now doing well again. But as this is the severest shock I have yet had, I do—as I ought—thank God from the bottom of my heart for his mercy to me. I myself am of no account, (at least in my own regard,) but to my family I feel my value—therefore do all I can to make myself as comfortable as furs and fires can. Nor have I neglected my men: you would, were you to see us, never take us for British soldiers—clad in sheepskins. The mountains around are covered perpetually with snow, which now fills all these valleys.

"In a day or two I hope to join our skaters—a party of whom has just interrupted me, to give me an account of their perfect success with the skates made by our armourer, after a pattern of one of our ingenious mechanics. The ditch round the fortress affords them a capital field for amusement; for it is frozen solid, and is also quite safe, from being under protection of the guards and sentries on the ramparts, which would not be the case if they went to any distance.

"Fifteen battalions of Russians have by this time arrived at Khiva, and will reach Bokhara—fifteen or twenty marches from Cabool—before we on this side the Hindoo-Koosh can move to intercept them; we being snow or frost-bound during the winter on this side

the mountains, while they on the other side are, comparatively, in a temperate climate. But in the spring, or month of March, it is expected we shall have our hands full, and reinforcements are moving from India to join us, through the Seikh country—the straight road through the Khyber Pass being at last opened to us. If, as it is reported, another column of Russians be advancing on our left, or *via* Persia, Herat, and Kandahar, we shall indeed require some more troops, as we are very weak. The thirteenth, a regiment of between three and four hundred men, had lost seventy-five by the last quarterly returns. . . . These Russians are quite at home here, and among, in fact, their own countrymen—all the people here and round about being Tartars, Usbecs, Calmucs, &c. Think of the knaves finding out at last that India was a richer and greater empire than their own vast desert!

"W. H. D."

By this last letter we have been informed of the famous Russian expedition into Central Asia. In imitation of Lord Auckland's manifesto of the 1st October, the Muscovite government issued their declaration of war against Khiva. It was stated in this document that the object of the intended invasion was, "to restore in

that part of Asia the lawful influence to which Russia has a right," which, with a slight alteration, might be taken as a free translation of a passage in that issued by the Governor-General of India little more than a year before. It commenced by complaining of the depredations, annoyances, and impediments to which the Russian merchants were exposed, and from which they suffered in passing through the Khivan territories on their way to and from Bokhara and other Asiatic countries, and ended by announcing it as the determination of the government of Moscow not to permit the return of this force to the frontiers of their empire, until an order of things conformable to the interests of Russia and the surrounding Asiatic states should be established. However that might be, the covert but real design of the expedition was understood by all to be directed against our eastern possessions. The idea was rejected as absurd, that such an enormous host as thirty-two thousand men, besides a large park of artillery, &c., should be sent on so long a march for the sole purpose of chastising some refractory nomades of Toorkistan; but all believed that another and more important design was contemplated.

"Cabool, January 20th, 1840.

"It was a great comfort to me, the receipt of your letter of October, for it told me that you had at last heard from me, and that my letters had safely reached you. Next to not hearing from those we love, I think nothing is more painful than finding they do not hear from us, and that they are perhaps ignorant or anxious about us when there exists no reason for their being so: or worse than all, that they doubt our affection, and fancy us forgetful and neglectful, when we have not another thought or feeling but of them. . . . It is truly very provoking to imagine that when I sit down to address you, probably you will never see or read one word of what I indite—that some scoundrel of a Beloochee or Khyberee will most likely intercept and scatter all . . . . to the winds; or more probably, that the rascally and cowardly couriers and escorts, to save their throats being cut, on the least alarm throw away or destroy our precious packets. I have reason to be thankful that, whatever mishap may have attended my epistles, all yours have come safe; and indescribably quick too—for your last letter was not more than ten weeks old; and considering our increased distance, this is as wonderful, as it is delightful. Now

that the dangers from marauders have diminished, another apprehension arises, and that is the state of the weather, and the impassable and difficult nature of the roads and country at this season. I doubt that in England snow was ever so continuous, or lasted so long, or lay so deep, as it does now with us, or has done for some days past. While I am writing, it continues to descend untiringly, and seems almost to look as if it meant never to give over. Every object is covered with a mantle some feet in thickness, of this boundless white, and the mountains round look like huge mounds of nothing but snow. At first, this sight was novel, and perhaps pleasing, from dear associations; but it begins to last a little too long, and, from the increasing depth, we are absolutely prevented from moving out of our houses, and our communication being almost entirely cut off with those around, the solitude becomes irksome. A month or two ago, or about the beginning of winter, on the contrary, we could be abroad every day, and all day; and it was amusing and exhilarating to see our poor fellows, the English soldiers, in their sheep-skin dresses, pelting each other with snow-balls, or sliding on the ice, as in their own land; while the officers, who had made themselves skates after a pattern, were enjoying themselves, after their fashion, wrapped in furs which lords and

ladies would have envied at home. Such extreme cold may seem strange to you in a latitude of only thirty-four degrees north, which would denote the climate of Spain, Italy, and the Mediterranean; but, be it remembered, we are seven thousand feet above the sea on this elevated table-land, and hence the difference. . . .

"I told you in my last letter that I had been ill; but, thank God, my health is now restored. However, I hope I shall never have such trials again to go through, unless I grow young with them. . . . .

"The natives assert this to be an unusually severe winter, and superstitiously attribute the same to our presence. Our mortality has been considerable, I regret to say. The disease of liver, &c. which carried off so many in India, in consequence of the intense cold has been replaced here by affections of the chest and lungs—pneumonia especially; and the inflammation is so great and invincible, that those attacked have all gone off in a day or two; and we have interred since we entered the fort twenty-seven of the thirteenth who died of this complaint. The poor private is exposed inevitably to much that his officer escapes, for guards and sentries are indispensable. I have contrived to make myself comfortable. . . . . .

I assure you, with my glass windows, (Russian looking-

glasses, with the quicksilver rubbed off,) chimneys and fire-places, and the indispensable addition of the country brazier, you would not—could you see my dwelling—scoff at it. The floors are covered with felt, and the doors and windows doubly guarded by purdahs, or curtains of the same material. Wax or any kind of candles we had none of at first, but we have now contrived to make tallow moulds—and capital they are. I wish you had seen our roast beef, plum-pudding, and mince-pies on Christmas day, and you would not have pitied our *roughing it* at all. Within the last week or two also some English supplies have reached us; and we opened a small quantity of wine and brandy on New-year's day. I have two regiments with me—the thirteenth and thirty-fifth N. I.—with some artillery; and I think if Russians or others tried to turn us out of our quarters they would come off with bloody noses and cracked crowns. What their intentions may be for the ensuing campaign seems a mystery. We learn, however, from authentic and different sources that two strong columns are advancing—one by the way of Khiva and the river Oxus upon Bokhara and Balkh; the other by Mushed, Herat, and Kandahar. They have thus selected the two great roads to India on our right and left; that is, in military parlance, they intend to turn both our flanks,

and force a passage to the Indus through the two great passes or defiles leading to that river, namely, the Bolan and Khyber passes. If their left column, which is opposed to our right, (or us at Cabool,) progress at the rate we are informed they are doing, they will, by the early part of spring, be within four hundred miles of a post we have in advance of Cabool, over the Hindoo-Koosh, (some half-dozen marches,) called Bameean. The Russians possess here an advantage over us, as on the other side of the mountains the country is lower, and consequently more open for their movements, while on this side we are tied by the leg, and cannot stir from frost and snow. The people of the country also through which they are passing are their brethren—of the same tribes as themselves—all Tartars. The Affghans are mixed Tartars, chiefly of the Turkomanian tribes—those who conquered Turkey, and have overrun at different times all the northern parts of Asia and south of Europe, and founded dynasties almost over the world, Persia and India inclusive. In this kingdom, as in those around, which are Usbecs and Calmucs, the tribes are intermingled; but a Russian could not be distinguished from those who crowd the streets of Cabool.

"This part of Central Asia has been famed in history

for thousands of years as the great nursery for all those migratory bands which in times far back overran Rome, Greece, &c.—call them Huns, Vandals, or Goths. Timur, Genjhis, Nadir, comparatively in modern times, did, as their forefathers, overrun all Asia and Europe, and not many centuries ago advanced to Moscow. This is all classic ground, and interesting in sacred and profane history. These people are maintained to be, and call themselves Israelites* to this day. It is memorable in Grecian story as forming the great province of Bactria, and every place hereabout is noted by some marks of its former possessors and conquerors. The abundance of Grecian coins which are found here, and purchased at little cost, would astonish you. The heads and inscriptions upon them are most perfect and legible, and many mounds or tumuli (topes,† as they are here called) are constantly opened, which abound not only with Grecian coins but antique gems, which are exquisite specimens of ancient engraving—forming such indubitable evidences of the days of Alexander the Great and

* Bin-i-Israel.

† Topes:—Cupola-shaped, nearly solid structures, of great antiquity, the uses of which are now merely conjectural.

his generals or lieutenants, who after him remained kings and rulers of these provinces.

"W. H. D."

"Cabool, 18th February, 1840.

"Ten days ago I was made happy by the receipt of your letter by the November mail, and had scarcely replied to it when the one of December arrived in the incredible short space of time of two months and a week into the very centre of Asia.

"The mercury is now literally below zero! We have no thermometer among us graduated below zero, but the quicksilver has been for some days in the bulb, we cannot, therefore, tell how much below zero it may be. Here am I as usual left in a fortress perfectly indefensible—the walls and bastions all tumbling down, parapets *fallen*, and the gates without strength; and where I probably shall remain until the end of April next, when the army will come up from the plains of Jellalabad, the danger and suffering being passed. The casualties among the soldiers have been very great, and my own regiment, the thirteenth, have scarcely two hundred efficient men left. The thirty-fifth native infantry and

some black artillery, being Indians, you may conclude have suffered cruelly from the cold. *All my camels are dead!* and one of my horses, an Arab, was frozen to death the other night; many of our poor camp followers and servants have shared, I regret to say, the same fate! For myself, let me be just and true, I have comparatively endured little. I have fitted up two rooms in the Balla-Hissar, constructed chimneys and large fire-places, and have a brazier of charcoal in the middle of the house for my people. But the confinement is latterly very great from the depth of the snow; however, the palace being flat-roofed, (as all the other houses in this country,) and the snow being occasionally removed to prevent the weight crushing the building, this affords me for the time a good walk and exercise. Still there is considerable harass and anxiety in a post of this nature, from the difficulty of keeping open the communication between the different guards and sentries, and watching over a population of one hundred thousand ruffians, among whom, or rather besides whom, there are some thousands of Kuzzilbashes, or Persian soldiers, or body-guards of the King, as they were of Dost Mahomed before; these fellows were left here, or at least their grandfathers were, by the great conqueror, Nadir Shah, of Persia, some hundred years ago. The

men, their horses and appointments are very handsome; but they are great rascals, like their brethren the Janissaries of Turkey, or the Mamelukes of Egypt, and just as little to be depended on. . . . . .

"W. H. D."

The letter next in date bears not the usual address. It was directed to a friend in England, who occupies a high rank in the British army. Colonel Dennie's letters, about this time, exhibit the anxiety he felt respecting the results which would follow the news of the capture of Ghuznee, in England, as to whether any acknowledgment would be made in the Gazette of his services on that occasion, by promotion or otherwise. Judge, then, his mortification on the receipt of this official paper, to find no mention of his name, while those around him were distinguished with rewards and honours of all kinds and degrees of merit.

Under feelings awakened by these circumstances, the following letter was written:—

"Cabool, 15th March, 1840.

"Dear E——, May I venture to tax your patience so far, as to beg you to read the accompanying memorial, or letter of remonstrance, together with the correspon-

dence which preceded it; and if, after perusal, you should consider me wronged, may I presume on your good feeling and love of justice, and upon old acquaintance of my character also, to advocate my cause, and interest yourself in my behalf. Your high station and reputation may obtain for me the right and redress which merit or conduct, I lament to say, cannot hope for. Honours or promotions are merely jobs or favours, accorded to those whom interest or partiality names, no matter how worthless the objects, or destitute of pretension. I know not on what terms you may be with Sir John (or rather Lord) Keane; I am perfectly aware that you were with the American expedition, and must have been present at *all the occurrences previous to and ending with* the grand assault of the lines before New Orleans; but whatever be your opinions of, or sentiments towards our late Commander-in-chief, I feel not the less assured that they will have no influence with you in a case where his personal feelings against me are so manifest, and have proved so injurious. Is it not too hard, that because he feels sore at attacks made upon him in newspapers, that his groundless suspicions should thus be visited upon me?*

* This alludes to anonymous letters, which appeared in the Indian newspapers, in condemnation of some of Sir J. K.'s

"As I have truly stated, I care not for these ribbons and crosses which are distributed thus indiscriminately; but I am indignant at the pains taken to insult me, by the solitary exclusion or exception made against me, and disgusted by the dirty mode adopted. If the wonderful epithets he (Lord K.) attaches to the exploit of Ghuznee,—which has given to *him* a barony, and to Lord Auckland an earldom,—be not exaggerated, surely it is passing strange, as unjust, that I, who have had *something to do* in bringing it about, should be alone unrewarded and unnamed! I claim, however, no *merit* in the *volunteer* part I enacted on the occasion. I knew, as every one did, that if we failed in this desperate attempt, we *never could retrace the fifteen hundred miles of desert* we had traversed.

. . . . . .

"It is said that we get used to cruel treatment; if

acts, one of which formed a topic for discussion in Parliament, when the subject of his pension was brought before the house. In a subsequent letter, Colonel Dennie again alludes to this unworthy suspicion:—"I told you before, that I had nothing to do with anonymous correspondence of any kind, and only wonder how, for one instant, you could suppose me mixed up with such rubbish as 'Injured innocence,' &c., nor do I know who those writers are."—(See also Appendix, No. XII.)

so, I ought to be patient under this last infliction, for I have smarted severely under frequent similar visitations. I commanded this regiment during a great part of the Burmese War, Brevet and the Bath *both* were given to the officers at Bhurtpore, for a quarter of an hour's work: the *Companionship* was all that was accorded to me, although *the thirteenth* had lost more men in action than the whole Bhurtpore army of thirty-five thousand men! . . . . Certainly I am little indebted to the service. I have slaved for these forty years, and never gained a single step other than by purchase, and now, as ever, am denied what is my due! It is as foul as if I had drawn a prize in a lottery and its payment were refused! I paid for my ticket;—that is, I staked my life and name to win success, and I achieved it;—but the recompense is withheld, while those who drew blanks are rewarded at my cost! . . . . .

"Forgive this long story about myself. Thirty years have elapsed since you and I were subs. and chums together. *Yours* has been a brilliant and fortunate career; *mine* marked by disappointment and misfortune. Still, I ever rejoice in your prosperity, and feel pride and pleasure in finding that your talents have won their deserved fruits.

"How are your predictions fulfilled with regard to Russia! See her now, actually at Khiva with a large regular army, and seventy-two pieces of cannon! Burnes, whom you know, and who is here with me at Cabool, *gave this information so far back as October last, and renewed it incessantly* ever since; but *none* so deaf as those who *won't* hear. I am with him daily, and see and hear the men he employs, and the letters they bring from his agents at Khiva and Bokhara. If three months ago they were at Khiva, what may prevent their being here in June, when the passes of the Hindoo-Koosh are open? We have no force here to oppose them. Two British regiments in Affghanistan, (amounting *together to six hundred men*,) and some six sepoy corps, very weak, are scattered over the country, which is *utterly disaffected to Shah Soojah!* I have been here, with two battalions and some artillery, since October, and we have had a severe winter, the thermometer having sunk below zero. This, after the heat of a hundred and twenty-five degrees, which we had experienced in our tents during our march hither, will sufficiently account for the great sickness and mortality that has prevailed.

"If Lord Auckland mean to hold this country, it is *indispensable* that he reinforce the division here without

delay. Ten thousand men from England are *absolutely necessary*. It is unwise and unsafe increasing the *native* army—which is already overgrown—at such a crisis; besides, they cannot be counted upon against European enemies. It seems a pity, after having won the game, albeit by *luck! most extraordinary luck!!* to throw down the cards, and give up all our stakes, which have been so high. But positively this army should be *strengthened greatly*, and we enabled to occupy the passes, and secure Balkh, which is a highly fruitful country, and could maintain the largest Russian army! —Can any one in his senses doubt the intentions of these Scythians? Does the train of seventy-two pieces of artillery not speak intelligibly? Were they intended only for the nomade tribes, or to be used against their tents of felt? They have advanced nearer to Calcutta than Moscow!! and the Seikhs in our *rear*, be it never forgotten, are most unreal allies; prepared, as most of the states in India, to profit by circumstances.

"Believe me, my dear E——,

"Very truly yours,

"W. H. D."

"Camp, Cabool, June 24th 1840.

" . . . . You will see by this that I am still at Cabool, again in tent, the King, and Envoy, and all the force having come up to this place from Jellalabad. It would be cool enough here in a house, but the heat is always disagreeable under canvas, and I suspect would be so in England in the dog-days.

. . . . . .

"Strange, contradictory reports are coming in of the Russians: some, that they are retiring, their camels, horses, &c. frozen to death, and their troops dying, or dead in numbers. Other accounts state, that they have made good their advance, and are actually in possession of Khiva. It is believed that we shall make a forward movement, across the Hindoo-Koosh, and anticipate the Russians in the occupation of Bokhara, as also release Colonel Stoddart, who, although sent there by our government on a friendly diplomatic mission, has been cruelly treated, and imprisoned for the last two years. No doubt the Russians are at the bottom of all these knaveries, insults, and injuries to us.

"W. H. D."

"Cabool, July 6th, 1840.

" . . . . By this you will learn, that the Russians, after getting very near us, were obliged to turn back; plague, pestilence, and famine pursuing them all along their line of march. . .

"The country is still in a very unsettled state, and I do not see any present likelihood of our return to India this year; but as the climate is so much better, and as long as I continue brigadier my pay is so much larger, I see no reason to repine. To have kept Cabool with so weak a garrison, through a long and severe winter, cut off from all other support, in the midst of a turbulent population, and after the passage of the Bolan Pass with only two hundred sepoys, gives me reason to hope and trust, that I shall yet be preserved to live and die among those I love, and for whom I undergo, cheerfully and patiently, every thing and any thing.

"W. H. D."

"Cabool, 1st September, 1840.

" . . . The weather here during the summer has been very hot, at least in tents. I have, like most of my neighbours, built a mud hut,

which I inhabit during the day, and thus escape the rays of the sun, which are my especial enemies. However, we shall soon have it cold enough, as the snow is beginning to appear on the neighbouring hills. The mountain of the Hindoo-Koosh never changes its aspect; from its summit—far above all clouds—to its base, it is covered with eternal white.

"About the middle of next month I expect, with my brigade, to accompany the Shah to Jellalabad, where he went last year to avoid the winter of Cabool. The Envoy and Sir W. Cotton will also accompany the King. It is six or seven thousand feet below this mountain table-land, and almost as hot as Indostan. General Sale remains, with three or four regiments, to garrison Cabool. The country is in a very unsettled state; and Sinde, Quettah, Bameean, &c., are proving the correctness of the Duke of Wellington's prophecy, that we should find it much more easy to conquer than hold this country. There will be work enough carved out for all of us. The force will not be relieved this year, it is said, nor would it be advisable; on the contrary, reinforcements are expected from Indostan, when the season admits of it. For myself, I repeat, I am well contented to remain here as long as my

exile lasts. The superior climate, and the rank and allowances of brigadier, more than reconcile me to any little annoyances we experience in Affghanistan.

"W. H. D."

It now becomes necessary to take a hasty survey of events occurring in the surrounding states, which are interesting, either on account of their connexion with past transactions, or with details which shall form the subject of future letters.

Our relations with the Punjab must first engage attention. For, as through the Seikh territory lay the principal route to Affghanistan, the hope of reinforcements reaching the troops there, must depend altogether on the nature and strength of our alliance with the court of that powerful state. On the 27th June, 1839 —the same day that the army broke up at Kandahar—our faithful, though perhaps not sincere ally, Runjeet Singh, the "Lion of the Punjab," breathed his last. His son, Kurruck Singh, who succeeded him, being a weak man, was quite unable to govern the kingdom, or keep in subjection the turbulent spirits by which he was surrounded; and the heir apparent, Nou Nihal Singh, with the powerful sirdars of the court—

whose hatred of the English was known—reigned absolute. As a consequence of this, the greatest disorder prevailed throughout the Punjab ; and an open breach with the British was so far dreaded and expected by the government, that it was deemed essential to have a large force on the confines of that state and Indostan, which might awe the Seikh rulers by its presence, and deter them from breaking faith with the allies of their late Sovereign.

But the intelligence which reached the garrison at Cabool, from the neighbouring states of Affghanistan, was not calculated to allay the anxiety they felt in consequence of the uncertainty of our relations with the Seikh kingdom. The dislike of the people to English interference in the affairs of their country, and the unpopularity of Shah Soojah, plainly showed that there was no prospect of an immediate peace. Accounts reached them of the total destruction of Lieutenant Clarke's and of Major Clibborn's detachments, and of the re-capture, by the enemy, of the stronghold of Khelat in Beloochistan; of the fortress of Quettah being besieged ; and, in fact, of the whole country being in a most unsettled state.

But these disheartening tidings were not all which they were destined to hear. The proceedings of Dost Mahomed in Bokhara were alone sufficient to alarm

the garrison at Cabool. It may be remembered that this undaunted chief had fled into the countries north of the Hindoo-Koosh Mountains, and that we had deemed it necessary, in order to watch his motions there, to place posts of observation at different stations on the principal line of route to that territory. After a variety of fortunes, he succeeded in uniting himself, by marriage, with the chiefs of the Koondooz territory, and was rapidly organizing the Usbecs, to a grand final struggle for the recovery of his lost kingdom. While thus employed, the King of Bokhara — for what purpose, or with what design, does not seem apparent, probably to be guided as circumstances might dictate— seized him and made him prisoner. After a long period of incarceration, the Dost succeeded in making his escape, with his son, Akbar Khan, to Khooloom, a state of Budakshan. His plans were there carried on with such secrecy, that for some time he eluded the vigilance of our political agents. Suddenly, however, his proceedings were unmasked; discoveries were made that he had opened a communication with the chiefs at Cabool, exciting them to combine for the deposition of Shah Soojah, and that for this purpose he himself had taken other and more vigorous measures, as related in the next letter.

In consequence of this alarming intelligence, letters had been sent to all the outposts, stating "that the game being up, nothing was left but to fall back upon Cabool;" advising that all the outposts should be withdrawn, the forty-eighth called up from Jellalabad, and the whole force concentrated in and around the Balla-Hissar. In the midst of such gloomy prospects, the events occurred which are related in the following letter:—

"Syghan, (supposed date) 21st Sept. 1840.

"This lifeless paper comes from another and more distant country than the last left—separated again by piles of some of the loftiest mountains in the world! It is from the farther side of the Hindoo-Koosh—what I have often looked at from the plains of Affghanistan, and wondered at the daring and ambition which first ventured to scale such fearful heights, and wade over such mighty mounds of everlasting snow. And yet they were no barriers to the insatiable longing for glory and wealth which drove Genjhis Khan and Tamerlane, with their countless hordes of Toorks, Usbecs, and nameless Tartar tribes across them. I confess I have often longed—without any of the aspirations of these great bad men, these imperial robbers and murderers—to see what was on the

other side of those tremendous hills, and to look at the strange people that inhabit countries so desert and isolated. My wish has been accorded, and accompanied by such strange success and signal triumph, that my heart and soul are full, so full that I cannot coherently convey to you half of what I am so anxious you should know, and which I feel assured will make you all so proud and happy. Yes, this letter will be the messenger of glorious tidings to you all! It will tell those dearest and most precious to me that I, with a handful of men, have gained a great victory!—have fought a battle, the result of which has been the most brilliant success, and has probably saved Affghanistan and all the British who were in it from destruction. What care I now for their trumpery, their ribbons, their honours, bestowed ever on the most unworthy, and refused to the meritorious. Have I not a reward which far surpasses these?—your honest pride, the good opinion of all honest men, the joy of my friends. But, to my tale of war. Of late, series of misfortunes have visited us in every part of this newly-conquered country; and the people found we could be beaten. All the effects of our former success were done away with, and this evil was increased by the erroneous and interested statements of politicals, &c. and all in authority, that

the country was subjected. In order to get away from this, all kept up the same delusions. In vain were the representations of military men of sense and integrity that reinforcements were loudly called for, as we could not hold our own; that our strength was daily diminishing, and the Affghans, who hated the Shah, and one and all were devoted to Dost Mahomed, were gaining confidence daily. The government of India believed, or affected to believe, what suited them. No reinforcements came, and all these evils increased. Conspiracies, open and secret, were rife every where, and already great part of the kingdom was in a state of insurrection. All this mischief was increased by our own bad rule, and the shameful extortion and oppression of that weak, vain puppet we had set up in lieu of the prince and the soldier, Dost Mahomed; and our agents about him suffered, or encouraged, or shared in all these abuses, and we became identified with the king forced upon them. The opinions and feelings of all were against us. At this critical moment the Dost himself escaped from Bokhara, and fled to a chief of the Usbecs on our frontier—the Wallee of Khooloom, as he is called—who not only gave him refuge, but joined in a design to reinstate him on his throne of Cabool, and expel the intrusive king. The actual advance of part of these

forces spread terror into our outposts on the north-western frontier; and the retreat from this place, Syghan, was attended with shocking disorder, the loss of arms, military stores, &c. &c. An Affghan corps, which formed part of this force, and most absurdly raised by us, hearing of the approach of their ancient master, comported themselves as might have been expected; and, between fear and old affection, plundered their officers, and behaved in the most mutinous and shameful manner. Thus the retreat was conducted until they fell back upon Bameean; where, hopeless to effect their escape to Cabool, the officers with the few faithful men left them entrenched themselves, and sent advice of their situation to Cabool, and I was sent with one native or sepoy regiment (for they had no more to spare) to relieve them. This I effected after desperate forced marches across the mountains, and arrived just in time to disarm the corps of mutineers, a whole company of which had the night before deserted to the Dost with their arms. Two days after my arrival a force appeared in front of Bameean. The information of the Political Resident pronounced this to be only the advanced party of the enemy. I therefore (on the 18th) went out with only a third part of the garrison, to drive them out of the valley, but, when two or three miles from the camp,

found I was in front of an army, with the Dost and Wallee in person. I attacked them, totally routed them, and have followed them to this place. Their camp and every thing fell into our hands. As it would be unavailing pursuing them farther, I return to Bameean to-morrow.

"W. H. D."

The following demi-official letter, written in haste, and immediately after the battle, gives a more particular account of the affair :—

"Bameean, 18th September, 1840.

"My dear General—Allow me to congratulate you upon our having obtained a brilliant victory over the conjoint army of the Dost and Wallee, and which was most complete and decisive. Last evening I received information from my advanced post, that bodies of the cavalry were entering the valley from the great defile in our front, about six miles from hence. Wishing to draw them well on, I rather encouraged their insolence; but this morning I learned they were attacking a friendly fort, and as we could not afford to let these people suffer, and lose the good will of those who had claims on our protection, I was forced to go and drive

them off, prematurely as I then imagined, but as the result has shown, in the very nick of time. From the reports brought in I had learned there were only some hundreds of the enemy in the valley, and therefore took with me but a third of the garrison, with a gun and howitzer, under Lieutenant M'Kenzie. I confess I was rather taken by surprise when, after driving in their advanced party, as it proved to be, which had pushed on to within two or three miles of our camp, to find an army in my front. It would have been too late to have sent back for reinforcements, and besides would have delayed us, and checked the forward feeling that all were filled with; moreover I was confident we were enough to thrash as many more. It appeared that the enemy had got possession of the chain of forts before us, reaching to the mouth of the defile. They drew up and attempted to maintain or make a stand at each, with the main body, while their wings crowned the heights on either side. In dislodging them from the latter, I am sorry to say, the Goorkhas suffered, but they did their work well, and have won great credit with all. The practice of Lieutenant M'Kenzie was beautiful, and his two pieces have earned all the grain and provender they consumed last winter. After three or four volleys, seeing our steady and rapid advance,

they lost heart, and fled in a great mass to the gorge of the pass; I then let slip all our cavalry on them. . . . . .

They cut up great numbers of the Usbecs, which chiefly if not wholly composed the allied force. A great number of Hopkins's men who deserted were also killed. They were seen plainly drawn up as light infantry, and extended in front. The pursuit continued about four miles up the defile; they scattered in all directions over the hills, and not more than two hundred men were last seen with the Dost. I do not believe an Usbec among them all will stop until he gets to the Oxus. The Dost is severely wounded in the thigh, and he had a very narrow escape, and, I should think also, his son Mahomet Ufzil Khan and the Wallee. One hundred killed and a proportionate number wounded, I am told, is the amount of our infliction: the number of the enemy, taking the mean of different opinions, was about six thousand. . . . . Cabool and Affghanistan will now be quite composed, and I trust all your troubles are at an end. . . . . I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

"W. H. DENNIE.

"TO SIR W. COTTON, &c. &c.

"Commanding in Affghanistan."

Colonel Dennie's despatches, giving an official detail of the engagement, as well as of the transactions previous and subsequent to that of the 18th, are published in the Appendix, No. XVI. It may be necessary here to remark, that these despatches are in a great measure original documents, as from some *unaccountable*, and as yet *unexplained cause*, the first, third, and fourth of the series were SUPPRESSED, *and* REFUSED PUBLICATION in the government gazette, although duly forwarded to head-quarters. By these we gain information of a highly important nature: first, of the bold and masterly movement by which Colonel Dennie seized the Irak Pass, thereby securing his intended junction with the force at Bameean, which it was the object of Dost Mahomed to prevent; secondly, of his successful pursuit of the enemy after the victory at Bameean, whose numbers, instead of being six thousand, as first supposed, are subsequently found, as stated therein, to be nearly ten thousand;*

* "In my despatch, I rated the Usbecs, or enemy opposed to us, at least six thousand; it has since been proved that they amounted to upwards of ten thousand. This has been proved by Sir Alexander Burnes, who elicited the truth from the Dost's Affghan followers, when he and they came into Cabool. Thus this matter is no longer one of opinion but of fact."—*Extract from Letter of 2d September*, 1841.

thirdly, of the capture and destruction of Syghan, "a fortress as strong as Ghuznee," and the seizure of the garrison at Illyatoo; and, finally, the *fulfilled* prediction, that as a result of this victory, Dost Mahomed would be forced to surrender himself, and accept our terms. It is difficult to conceive the reasons wherefore these important facts were concealed, and thus kept from the public eye. But of the *quarter* in which this mutilation originated, and of the invidious design with which it was planned, Colonel Dennie had his suspicions; and felt the injustice the more acutely, as he conceived that *there*, at least, he had possessed one steady friend.

The news of this brilliant victory, as might be expected, diffused universal joy throughout Affghanistan. Congratulations,* warm and sincere, poured in upon the victor from every quarter, testifying the feelings which

"Cabool, 20th September, 1840.

* "Accept, my dear Dennie, my warmest congratulations on the judgment and decision which marked your attack on the Dost, and caused the brilliant achievement you have performed. I am delighted with every part of your affair; and pray, thank the officers and men, in my name, for their most gallant conduct. I am anxiously awaiting your official report, with the return of your casualties.

"I have already written, by express, to the Commander-in-

animated the hearts of all at their escape from danger and disgrace; and affording the fullest acknowledgment,

chief, and Governor-general, in terms of your conduct, which I trust will ensure you the reward you so well merit.

"This is a *long letter* for me, but the occasion must plead my excuse. Ever yours faithfully,

(Signed) "WILLOUGHBY COTTON.

"Brigadier Dennie, C.B."

"Cabool, 20th September, 1840.

"MY DEAR COLONEL—Accept the warm, the cordial, the heart-felt congratulations of a friend, and admirer of your glorious—most glorious success against Dost Mahomed Khan. I have not seen your despatch as yet, but have read Lord's, and see by it the old soldier's eye, plans, and triumphant result. Could I allow one moment to pass without saying how much I share in the gratified feelings that must rise in your own heart? A victory over a man of the stamp of Dost Mahomed is no small honour; and it will prove—ay, fully prove, that the man they so unjustly injured at Ghuznee, deserved other things; and, forgetting all past slights and injuries, did in the hour of duty gloriously maintain the name and honour of his country.

"Farewell to-day, and believe me always very sincerely yours,

(Signed) "ALEXANDER BURNES.

"Brigadier Dennie, C.B."

(From the Governor-general of India.)

"Calcutta, October 11, 1840.

"MY DEAR SIR—The account of the decisive action which was fought under your command at Bameean reached us yes-

if such were wanting, that this was not only the most decisive and complete victory—if we observe the number

terday; and I had but time very hastily to acknowledge to Sir William M'Naghten, and Sir Willoughby Cotton, the receipt of this most welcome news. I would to-day address a few lines of congratulation to you, and assure you of the warm and unmixed satisfaction with which this intelligence has been received. There is but one feeling (and I share most heartily in it) upon the admirable gallantry with which the officers and troops of your detachment have fought, and upon the noble manner in which they were led and directed. The importance of the results of this achievement adds to its brilliancy; and I cannot deny myself the pleasure of conveying to you at once my own personal sense of it. I am, too, the more anxious of doing this, as your official report of the action has not yet reached us, and some days may yet elapse before the government will be able to communicate its acknowledgments to you.

"I am, most faithfully, &c.

(Signed) "AUCKLAND.

"Brigadier Dennie, C.B."

(From the Governor of Bombay.)

"Candakka, 23d October, 1840.

"MY DEAR SIR ALEXANDER—Most heartily do I congratulate you on Brigadier Dennie's important victory—important, as showing the Affghans and Seikhs what our gallant sepoys can do. The effect of the Dost's signal defeat will be tremendous every where, and I have no doubt that you will follow it up. I confess from what I had heard before, that I was anxious

of the forces on each side engaged—but also the most important that had then been gained in Affghanistan: * thereby the sepoy earned a name for courage and steadiness which before this was given to him but sparingly and unwillingly; and, finally, Dost Mahomed himself, hitherto considered by all the nations around as invincible, was beaten, wounded, and disgraced.

about our situation at Cabool, but now I consider it all right again. I think that Brigadier Dennie's decision and good judgment on this occasion are beyond all praise, and that he merits another wreath of laurels to his brow. Your letter mentioning the event has but just reached me. I hope it may make the Seikhs pause.

(Signed) "J. R. CARNAC.

"Sir Alexander Burnes."

He likewise received the marked thanks of the government of India, and an especial acknowledgment by the Court of Directors, for his skill and success on that occasion. (App. Nos. XVI. & XVII.)

* In a future letter, dated Cabool, January 1st, 1841, occurs the following passage:—

"The general orders (Appendix, XV.—E.) and a *royal salute* fired on the occasion, attest the importance of this battle, for 'royal salutes,' you must know, are only fired for battles of first-rate consequence and distinction. The same was repeated at Kandahar, and both cities illuminated in honour of the battle of Bameean."

But the feelings of gratification and pleasure which these acknowledgments of Colonel Dennie's services awakened in his heart were not permitted to be unalloyed: and circumstances soon occurred again to gall and wound him. For his Bameean victory he was offered the second class of the Dooranee order, which, like the third, however, he immediately, and very properly declined accepting.* The plea put forth by Sir John Keane for his having nominated him on a former occasion to the lowest grade of that order was, that Colonel Dennie, at the capture of Ghuznee, did not occupy the rank of brigadier. Yet about this time a *lieutenant-colonel,* for the success of an action of very minor importance, when compared with the affairs of either Ghuznee or Bameean, was invested with the second class of that order. And the conviction that for his position at Ghuznee this was his right, and that on this, as on every occasion, an invidious exception was made against him, impelled him to reject, like the first, this last proffered honour.†

* *Vide* Appendix, No. XVIII.

† The following comparison we hope will not be deemed invidious. The gallant officer, part of whose career we take the liberty of selecting for our purpose, certainly deserved all the laurels which he earned during these campaigns. But why

"Cabool, 1st Nov. 1840.

"You will see by the above that I have got back in safety to the capital of Affghanistan, and head quarters of the army, after having crossed the great mountains of the Hindoo-Koosh, and traversed its difficult and terrific passes—passes that one must behold, for the mind of man cannot conceive such things, nor can we overcome our wonder how the foot of man could first dare to pass them. But they presented the only road, and from Alexander's day to our own no other was known; and Grecian, Turk, Mogul, Persian, in turns

rewards were lavished on him, and all, Colonel Dennie being alone excepted, is more than we can answer. Like him, he started on this war a lieutenant-colonel and a C. B., and both were soon nominated to a brigade. After the taking of Ghuznee, this officer was invested with the *second* class of the Dooranee order; Colonel Dennie, although on that occasion occupying a more hazardous post, *nothing*, in consequence of his rejection of the *third* class. As soon as the news of this exploit arrived in England, the former was nominated to the distinction of K.C.B. and the brevet-rank of major-general; while in the gazette *no mention* even was made of Colonel Dennie's name. For the victory at Bameean, the latter was offered the *second* class; while for the dearly-bought termination—victory, shall we call it?—of the affair at Purwan-Durrah, at present to be noticed, the former was invested with the first class of the order of the Dooranee empire.

scaled their lofty summits, and forced their way through their eternal snows. The modern European discovered the ocean-route round the Cape, and the English profiting by the discovery of the Portuguese, have founded a mighty empire in the far east; its merchants surpassing former princes and sultans in power and revenue. Reversing the former order of history and events, they have turned the tide of conquest backward from India, and, crossing the great barrier of the Indus and of Tartary, have pushed their arms into Toorkistan, and led the Hindoo victorious into Central Asia. The hitherto conquered of the conquered have now, under British commanders, become the conquerors of conquerors.

"It has been reserved to me to be the first to tread this path successfully; to beard the Usbec in his den, and measure swords with the great Dost Mahomed Khan himself! He and the Meer Wallee of Khooloom, the Usbec chief, were hitherto considered invincible by all the neighbouring tribes and nations. To have beaten both so completely off the field—to have taken all they attach pride to—their guns, kettle-drums, together with the whole of their camp-tents, ammunition, baggage, and provisions—and chased them, on that day, at least ten miles, is something to feel proud

of: to have pursued them afterwards into their own territory, captured their strong-holds—above all, demolished the one that for centuries has been, by its great strength, tradition, and superstition, regarded and termed as the portal of Toorkistan; and finally, to have compelled the Meer to surrender to all our terms—expel the Dost, and make submission in person, is still more.

"I have just got back in time, as the passes are all closed in October;—a little later and we must all have perished.* You will learn by the papers that the Dost, after escaping from us in the north, fled with a few followers into Kohistan, a part of the country joining Cabool. General Sale was sent out there with a considerable force of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, but met with a most unfortunate check before one of the forts of the valley called Joolgah. A great number of the thirteenth, after behaving most bravely, were killed and wounded; and the attack was repulsed. This is the first time the regiment I so long commanded ever had a check, and I feel it sorely on their account and Sale's."

* He states in another letter, "that on the Koh-i-Baba, eighteen thousand feet high, a bottle of wine froze at night, in tent, and burst the bottle."

"Cabool, December 1st, 1840.

"The first thing that I shall tell you is, that Dost Mahomed Khan, the redoubtable, has given himself up; so that there is now a likelihood of affairs in this part of the world settling down into *comparative* order; —for this country never was, nor ever will be as composed and orderly as India, until the character of the inhabitants be utterly changed; they being, without exaggeration, the most brutalized, sanguinary, and savage wretches on the face of this earth. Nevertheless, you may not expect that we shall be knocked about as much as heretofore, nor exposed to the same hardships. The manner of his giving himself up was chivalrous and romantic enough. Major-general Sale had for some weeks been carrying on a desultory kind of warfare in Kohistan, whither, after the Dost's defeat at Bameean, and the renunciation of his cause by the Usbecs, consequent on the treaty made by us in Toorkistan, he finally made his appearance and joined the insurgents in Kohistan. A series of misfortunes attended our arms here, and on the last day (2d of November,) after an action at Purwan-Durrah, in which the second regiment of cavalry ran away, and several

officers were killed* and wounded in endeavouring to rally them, the Dost, after riding sixty miles from the field, and arriving here with a single attendant only, suddenly flung himself from his horse, in the middle of the Balla-Hissar, and called out to the Envoy, Sir William M'Naghten, 'that he gave himself up, and claimed the terms offered him.' . . . . . His followers had either fallen from him, or been bought over by us. He had no money, and the Seikhs had agreed to the passage of our reinforcements through their territory; he took advantage, therefore, of his own success, to come in with honour and credit to himself, and, as proved to be the case, on better terms.†

* Among whom was Dr. Lord, political assistant to Sir Alexander Burnes.

† The following nervous extract is from a letter published in *The Bombay Times*, May, 1842:—

"The ridiculous, or to speak seriously, the disgraceful part of the affair is, that all our Bengal editors have, without exception, turned this into a victory! and you will see 'attack,' 'defeat,' 'pursuit,' and 'surrender of Dost Mahomed,' in large characters, heading every leading article. To make our victory without a battle—to turn our disaster into a triumph and route of the enemy, is ingenious enough, and turning the tables upon them with a vengeance. At all events, we beat them in lying, for, as matter of fact goes, the second cavalry had it all

"And now I must bid you farewell, for I am still in my tent, and my fingers and faculties are frozen; but I go into the Balla-Hissar to-morrow, my old command at Cabool being assigned to me this winter again. It is thought we shall be relieved next year, and return to Indostan, now that the Dost is caught."

About this time tidings had reached Cabool that our arms had retrieved their character throughout Affghanistan. The fortress of Khelat had once more changed masters, and was ours, and peace seemed to be established throughout the kingdom. Lastly, all our fears were allayed by the satisfactory adjustment of the affairs of the Punjab. Both Kurruck Singh and his mutinous son were no more—the latter being killed by accident on returning from his father's funeral. The government then devolved upon Shere Singh, a man of depraved and sensual habits, but with whom, after some months of disorder and uncertainty, the govern-

to themselves, no other corps of the army being engaged, and most unaccountable, all the rest were looking on at this dastardly cowardly conduct of these troops! and yet no forward march was made by us, nor any effort on our part to resent the insult or revenge the injury, nor to drive off the rebels, who maintained their position in our front all day."

ment of India was enabled to conclude a treaty of mutual friendship; and the tranquillity of the Punjab was re-established.

In December, 1840, Sir Willoughby Cotton having applied for leave to return to England, on the plea of ill health, the unfortunate Major-general Elphinstone succeeded him in the command of the troops serving in Affghanistan.

The letters up to September, 1841, contain no intelligence of public interest. They are expressive of the highest indignation at the way in which he had been passed over by the authorities. In February he writes:—

"We have had an extraordinary mild winter this year—hardly any snow, and the frost not severe. It was much colder than now last September, in the mountains of the Hindoo-Koosh, and among my friends the Tartars in Toorkistan."

His letter of the 1st of March contains the intelligence of his having been deprived of his brigade, Colonel Shelton, of the forty-fourth foot, being appointed to the command of a reinforcement, which was then supposed to be near Cabool:—

"This, too, was ordered in the midst of a Cabool winter! I was forced to vacate the dwelling or shelter I had at so much cost and trouble constructed in the Balla-Hissar, and repair to the lines of my corps, where a wet mud hovel was my only abode, to which I owe, no doubt, great part of my present ailments."

In his letter of the 18th of May, he again alludes to this :—

"I told you before how despicably and ungratefully they took my brigade from me *last January*, and sent me back to my regiment, on the plea of 'Colonel Shelton's appointment to this army, and who, as my senior officer, must supersede me.' I have only to state that up to this hour Colonel Shelton has never made his appearance; and as the troops with him are ordered to Peshawar, it is uncertain when he may join at Cabool, or at what time the only necessity for my being thus ungenerously and unworthily treated may arise. The true and simple, as only reason that can be assigned, however, consists in my having declined the second class Dooranee order for Bameean, the which I had been entitled to at Ghuznee. It is difficult to account in any other manner for such unprovoked

injustice and injury, than to the one cause, viz:—envy and jealousy at my having done the four greatest, or in fact, the only great things that had been enacted during the whole war; and that I was rewarded as one who had no claim to such good fortune, as being without family, interest, or patronage, to entitle me to any honour of the kind; and now you behold me deprived of my brigade, or the post which my position, rank, or seniority accorded me, and an officer selected from the provinces over my head, and I remanded to my corps many months in anticipation of his arrival. You behold me a solitary instance in this army, where scores and hundreds literally have had rewards of promotions and decorations showered upon them for nothing!—And I who have won every prize, and rendered services which involved, had I failed, the loss of the army and the country, have had nothing but their barren thanks! —which, however, are proofs against themselves, and in my favour, that I did earn my recompense, but that they were too dishonest or dishonourable to pay my dues."

"Cabool, 25th, September, 1841.

". . . Next, I may apprize you that there seems now little doubt of our returning—I mean

the thirteenth—this season to India. We go again into camp early in October, and expect to start from Cabool about the middle of October, or before the cold becomes too severe, or the snow falls. As soon as we get down from this elevated land, which will be effected in a few marches, we shall arrive at almost the level of India, and the climate will be genial and mild all the winter, or during our progress. Our route back will be a different one from that we came, which was very circuitous; this, on the contrary, is straight, and direct through the Punjab, or across the Seikh country. If we be not detained, we may reach Ferozepore, or our own frontier station, in January. We must, however, make up our minds for one inevitable evil attending this return to the provinces—which is, that our brigades will be broken up, and General Sale will thereupon lose his present command, and fall back upon his regiment, which will again deprive me of four hundred rupees a month.

"W. H. D."

At the beginning of October, the country appearing to be somewhat tranquillized, their homeward march commenced. A few desultory skirmishes, however, soon told their forces that all was not so peaceful as the political agents had reported; and a determined

opposition by the enemy, at the Khoord Cabool Pass, clearly evinced that they were actuated by a more serious motive than mere depredation: the heights around were crowned by those infuriated bands, and numbers, screening themselves behind a breast-work in the centre of the valley directly in their front, showed to our brigade the work they had before them. The force consisted of her Majesty's thirteenth light infantry and the thirty-fifth native infantry, commanded by General Sale, besides two hundred Jezailchees or riflemen, and others, which were all judiciously posted for the attack. At the commencement of the affair, General Sale having received a ball in the ancle, he was compelled to retire from the field, and resign the command into the hands of Colonel Dennie. *He* immediately pushed on his advance column with a view of dislodging the enemy from their breast-work in the valley, but finding that they had deserted that position and secured the heights, then ordered the skirmishers to dislodge them; and who, in the very face and fire of the enemy, bravely ascended the nearly perpendicular precipices on either side. This bold movement was crowned with complete success, and by the steady progress of the advance, the more distant gorge of the pass being gained, the whole valley was soon cleared of the enemy. By this time

the skirmishers had established themselves on all the heights for the purpose of keeping the pass clear, and the thirteenth, according to the orders of General Sale, returned to camp at Bootkhak.*

On the 23d October the force reached Tazeen after a sharp conflict, in which the enemy succeeded in cutting off part of their ammunition and stores which had been left behind at Khoord Cabool, in consequence of too great an interval having occurred between the rear-guard and the main body. They arrived at Jugdulluc on the 28th without much opposition. But on their march thence to Gundamuc, they experienced the most hostile determination on the part of the enemy since their departure from Cabool. The rebels who had been harassing their rear now moved off with an intention to concentrate in front and cut off their approach to Gundamuc. The nature of the country through which their march now lay was most favourable to a vindictive enemy;—a long winding kotul or defile, overlooked by a lofty range of mountains, and partially clothed with bushes and dwarf trees. Of these terrific eminences the rebels, in more considerable numbers than they had appeared since their

* See General Sale's and Colonel Dennie's despatches, dated "Camp, Bootkhak, October 12, 1841." The latter is given in the Appendix—No. XX.

leaving Tazeen, had possessed themselves. Holding all the salient points of the hills, and secured by breast-works, they showed a determination to dispute with the utmost obstinacy the progress of the flanking parties. Companies were detached from every corps, who slowly won their way up these lofty heights. The enemy having neglected to guard the outlet of the pass, the most favourable positions were immediately occupied by the troops to secure the retreat of the rear-guard; and on reaching the more open country the enemy seemed to decline all further opposition; but as soon as the more difficult country was attained, the enemy renewed their attack in greater numbers, and with redoubled fury. So suddenly was the onset on this occasion made, that for a time our troops were thrown into confusion, and some baggage fell into the enemy's hands. After much loss, however, order was restored, and Gundamuc reached on the 30th October. Their casualties in this last march were severe, thirty-one being killed and ninety-one wounded.*

"Gundamuc, 2d Nov. 1841.

"You must excuse this short and hurried letter; but a line to assure you that I am safe and well, after having

* General Sale's despatch of the 30th October.

undergone a good deal of fatigue and the usual accompaniments of a soldier's life, must be consolatory. It is believed that we are now through most, if not all our difficulties, and that the rest of our road to Jellalabad will be as facile and secure as when I last wrote to you. I fear, however, that the cause of all this present trouble and harass to us has occasioned much anxiety to you; for we have reason to fear, I believe, that all our letters by the last mail have been intercepted by the knaves against whom we have been engaged since we left Cabool. This is distressing to you as well as to me, for I had despatched on that occasion four or five to England. . . . . .

"All the hardest work in this country has fallen to my lot; and in the late affairs, Sale having been wounded at the onset, and obliged to travel in a dooley or litter, you would suppose I might have come in for some share of what was going, but such was not my fortune. He has kept the nominal command, although I the actual and virtual! You will have understood by my former letters that we expected, at the commencement of this cold weather, to march from Cabool to Jellalabad, at the foot of the mountains of Affghanistan, and thence across the Punjab, in progress of our relief, or return to the provinces of Indostan. An

insurrection took place among the tribes on our route, immediately contiguous to Cabool; and our easy and pleasant march has been changed into a hostile and harassing one. We have, however, forced all the passes, and are now in an open and friendly country.

"We have, no doubt, had some loss, which I fear you will read or hear of as much exaggerated, and therefore do I write without delay to re-assure and comfort you; and with me to thank that good God who has been so merciful and kind to me through the multiplied dangers I have been so exposed to, as to have shielded and protected me through all. Should the present state of affairs in this country change the intentions of government with regard to the relief of the thirteenth this year, to induce them to detain them yet another season, it is my present determination to apply for a certificate of leave to England, or the hills of India—Landour or Simla—where I may be enabled to recruit my health and constitution, which have been somewhat shaken or undermined by all I have gone through, and the thankless returns I have met with. Time—and a short time—may develope what may be best for my health and your interests; and the one, I consider, involves the other, and I shall be guided acccordingly.

"W. H. D."

The day on which the above letter was written, a tragedy of a truly awful character was being enacted at Cabool, spreading dismay and terror into the hearts of all. Prior to, and on the first of November, security and peace was considered by all to have been effectually established; so blinded and infatuated were our authorities in Cabool by this opinion, that all private, yet authentic, intelligence to the contrary was considered as unfounded and visionary. But on the morrow—the anniversary of the surrender of Dost Mahomed—they were undeceived. An insurrection broke out in the city; and so well concerted and organized, that the very first act of massacre began with Sir Alexander Burnes himself. The whole city was up, and plunder and pillage was rife. Our forces, part within the walls, and part in cantonments without, defended themselves with their accustomed gallantry in numerous actions with the enemy. But the calamitous loss of their commissariat and ammunition at the commencement of the outbreak, could not but be regarded as preliminary to the final destruction of the garrison. Accounts received from all the neighbouring stations, showed the universality of the insurrection; and the notorious Akbar Khan, son of Dost Mahomed, having soon

headed the insurgents, inspired the Affghans with fresh fury.

At last, the troops having suffered the extremities of hunger, their ammunition spent, and being defeated in numerous conflicts with the enemy, treaties began to be discussed; which, in consequence of the terms proposed by the enemy, appear to have been at first rejected. However, on Christmas-day, Sir William M'Naghten, Captains Conolly, Laurence, Trevor, and M'Kenzie, formally proceeded to enter into negociations with the insurgent chiefs; but the death of Sir William M'Naghten, which he met at the treacherous hands of Akbar Khan himself, closed this interview. The rest were either butchered or taken prisoners. And, Major Eldred Pottinger having assumed the place of the murdered envoy, a treaty was concluded, under which our troops quitted Cabool about the 28th December.

The force in and about this place consisted of, one troop of horse-artillery, two squadrons of the fifth cavalry, her Majesty's forty-fourth foot, the fifth, thirty-seventh, and fifty-fourth native infantry, besides a large body of the Shah's force, making in all about five thousand five hundred men—besides camp followers

to nearly double that number—which were all, with few exceptions,* annihilated.†

One person alone, Dr. Brydon, was then supposed to have escaped this awful massacre, and who bore the sad tidings to the garrison at Jellalabad.

We must now return to Gundamuc, where we last left the detachment under its wounded commander, General Sale. The troops took their departure from that place on the 11th of November, under circumstances sufficiently inauspicious and alarming. The irregulars, which formed part of the force, deserted in numbers, and a rising of all the surrounding Khails showed them but too plainly that opposition had not ceased. Gradually, as they advanced, thousands of the exasperated natives arose, enclosing our forces on all sides. Colonel Dennie commanded the rear-guard. On approaching the level country he commenced a manœuvre,

* Of these were several officers who were made prisoners, one of whom was General Elphinstone, who not long after died of his wounds. Many ladies of officers too, who, with their children, were most injudiciously permitted to accompany their husbands, fell into the enemy's hands, having been delivered to Akbar Khan under promise of his protection.

† At the same time two garrisons, of more than one thousand men each, one at Ghuznee, and the other at Charekar in Kohistan, met a similar fate.

with a view of drawing them into action in the plain—simulating a retreat, but still keeping his men together. The plan succeeded: and the insurgents pursuing (as they imagined) a flying enemy into the open plain, Colonel Dennie "now directed a combined charge, which was instantaneous and overpowering. Bringing their right shoulders forward, they swept the plain, and bore down all opposition."* The rout was complete; and no enemy appearing during the remainder of their march, they reached Jellalabad without further molestation. Immediately they commenced putting the town into a state of defence, but were so annoyed by the repeated assaults of marauders, that they were obliged to make numerous sorties to disperse them.

On the 2nd December the men still continued to work at the ramparts, but as a destructive fire was kept up on them from some ruined forts in the neighbourhood, a small party sent out under Colonel Dennie was directed to dislodge them; this he accomplished in the most spirited manner, and, having demolished most of the forts and tombs surrounding the town, returned within the walls.

The next and *final* letter received from this officer,

* Vide Appendix, No. XXI. for Colonel Dennie's despatch.

dated Jellalabad, December 5th, 1841, alludes to most of the foregoing particulars. It occupies a scrap of paper little more than four inches square, to admit of its being concealed in a quill, and thus conveyed in secrecy and stealth to Peshawar; hence having received the form of an ordinary note, it was despatched to England. Reluctance to intrude upon the feelings of sanctity and veneration with which the last communication of a near and dear relative is ever regarded, forbids us to publish this interesting document. Full of confidence and hope was the tone it breathed; and the welcome intelligence it communicated was, that in consequence of the successful issue of the affair of the 2d December, no enemy had dared to venture within twelve miles of the town.

But their security was again soon endangered. Scarcely had they, by the most untiring exertions and unexampled patience, succeeded in making the fortifications in some degree defensible, than the occurrence of a fearful earthquake at once prostrated all the works they had erected, and reduced a third of the town to a heap of ruins; and in the space of little more than a month they were visited by a hundred shocks of this terrible phenomenon! The enemy, under Akbar Khan, taking advantage of the state of weakness to which, by these convulsions, they were reduced, again invested the

place, and established a vigorous blockade, which kept them, up to the date of their release, in constant, though successful skirmishes with the enemy. In most of these Colonel Dennie commanded, conspicuous alike for his courage and judgment; and frequently succeeding in capturing numbers of sheep and bullocks in the very teeth of the enemy.

At length, in the early part of April, a large force, commanded by General Pollock, proceeded to the arduous work of forcing the Khyber Pass, with the view of relieving the garrison at Jellalabad, now in a state of siege for five long months. On the 5th, the spies had brought the false intelligence to General Sale that the attempt to force the Khyber Pass had failed, and a salute of twenty guns, fired by Akbar Khan on the next evening, appeared to confirm the news.* The garrison then came to the desperate resolution of making a final sally, and, if successful in dislodging the enemy, to fight their way to Peshawar—a distance of about seventy miles! At daybreak, on the 7th of April, they issued from the town in three columns; the centre consisting of five hundred of the thirteenth foot, under

* The assassination of Shah Soojah at Cabool, as it afterwards appeared, was the occasion of this *feu-de-joie*.

Colonel Dennie; and the right and left under Captain Havelock and Lieutenant-colonel Monteith, respectively; the whole consisting of about one thousand two hundred men. The enemy mustered six thousand strong, and were posted in the most advantageous manner. A ruined fort, within about eight hundred yards of the gate, which had been partially repaired by Akbar Khan, and which had been filled with Giljhie marksmen, was selected as the object of attack for the central column. In the meantime the guns were set to play, and a breach having been supposed to have been effected, the command was given for this column to advance. Colonel Dennie rode in front, and when within only five yards of the fort received a ball in the hip; and before he witnessed the glorious termination of his own gallant movement, this devoted soldier breathed his last.

The rest of the tale may soon be told: the courage and determination of the besieged were attended with most complete success; the enemy were dislodged from their positions, and at about seven o'clock, A.M. the battle was over, and the enemy in full retreat. Their standards and guns—four of which were lost by the Cabool and Gundamuc forces—falling into our possession, and their camp involved in one general conflagration. General Pollock having succeeded in forcing

the long-dreaded pass of the Khyberees, the relief of the garrison followed soon after.

"The fall of so distinguished an officer as Colonel Dennie," writes General Sale, "will be felt as a public calamity. Lamenting it in every way, I must share with his country, his regiment, and his friends, in the consolation afforded by the reflection that he was killed most gallantly performing his duties." Words which we believe convey less of hyperbole than truth, and sentiments to which more than one bosom will respond. In his public character he is now in some degree known, and his merits appreciated. As a writer in *The Bombay Times* expressed it:—"He was the very Diomede of the British army. Brave to the verge of rashness; fierce, fiery, and almost romantically chivalrous. With the keenest sensibility of temper, and irritable impatience of injury or injustice, he was occasionally excited almost to madness, by practices against himself which would scarcely have moved a more phlegmatic spirit. His own warm heart harboured no rancour against any one, and he ill endured to be made the object of treatment, to which he himself would have scorned to become the party."

The Companionship of the Bath was the only reward conferred upon him during forty years of

incessant, and principally active service; and notwithstanding all his late repeated deeds of gallantry, the approbation of his superiors was merely testified by words, until a short time preceding his fall. So closely indeed on the last mark of distinction awarded him followed the melancholy termination of his career, and so effectually were all communications with the garrison intercepted, that it is scarcely probable he could have received the tidings: even if they arrived in time for him to know of his appointment as Aid-de-camp to the Queen, how short a period was left him to enjoy that knowledge—a few days at the utmost, no more! At the same time, too, he was promoted to the rank of Colonel in the army; and on Lord Ellenborough's landing in India, he nominated him to the command of a brigade. Since his death, however, government, sensible of his merits, have done much towards atoning for the injuries inflicted on him during his life-time, by honouring his memory in the manner most serviceable to his friends, in which mark of respect the Board of Directors of the Honourable East India Company—however unusual—have not neglected to join.

In conclusion, we find it necessary to say a few words concerning these letters. As *private* and confidential documents we believe them of unrivalled excellence;

but they must not be deemed examples of the style of Colonel Dennie's more carefully indited compositions. If they evince a greater degree of egotism than suits the taste of *general readers*, these will please to recollect that for such they were never intended; and that the value of such productions, and the charm they convey to distant and beloved relatives, consist chiefly in the narration of deeds, however insignificant, which engross the time and attention of the absent friend. But, making every allowance for this peculiarity, let us ask, do these personal memorials magnify Colonel Dennie's exploits beyond their real importance?—Let it be borne in mind, that to him, who voluntarily commanded the storming-party at Ghuznee; who gained the important victory at Bameean; who conducted the forces from Khoord-Cabool to Gundamuc; and who, in the brilliant sortie from Jellalabad, on the 7th of April last, so gloriously fell—are we indebted for nearly all that we have reason to be proud of in the military operations conducted by our armies in Affghanistan.

While the foregoing was in press, intelligence of a highly important and gratifying character was received by

an extra Indian mail, which may be thus briefly stated. On the relief of the garrison at Jellalabad, so soon as a sufficient force could be equipped for the purpose, Lord Ellenborough—who succeeded Lord Auckland in the Governorship of India on the change of ministry—issued his instructions to General Pollock to advance, in force, upon Cabool, and release the prisoners. Accounts having arrived, also, of General Nott's gallant defence of Kandahar, orders were given to him to proceed to the same place from the south. General Pollock having forced all the difficult passes between Jellalabad and Cabool, and General Nott having accomplished his arduous march from Kandahar—taking and destroying the fortress of Ghuznee in his way, with little resistance—both arrived at Cabool—the former on the 16th of September, the latter in a few days afterwards. The prisoners were all, with one exception (Captain Bygrave, who was taken by Akbar Khan among the mountains of the Hindoo-Koosh), restored to liberty. Thus, all the objects consistent with the principles of the present ministry having been accomplished, the Governor-general issued the annexed Proclamation for the evacuation of Affghanistan, and the consequent termination of this unhappy war: a document in which we know not whether to admire most, its noble and lofty tone of

conscious power and superiority, the upright and unassailable principles it avows, or its manly condemnation of those former errors which entailed on us so many and great disasters.

The date of the proclamation is the fourth anniversary of Lord Auckland's declaration of war.

"PROCLAMATION.

"Secret Department,
"Simla, the 1st of October, 1842.

"The Government of India directed its army to pass the Indus in order to expel from Affghanistan a chief believed to be hostile to British interests, and to replace upon his throne a Sovereign represented to be friendly to those interests, and popular with his former subjects.

"The chief believed to be hostile became a prisoner, and the Sovereign represented to be popular was replaced upon his throne: but, after events which brought into question his fidelity to the Government by which he was restored, he lost, by the hands of an assassin, the throne he had only held amidst insurrections, and his death was preceded and followed by still-existing anarchy.

"Disasters unparalleled in their extent, unless by the errors in which they originated, and by the treachery by which they were completed, have in one short campaign

been avenged upon every scene of past misfortune; and repeated victories in the field, and the capture of the cities and citadels of Ghuznee and Cabool, have again attached the opinion of invincibility to the British arms.

"The British army in possession of Affghanistan will now be withdrawn to the Sutledge.

"The Governor-general will leave it to the Affghans themselves to create a government amidst the anarchy which is the consequence of their crimes.

"To force a Sovereign upon a reluctant people would be as inconsistent with the policy as it is with the principles of the British government, tending to place the arms and resources of that people at the disposal of the first invader, and to impose the burden of supporting a sovereign without the prospect of benefit from his alliance.

"The Governor-general will willingly recognise any government approved by the Affghans themselves, which shall appear desirous and capable of maintaining friendly relations with neighbouring states.

"Content with the limits nature appears to have assigned to its empire, the government of India will devote all its efforts to the establishment and maintenance of general peace, to the protection of the Sove-

reigns and Chiefs its allies, and to the prosperity and happiness of its own faithful subjects.

"The rivers of the Punjab and the Indus, and the mountainous passes, and the barbarous tribes of Affghanistan, will be placed between the British army and an enemy approaching from the west—if, indeed, such an enemy there can be—and no longer between the army and its supplies.

"The enormous expenditure required for the support of a large force in a false military position, at a distance from its own frontier and its resources, will no longer arrest every measure for the improvement of the country and of the people.

"The combined army of England and of India, superior in equipment, in discipline, in valour, and in the officers by whom it is commanded, to any force which can be opposed to it in Asia, will stand in unassailable strength upon its own soil; and for ever, under the blessing of Providence, preserve the glorious empire it has won in security and honour.

"The Governor-general cannot fear the misconstruction of his motives in thus frankly announcing to surrounding states the pacific and conservative policy of his government.

"Affghanistan and China have seen at once the

forces at his disposal, and the effect with which they can be applied.

"Sincerely attached to peace for the sake of the benefits it confers upon the people, the Governor-general is resolved that peace shall be observed, and will put forth the whole power of the British government to coerce the state by which it shall be infringed.

"By order of the Right Honourable the Governor-general of India,

"F. H. MADDOCK,

"Secretary to the Government of India, with the Governor-general."

APPENDIX.

No. I.

From Sir W. Cotton, enclosing Colonel Dennie's report, No. II.

Head Quarters, Camp, Kandahar, 8th June, 1839.

SIR—I have the honour to request you will be good enough to lay before his Excellency the Commander-in-chief the accompanying report of Colonel Dennie, which I called for on that officer's arrival here yesterday, agreeably to the instructions contained in your letter of the 30th of May. On an attentive perusal of that officer's report, which strikes me as clear and succinct of all his proceedings, from Dadur to Ser-i-ab, where he afforded protection to the two troops of horse-artillery of his Majesty the Shah's force, under charge of Captain Anderson, it appears to me the Colonel's arrangements, from the time he entered the Pass of Bolan till he cleared it, were perfectly military, adapted in every way to secure their safe progress. From the first day's march, the state of the bullocks with the rear carts was remarked upon by Colonel Dennie to Captain Anderson; and it possibly would have been better to have countermanded them to Dadur, under escort of a party of his Majesty's infantry, than bringing them on. But as they did proceed, and arrive at Ser-i-Bolan, the disasters that occurred to some on the last day's march does not appear to have arisen from any want of attention on the

part of Colonel Dennie to their preservation; as they had one company with them, and he detached two parties to strengthen them; but totally to the impossibility of getting on the exhausted bullocks.

I beg to return the papers you forwarded to me, with your letter of the 30th May; and have the honour to sign myself, sir, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed) W. COTTON,

Major-general, commanding 1st division, Army of the Indus.

To Major Cragie, Deputy Adjutant-general, Head Quarters.

No. II.

Colonel Dennie's report of his operations in his march from Dadur to Kandahar, to Sir Willoughby Cotton, accompanying No. I.

Camp, Kandahar, 5th June, 1839.

SIR—In reply to your letter, I have the honour to state, for the information of his Excellency the Commander-in-chief, that I consented, at Dadur, to afford protection and assistance to Captain Anderson's two troops of horse-artillery, (twelve guns and their waggons,) with the four companies of the forty-second native infantry alone at my disposal. At the first march from Dadur, Captain Anderson reported that his bullock-carts were in the rear, and applied for an escort to bring them up. This I refused, and explained to him that four companies were barely sufficient for the duties they had to perform, and that I considered it fair and right that a proportion should be taken by the Shah's infantry, which he had attached to him. I also pointed out, that I had myself seen the carts on marching out of Dadur, and that they appeared to me, from the state of the bullocks, quite incapable of proceeding. Finding, in fact, that they did not come up before

leaving our ground, the next morning, I left a party to reinforce his guard of the Shah's infantry, which party remained with them during the rest of their march.

At Captain Anderson's representation, and the deplorable state of his horses, I halted the third day; as also again, two days more at Ser-i-Bolan, at both of which places the carts were brought up. Here I was unexpectedly joined, as I have before reported, by three companies of the thirty-seventh native infantry.

Aware of the difficulties of the last march—its length, the want of water, heat of the weather, and the nature of the defile—I made the following arrangements:—

The whole of the baggage, with the commissariat Godown, left camp under charge of three companies, at nine o'clock, when the moon rose, and arrived safe at Dust-i-bedowlut, without the loss of a camel. Two hours afterwards, I marched with the guns, &c. in the following order:—

One company in advance, one in rear, and one on each flank; thus covering them, and being ready to afford the necessary assistance of dragging, which they had constantly required during the previous marches, from the weakness of the cattle, and the inability of the men to ride. After proceeding a short distance, Captain Anderson asked permission to push on with his guns, as the infantry were only retarding them; which he did with some few of his efficient guns, leaving the remainder for me to bring up by manual labour. I saw no more of Captain Anderson until about my arrival at ten A.M. at the inlet of the Pass, where he had been obliged to wait from daybreak for our assistance to drag the guns he took with him up the Ghât.

The first intimation I had of the Pass being occupied, was at the entrance of the narrow defile, when stones were rolled down, accompanied by some heavy firing, which neither in-

jured nor interrupted us much; the greatest mischief occurring after daybreak, and in the more open part of the Pass. The heights being occupied in force, I deemed it prudent to send up parties to clear them, and to crown the most commanding hills about, which was done; but, from the nature of the rocks, and the weakness of my party, and the labour they had to perform, I could not afford continuous flanking parties. Here Captain Barstow, with some few men and horses, were wounded. When nearly through the Pass, a surwar reported that the party with the carts were unable to come on, the bullocks being done up, and that they had been fired upon. I ordered a reinforcement to support them; and these again sent back word that they were unable to proceed, having been checked by bodies of Beloochees.

On hearing this, I sent more infantry, together with some surwars, who succeeded in joining them. On reaching Dust-i-bedowlut, learning that they were unable to get on, and that they were suffering greatly from want of water, I detached another party of thirty men, under a jemidar, with all the water I could collect, with orders that, if the carts were unable to proceed, they should be abandoned and destroyed—the distress from want of water rendering any other relief or any other measure impossible, there not being a drop at Dust-i-bedowlut, or near it; and from this cause, I was compelled to march at four o'clock P.M. with the main body, to Sir-i-ab, the sepoys and followers suffering much from thirst during the march, some having died on the road-side.

It is a duty I owe to the detachment lately under my command, to bring to notice their good conduct, and ready obedience to my orders—both officers and men—under the severest labour—while they were employed dragging the guns, for thirteen hours, through deep shingle, in the Bolan Pass; and I cannot refrain from particularly dwelling on the spirited and zealous conduct

of Lieutenant Turner, the officer of artillery, who remained with me, and to whose exertions I feel especially indebted.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c. &c.

WM. H. DENNIE,
Lieutenant-colonel

To the Assistant Adjutant-general, 1st Division, Army of the Indus.

No. III.

Observations on No. II. by instruction of Sir John Keane.

Camp, Kandahar, 8th June, 1839.

SIR—I have had the honour to submit to his Excellency the Commander-in-chief your letter of yesterday's date, forwarding a communication from Lieutenant-colonel Dennie, of her Majesty's thirteenth light infantry, explanatory of the circumstances under which certain store-carts, belonging to Shah Soojah's artillery, were abandoned during their passage through the Bolan defile; and I have been directed, in reply, to convey to you the observations which occurred to his Excellency on a perusal of the despatch.

When Lieutenant-colonel Dennie offered the escort of his detachment to protect Captain Anderson's guns to the front, he became responsible for their safe conduct, and on observing that the cattle were unequal to the transport of the whole of the carriages, he would have been fully borne out in ordering some of the least valuable amongst the carts to be destroyed, and the cattle attached to them to be applied to the draught of the others.

Lieutenant-colonel Dennie appears to his Excellency to have erred in permitting Captain Anderson, on the morning on which the detachment was attacked, to quit the protection of the infantry, and to push on to the extremity of the defile; and you will point out to the Lieutenant-colonel that he ought to

have reported the whole particulars of the case to this department immediately after the occurrence took place.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

P. CRAGIE, Major,
Deputy Adjutant-general.

To Major-general Sir W. Cotton, commanding
1st Division of Army of the Indus.

No. IV.

General Order by his Excellency the Commander-in-chief, supplying an omission in the General Order of the 23d inst.

Head-quarters, Camp, Ghuznee, 27th July, 1839.

(Issued four days after the capture of Ghuznee.)

THE circumstance of Major Tronson having fallen into the command of her Majesty's thirteenth light infantry on the morning of the 23d instant, was overlooked at the time that the General Order of that date was issued, and his name was in consequence not mentioned in it. His Excellency the Commander-in-chief willingly rectifies the omission by thus publicly acknowledging Major Tronson's services at the head of his regiment, when it followed the storming party into the works of Ghuznee.

No. V.

Extracts from Sir John Keane's Despatch to Lord Auckland, on the Capture of Ghuznee.

"Head-quarters, Camp, Ghuznee, 24th July, 1839.

"MY LORD—I have the satisfaction to acquaint your Lordship, that the army under my command have succeeded in performing one of the most brilliant acts it has ever been my lot to witness, during my service of forty-five years, in the four quarters of the globe, in the capture, by storm, of the

strong and important fortress and citadel of Ghuznee, yesterday.

"It is not only that the Affghan nation, and I understand Asia generally, have looked upon it as impregnable, but it is in reality a place of great strength, both by nature and art, far more so than I had reason to suppose from any description that I received of it, although some are from officers in our own service, who had seen it in their travels."

A description of the place then follows.

"It is, therefore, the more honourable to the troops, and must appear to the enemy out of all calculation extraordinary, that a fortress and citadel, to the strength of which, for the last thirty years, they had been adding something each year, and which had a garrison of three thousand five hundred Affghan soldiers, commanded by Prince Mahomed Hyder, the son of Dost Mahomed Khan, the ruler of the country, with a commanding number of guns, and abundance of ammunition, and other stores, provisions, &c., for a regular siege, should have been taken by British science, and British valour, in less than two hours from the time the attack was made, and the whole, including the governor and garrison, should fall into our hands."

The despatch then relates the proceedings from the time of their arrival before Ghuznee, until the blowing down of the gates. The Commander-in-chief then proceeds :—

"Under the guidance of Captain Thompson, of the Bengal engineers, the chief of the department, Colonel Dennie, of her Majesty's thirteenth light infantry, commanding the advance, consisting of, &c. &c., proceeded to the gate, and with great difficulty, from the rubbish thrown down, and the determined opposition offered by the enemy, effected an entrance, and established themselves within the gateway, closely followed by the main column, led in a spirit of great gallantry by Brigadier Sale, to

whom I had entrusted the important post of commanding the storming party, consisting (with the advance above mentioned) of her Majesty's second foot, under Major Carruthers, the Bengal European regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel Orchard, followed by her Majesty's thirteenth light infantry, under Major Tronson, and her Majesty's seventeenth regiment, under Lieutenant-colonel Croker. The struggle within the fort was desperate for a considerable time. In addition to the heavy fire kept up, our troops were assailed by the enemy, sword in hand, and with daggers, pistols, &c. ; but British courage, perseverance, and fortitude, overcame all opposition, and the fire of the enemy, in the lower area of the fort, being nearly silenced, Brigadier Sale turned towards the citadel, from which could now be seen men abandoning their guns, running in all directions, throwing themselves down from immense heights, endeavouring to make their escape ; and on reaching the gate, with her Majesty's seventeenth, under Lieutenant-colonel Croker, followed by the thirteenth, forced it open," &c.

Then follows a description of the operation of the other portion of the troops—the reserve under Sir W. Cotton, the feint under Captain Hay, the guard under Colonel Stalker, on the Cabool road, to receive an expected attack from the enemy in that quarter, but which was not made; of the cavalry division, under Major-general Thackwell, consisting of Brigadier Arnold's brigade, (the brigadier himself being prevented by illness from commanding,) under Lieutenant-colonel Persse, momentarily commanding the brigade, and Major M'Dowall; the other portions of this brigade, under Major Salter and Lieutenant-colonel Smyth ; of Brigadier Scott's brigade, the regiments commanded by Major Daly and Lieutenant-colonel Sandwith.

The despatch then runs on to express the Commander-in-chief's acknowledgments of the services of the various officers

engaged. First, Sir Willoughby Cotton and Major-general Willshire; then—

"To Brigadier Sale I feel deeply indebted for the gallant and soldier-like manner in which he conducted the responsible and arduous duty entrusted to him, in command of the storming party: and for the arrangements he made in the citadel, immediately after taking possession of it. The sabre-wound which he received in the face, did not prevent his continuing to direct his column, until every thing was secure. And I am happy in the opportunity of bringing to your lordship's notice the excellent conduct of Brigadier Sale on this occasion."

Then Brigadier Stevenson claims his flattering notice.

"To Brigadier Roberts, to Colonel Dennie who commanded the advance, and to the different officers commanding regiments, already mentioned, as well as to the other officers and gallant soldiers under them, who so nobly maintained the honour and reputation of our country, my best acknowledgments are due."

Having thus summarily included Colonel Dennie with all the other officers, he finishes with an enumeration of the importan services of Captain Thompson, and the various officers employed on staff-duties.

"It is my intention, after selecting a garrison for this place, and establishing a general hospital, to continue my march to Cabool.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) "JOHN KEANE,

"Lieutenant-general."

[This despatch occupies about fifteen pages of letterpress, octavo size.]

No. VI.

From Colonel Dennie to the Deputy Adjutant-general, Bengal Column, Army of the Indus, on the Health of the Thirteenth Light Infantry regiment. Forwarded through Brigadier Sale, enclosing No. vii.

Camp, Cabool, 24th August, 1839.

Sir—Major Tronson having informed me, that his Excellency the Commander-in-chief has selected the thirteenth as the European corps to be left in Affghanistan, I feel it my duty to represent the inefficiency of the regiment, and to submit the opinion of the Surgeon thereupon.

Its weak and sickly state is exhibited by him; and from the general condition of the corps, I regret to say, there is little or no prospect of its recovering, or proving serviceable under the privations, duties, and vicissitudes, it must, of necessity, be more or less liable to here. Its strength daily diminishes by death—yesterday's report alone reducing eight of its numbers, and we have buried no less than forty-eight since leaving Kandahar.

The present rank and file of the regiment (including the band and boys) is four hundred and sixteen, and of these sixty-one are in hospital; the great proportion, cases of a serious nature. From our depot at Kurnaul, no adequate increase can be looked for, there being only seventeen recruits; and of the diseased, or worn-out men left there on the regiment taking the field, very few will ever be fit for duty.

By an inspection just taken of the regiment, the Medical officers report, that almost every soldier in it is affected with bowel complaints.

Under these circumstances I cannot but entertain serious apprehensions of the result; nor should I, perhaps, be con-

sidered free from blame, had I not brought the matter fully to his Excellency's notice.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

W. H. DENNIE,
Lieutenant-colonel.

No. VII.

From Doctor Robertson to Colonel Dennie, on the Health of the Thirteenth Light Infantry.

Camp, Cabool, August 24th, 1839.

SIR—In reply to your communication, I have the honour to state, that in addition to the mortality that has taken place in the thirteenth light infantry since taking the field, amounting to fifty-nine, and the number of diseased men left at Kurnaul, Ferozepore, and Ghuznee, amounting to ninety-seven, almost the whole of the corps have had their health impaired by bowel complaints and intermittent fevers; and such is their present unhealthy state, that I consider them liable to relapses from the slightest exciting causes, and the worst results may be apprehended from their being subjected to the severity of a Cabool winter. For the restoration of their health, they would require a mild, equable, and temperate climate, conjoined with repose, shelter, and comforts, which they are not likely to find here. It is a melancholy fact, that even at present the exposure to the morning cold, induces an immediate purging in a great proportion of the regiment; and nothing can so plainly indicate their inability to endure the vicissitudes of climate incidental to Affghanistan. I further beg to state, that many of those men are subjects for invaliding. And in conclusion, I am of opinion, that the regiment is unfit for service in Affghanistan.

I have the honour to be, &c

J. ROBERTSON, M.D.
Assistant-surgeon, Thirteenth Light Infantry,
in medical charge.

No. VIII.

Reply, by instruction of Sir John Keane, to Colonel Dennie's letter, with Doctor Robertson's enclosure, on the Health of the men of the Thirteenth Regiment. Addressed to Sir W. Cotton.

Head Quarters, Camp, near Cabool, August 26th, 1839.

§ 1.—Sir—I have the honour, by direction of his Excellency the Commander-in-chief, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, with its enclosures from Brigadier Sale and Lieutenant-colonel Dennie, and Assistant-surgeon Robertson, of her Majesty's thirteenth light infantry; and I have been structed, in reply, to convey to you his Excellency's sentiments on the subject.

§ 2.—It appears that on a casual communication from an irresponsible individual, Lieutenant-colonel Dennie took upon himself to call upon the Assistant-surgeon in temporary charge of the regiment, for a report on the state of the corps, and on its fitness for service in Affghanistan; which report he has deemed it necessary to obtrude upon the consideration of the Commander-in-chief.

§ 3.—The Assistant-surgeon, as might have been expected, taking advantage of the encouragement afforded him by his superior, has thought fit not to confine himself to a mere opinion on the health of the regiment, but has proceeded, most gratuitously, to assume, that the troops to be left in Affghanistan, are to be without shelter and without comfort, and that the repose so necessary for the re-establishment of the health of the men, is to be denied them.

§ 4.—Lieutenant-colonel Dennie's experience ought to have taught him, that it is one of the characteristics of the government he serves, studiously to attend to the health and comfort of its soldiers; and that, although on field-service it may not be

found at all times easy to obtain for them what might be procured in abundance in a fixed cantonment, still that no expense or trouble is ever spared to provide suitable substitutes for what the country, through which the troops are moving, may not produce.

§ 5. His Excellency considers that Lieutenant-colonel Dennie, when he received this report, ought to have returned it, and to have pointed out to the Assistant-surgeon, that by going beyond his province, and speculating on contingencies not likely to happen, and thus causing the soldiers to believe that their interests were neglected, and their comforts uncared for, he was inflicting an injury on the discipline of the regiment. Instead, however, of noticing, in this manner, the Assistant-surgeon's officious proceedings, the Lieutenant-colonel has disseminated the mischief further, by addressing the present representation to head-quarters: for it is scarcely to be expected, that the orderly-room clerk, who appears to have been employed as the amanuensis on the occasion, will fail to communicate to his comrades how zealously their commanding and medical officers are exerting themselves to save the regiment from being continued on, what they may choose to consider, a disagreeable service, although it be one which has fallen to the lot of the brigade in the regular tour of duty.

§ 6. It might have occurred to Brigadier Sale, and to yourself, when required to forward the present enclosures, that His Excellency receives reports periodically, on the state of the health of the troops under his orders, and that the sickness and mortality with which the thirteenth light infantry has been visited, have not escaped observation. The complaints under which some of the men of this corps are suffering, are unhappily too prevalent throughout the force; but, nevertheless, the Commander-in-chief desires it may be fully understood by those with whom this correspondence has originated, that his

Excellency would fail in his duty, were he, on the report of any one save the Chief medical-staff-officer with the army, to set aside an arrangement which had been determined on after mature reflection; for it must be borne in mind, that this staff-officer has been especially attached to the force, to watch over the preservation of the health of the troops, and to offer suggestions having reference to their comfort; and from his situation, he must be held to be equally well-informed on the subject, and much more disinterested than the Assistant-surgeon, who has been brought so prominently forward on the present occasion.

§ 7. It cannot but have occurred to you, that discussions like the present, are most hurtful to discipline and to the service; and I have it accordingly in command, to beg the exercise of your best endeavours to put them down, and to discourage them.

I have the honour to be,

(Signed) P. Cragie,

Major, Deputy Adjutant-general.

To Major-general Sir W. Cotton, &c. &c. commanding
First Division, Bengal Column.

[Forwarded through Brigadier Sale to Lieutenant-colonel Dennie.]

No. IX.

List of the Officers nominated for the several classes of the Order of the Dooranee Empire. Instituted 17th September, 1839.

First Class.—*In Political employ:* Lord Auckland, Sir W. Mac Naughten, Sir A. Burnes, Lieutenant-colonel Wade. *Military employ:* Sir J. Keane, Sir W. Cotton.

Second Class.—*Political:* Major Todd. *Military:* Major-generals Willshire, Thackwell, and Simpson; Brigadiers Sale, Roberts, Arnold, Baumgardt, Scott, Stevenson.

The following officers are specially recommended by the Commander-in-chief, for the second class of the order, in addition to those above-mentioned, for their excellent and efficient service during the whole campaign, and at the assault and capture of Ghuznee.

Majors Cragie, Garden, Parsons; Lieutenant-colonel Mac Donald; Majors Keith and Campbell; Captains Thompson and Peat.

Third Class.—Lieutenant-colonels Dennie, Orchard, Herring, Monteith, Wheeler, Persse, Croker, Smyth, Sandwith, and Stalker; fifteen majors and six captains. And in the political department, Major Leech, Lieutenants Macgregor and Mackeson, and Dr. Lord; together with the following who remained at Quettah, Shikarpore, and Bukkur—Lieutenant-colonel Stacy, Majors Clarkson, Weston, Billamore, Aitchison, and Wilson.

No. X.

Letter from Colonel Dennie declining the third class of the Dooranee Order.

Camp, Cabool, 17th Sept. 1839.

Sir—Although innocent and unconscious of all intentional offence, it has been my misfortune to suffer under severe and recent marks of his Excellency's displeasure. I cannot, therefore, without great difficulty, and considerable apprehension of increasing this feeling against me, venture to address the Commander-in-chief, through you, on such a subject as the present.

Nevertheless, my acceptance of the third class of the Dooranee order would be so painful to me that, with all respect and submission, I beg to decline it.

As, however, my doing so, without assigning some reason, might be susceptible of misconstruction, I take the liberty of

stating, that when the army was organized at Ferozepore, I was nominated, by the Governor-general and Commander-in-chief, in India, to the command of the second brigade, which I retained during the whole of its services in Sinde, and until the junction of the Bombay army; when, being still a senior officer to a brigadier then present with the force, I was appointed, in general orders, to perform the duties of that rank; and on the morning of the storm of Ghuznee (the advance of which I had the honour of successfully commanding and leading, and for this am mentioned in the public despatches) I was actually brigadier of the day.

A great proportion of the officers who have been distinguished by the order of the second class, are not only my juniors, (as brigadiers or lieutenant-colonels,) but are even of the grade of majors and captains.

I am aware that by the rules or customs of the British army, a junior officer, whose good fortune it has been to distinguish himself, may have rewards conferred on him which are not accorded to his seniors, who had no share in the achievement. But I would humbly observe, in this case, that most of my juniors, above referred to, had no such opportunity offered them.

In the third class, to which I was nominated, all are my juniors, down to the rank of subaltern.

Under these circumstances, and after forty years' active service, and being one of the senior officers of this army, and having more than twelve years ago, been honoured by my own sovereign with the Companionship of the Bath, I trust his Excellency will not deem me ungrateful nor presumptuous in returning the third class of a foreign and Asiatic order.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. H. Dennie,
&c. &c. &c.

To Lieut.-col. Mac Donald,
Military Secretary to the Commander-in-chief.

No. XI.

Reply, by instruction of Sir J. Keane, to Colonel Dennie's letter declining the third class Dooranee Order.

Head Quarters, Camp, Cabool, 18th Sept. 1839.

SIR—I have received and laid before the Commander-in-chief your letter of yesterday's date, in which you state that you decline accepting the third class of the order of the Dooranee Empire, which his Majesty Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk has been pleased to signify his intention of conferring upon you, in common with every other officer of this force holding a similar command with yourself, viz., the command of a regiment.

His Excellency desires me to acquaint you, in reply, that he will cause your desire to be made known to the British envoy and minister at his Majesty's court, with a view to the king ordering your name to be erased from the list of officers upon whom he designs to confer that honour.

His Excellency will further cause it to be made known to the right honourable the Governor-general, with a view to relieve his lordship from the necessity of asking the usual permission for you to wear it.

The Commander-in-chief has remarked, that you have not confined your observations to declining to receive an order from the Sovereign of the country this army has been employed to support, but that you have thought fit to go into other matters, and especially to allude to the occasions in which his Excellency felt bound to disapprove of your proceedings, during this campaign; and which he cannot but think extremely ill-judged, on your part, as they have already been disposed of. As, however, you have done so, it may be proper not to pass some of them over altogether unnoticed:—

First—You undertook the charge of a convoy which included

a troop of the Shah's horse artillery coming to join the army; and by your bad arrangements and want of firmness in communicating your orders, permitted a great part of its *matériel* to be captured by a band of robbers, you and your detachment being altogether away from it, thereby occasioning severe loss and inconvenience to the service; besides the encouragement it held out to marauders to make similar attempts again. For this the Commander-in-chief expressed, through Major-general Sir Willoughby Cotton, commanding the division, his disapprobation. These papers, including your own explanation, were forwarded to the Governor-general of India, and his lordship expressed his perfect concurrence in the view taken by the Commander-in-chief, of the unsatisfactory manner in which you had performed that duty, and which was also communicated to you through the same channel, of the General officer commanding the division.

Second—As your letter begins by stating that you are unconscious of having given any offence which could incur the displeasure of the Commander-in-chief, his Excellency remarks that this is indeed strange; you can scarcely have forgotten that he informed you in distinct and above-board terms, in the neighbourhood of Ghuznee, that you acted in an unbecoming and unofficer-like manner, when you presumed to dictate to him the way in which it would be proper for him to mention your name in his orders, conceiving yourself entitled to much greater credit than had been given to you, thus constituting yourself a judge in your own case, and adapting a view favourable to yourself, which none else could see the justice of.

Third—You endeavoured to thwart the Commander-in-chief's arrangements, by calling upon the Assistant-surgeon in medical charge of the thirteenth light infantry, to frame a report of the sickly state of the regiment, which might have the effect of getting the corps sent back to Indostan. The Assistant-

surgeon, with this encouragement, did not confine himself to a mere medical opinion, but started into other matters and observations which reflected on the government he serves. This improper letter you forwarded, with one from yourself, to the Commander-in-chief; the whole having been copied by an orderly-room clerk or clerks, who had thereby the opportunity, by their representation to the men of the regiment, of causing discontent; and for this whole proceeding also His Excellency caused his severe displeasure to be communicated to you through Major-general Sir W. Cotton, commanding the division, and Brigadier Sale commanding the brigade.

By the allusion you have made to the temporary appointment of brigadier, which you held during the march of the troops from Ferozepore, to the crossing of the Indus, and arrival at Shikarpore, you would appear to wish it to be inferred, that some injustice had been done to you in depriving you of the command of a brigade. The Commander-in-chief cannot, in terms too strong, condemn this feeling, and the colouring attempted to be given in your letter to the case, because the Brigadier commanding the artillery happened to be a junior officer to you. On the Commander-in-chief assuming the command of the Bengal force, Major-general Sir W. Cotton relinquished the command, and fell back to the command of his division; in like manner, Major-general Nott to the command of his brigade, and you to the command of your regiment. Much scurrility and untruth has been written in the newspapers on that subject, in reference to General Nott; and the allusion you have made is in no manner calculated to place this matter in the clear light it should stand. A few days before the army reached Ghuznee, in consequence of the inability of two of the Brigadiers, from severe illness, to attend the outpost duties, Lieutenant-colonel Persse and yourself were, as the two seniors, nominated to take your tour of such duty; but

you had no other command than that of your regiment, nor did you act as Brigadier at the capture of the fort of Ghuznee.

The Commander-in-chief, in conclusion, desires me to say, that he conceives he has done you ample justice in the public mention he has made of your name, as connected with the capture of Ghuznee, where you did nothing more than your duty, as other officers had done. But it would seem that you are impressed with the idea that your services, during the campaign, have been very important, whereas it is not so apparent to others as to yourself; and the Commander-in-chief thinks it high time that you should be informed, in the hope that it may have a good effect upon you, in inculcating good feeling, and observance of the rules which guide other members of the profession, and as being far more likely, not only to add to your consequence, but also to your comfort and happiness, than the line you are following, of fondness for litigation, and cavilling at the orders of your superiors—the only instance of it in the officers of her Majesty's service, in this army, that his Excellency has met with.

The Commander-in-chief desires me to add, that it is a source of extreme regret to him to have received an appeal from an officer of your station and standing, which has called for such strong remarks ; but that his Excellency has felt himself imperatively called upon to make them. His Excellency desires the correspondence may here cease, as he will receive no more statements from you on the subject to which this letter has reference.

His Excellency will forward a copy of your letter, and this reply, to the Governor-general of India, and to the General commanding her Majesty's army at the Horse Guards, which will sufficiently explain to the latter the reason of your name

not appearing in the list of officers to receive the Dooranee order.

I have the honour, &c.

(Signed) R. MACDONALD,

Lieut.-colonel, Military Secretary.

To Lieutenant-colonel Dennie, commanding her Majesty's Thirteenth Light Infantry.

No. XII.

Letter from Colonel Dennie, to Sir Henry Fane, Commander-in-Chief of India, enclosing Correspondence i. ii. iii. vi. vii. viii. x. xi. xiii—*A. and B.*

Camp, Cabool, 29th September, 1839.

SIR—I am under the painful necessity of begging you to submit the accompanying correspondence to his Excellency Sir Henry Fane, Commander-in-chief of India.

In the letter dated the 18th September, received by me on the 21st, from the Military secretary to the Commander-in-chief of the Army of the Indus, the most grave and serious allegations are made against me, which I am told therein will be forwarded to the Horse Guards.

Aware of the injury that must arise from such accusations remaining unanswered, and knowing I had the means, or proofs present of acquitting myself, I applied to the Major-general of ivision, in the hope that he would obtain permission to exculpate myself; but the interdict in Lieutenant-colonel Macdonald's letter, that "all correspondence should here end, as no further statement would be received from me," was considered final. Never having made any reply or justification of myself, but bowed with silent submission to former censure, however innocently or unconsciously incurred, I have now no alternative left but to appeal to his Excellency.

My having declined the third class of the Dooranee order, appears to have called down upon me this last severity. My letter, excusing my acceptance, will not, I am sure, be harshly judged by Sir Henry Fane. Precedents are recorded of many British officers declining foreign distinctions, which were attended with no reprehension nor marks of the Duke of Wellington's dissatisfaction.

In seeking to deprecate Sir John Keane's anger, in the most propitiatory and apologetic terms—disclaiming all *intentional* offence, in the recent instances in which I had the misfortune to incur his displeasure—I have unhappily called forth a recapitulation, not only of these, but unexpectedly of an occurrence almost forgotten, and which I had no reason to believe was before viewed by him in its present new and highly unfavourable light.

First—I am now told, that by "my bad arrangements, and want of firmness, in giving my orders, when I undertook to afford protection to a troop of the Shah's artillery through the Bolan Pass, a great part of its *matériel* was captured by a band of robbers, I and my detachment being far away from it; and that I had thereby given encouragement to marauders to make similar attempts again." For this the Commander-in-chief expressed, through Major-general Sir Willoughby Cotton, his disapprobation of the manner which this duty was performed. Annexed is my report of this affair; the letter of the Major-general, to which I beg to call attention; and his Excellency Sir John Keane's own reply, in the month of June last;* the which would, perhaps, be the most complete answer to these novel and injurious imputations. No allusion is therein made to "bad arrangements," "want of firmness," &c., &c. The only remarks, it will be seen, are,

* *Vide* Appendix, Nos. I. II. III.

"that I should have been fully borne out in destroying the least valuable carts, and applying their cattle to the draught of others;" my having "permitted Captain Anderson to proceed;" and that "I should have reported the matter at the time." I may here observe, that the Commander-in-chief's suggestions had been fully acted upon, as seven out of the twelve carts were in this manner saved by us: that Captain Anderson moved on without protection, and in perfect safety, leaving the road less embarrassed for the rear guns: and that I only deferred my report till I joined the army, from the little chance of its ever reaching. All this I could have shown; but my supposed error seemed so trivial, I feared to appear troublesome, or disputatious, and refrained from all comment on the Commander-in-chief's decision. The mistakes, however, in the present statement, reflect so seriously on my reputation, that I am compelled to correct them:—First—I repeat there was not one troop, but two troops, or twelve guns, with their tumbrils, waggons, and magazines, amounting to forty or fifty carriages, to which I consented to afford protection, and safely brought them all through the pass. As to Captain Anderson's bullock-carts and baggage, I had from the first refused it distinctly, and in no manner did nor do admit of any responsibility on my part regarding these. I fully explained that the four companies of the forty-second were barely sufficient to guard the guns, a convoy of five hundred camels loaded with grain, besides those carrying the tents and baggage of the detachment; and most explicitly gave him to understand that his own men, or the Shah's infantry, must take the duty over his carts, and he himself look to their security. All I afterwards did to rescue them was in excess of the charge I undertook; and I doubt whether I should have felt justified in diminishing the party with the guns, by detaching so many to their relief, had I not heard that Captain Anderson, on that day,

had put some of his sick on one of the carts. In the last march of twenty-eight miles, without water, the whole baggage, hospital doolies, &c., were ordered by me to proceed under Captain Prole, thirty-seventh regiment, with adequate escort, two hours in advance of the guns ; when near the outlet of the defile, I learned that, notwithstanding these orders, the carts had not taken advantage of such protection, but were far in the rear. To repair this neglect, and retrieve this fault of Captain Anderson, all efforts were made by me, and every cart and bullock that could be moved was brought on, and none were abandoned until all means and hope had failed. Their destruction, however, which I had directed, was not completed, owing, as reported by me, to the want of implements. It was impossible that more could be done, as every man sent back only increased the evil from excessive exhaustion and want of water. I am at a loss to conceive what is meant by "myself and my detachment being far away from it." The guns and carriages, the party was covering and dragging, could not be left, and I was in the rear of all these to the last. I can only repeat that not one of these, nor a single camel, was lost ; and here, I refer to the statements of the officers present, as appended.* I am happy to add that no portion of the army came through the pass with so little loss as that sustained by my small and isolated detachment, or certainly afforded less encouragement to marauders. Forty-nine out of fifty carts of the field commissariat, moving with the rear division, some days previously had been captured and plundered ; and the Bolan and Kojuk passes were strewn with *matériel* of the columns in front, and presented a wreck of cattle, grain, tents, and baggage, and even ammunition. Almost daily, with the army, had camels been carried off in numbers, and the loss immense in these animals, as also hundreds of camp followers and others murdered.

* *Vide* Appendix, No. XIII. A.

I claim no merit on the occasion; simply, I deny that my arrangements were bad, or my orders wanting in firmness: all is due to the officers and men under me. The exertions of the sepoys were almost superhuman; and their endurance under exhaustion and thirst surpassing. An opportunity had been afforded me the preceding month, with this same detachment, of relieving Captain Stockley of the Bombay commissariat, (who had been shut up in the fort of Jannadeera by the Beelochees, and had lost three hundred camels,) and delivering his convoy, after a march of many days, across the desert without the loss of a camel. I mention these facts, as they are the only two instances of even large escorts arriving at their destinations, without a loss of the greater part of their convoy.

It now becomes my painful task to approach a subject which, as it concerns my personal services—however humble and unimportant they may be—is a matter of uneasiness and embarrassment.

I am accused of having asserted myself innocent and unconscious of offence, and his Excellency intimates his surprise that I should so express myself after what had occurred, when I had the honour to wait upon him at Ghuznee; but I have either been misunderstood, or the military secretary has misquoted my letter. I declared myself innocent of all "intentional" offence in the *recent* instances; for I neither knew nor suspected the existence of *former* displeasure against me. But these essential words contained in my letter are unobserved, or unattended to. I am, indeed, sorely sensible that on that occasion I gave offence to his Excellency, but never was offence more unintentional. I waited upon my Commander-in-chief, not to dictate the terms in which my name should be mentioned in his orders; not to claim any degree of merit which his Excellency might not judge fit to accord to me; not to

presume so far on any matter of opinion; but to explain the equivocal or negative position in which I stood, when the post he had done me the honour of allotting to me, at the storm of Ghuznee, appeared to have been filled, and the duty executed, by another. It may be objected, that I committed an offence in approaching his Excellency even upon a matter of fact; and sorry am I to have erred even to this extent; but I never imagined it would have called down upon me such violent expressions as then overwhelmed me, from which I withdrew shocked, oppressed, and deeply wounded. As if the feeling against me were still unappeased, and that I was not considered sufficiently mortified and humiliated, my conduct is now denounced in the letter of the military secretary as unbecoming and unofficer-like. The more I reflect on the unmeasured infliction with which I have been visited, the more I am at a loss to account for it, or reconcile it with that of others. I was aware that before my visit on that day, Major Tronson had made a personal application to a similar effect, viz., that he should be named as commanding the regiment, which was not only received without exciting any mark of disapproval, but in the following day's order Sir John Keane expresses "his willingness in supplying the omision."* How, then, could I apprehend I should be guilty of any impropriety in following an example which had met with no reproaches, but, on the contrary, been so readily complied with?

To put Sir Henry Fane in possession of the cause of these most painful effects, I here cite the general order on the capture of Ghuznee:—"The leading column, in a spirit of fine gallantry, led and directed by Brigadier Sale, gained a footing inside the fortress," &c. It is distasteful to me to be egotistical; but the explanation is extorted from me. The leading

* *Vide* Appendix, No. IV.

column consisted, as detailed in general orders of the preceding evening, of the four light companies of the British regiments under my command. This "advance," then, I alone *led*, and I alone *directed;* and I was the first to gain a footing in the fortress, and the first in the body of the place. This is known to those who followed me, as to the whole army. Brigadier Sale, as commanding the whole, was with the main column, at the head of which he entered the fort. Let it not for a moment be supposed, that in thus exhibiting our relative situations, I am actuated by any unworthy feeling, or subtracting aught from services, that on that occasion, as in former ones, are so well known; on the contrary, I am proud to say that Brigadier Sale has evinced every interest in this matter; and I have reason to believe, that it was at his suggestion, and our having formerly served together, that I am indebted for the command of the advance.

I was taken from the command of a light-infantry regiment, and selected to command these four companies. This, as being unusual, I felt to be the greater honour. Little could I then suppose that his Excellency would take umbrage at my desire, expressed in the most deferential terms, that he would not leave doubtful my having satisfactorily executed his orders in the distinguished post assigned to me; still less can I conceive, after reading his Excellency's letter, how he could have chosen an officer whom he at the same time considered wanting in firmness, to perform a service of a nature the most dangerous and important, and on the result of which so much, perhaps, depended.

In answer to the third instance specified in the military secretary's letter, viz., "of my having endeavoured to thwart his Excellency's arrangements," &c., it becomes indispensable that I lay my report, and the reply thereto,* before Sir Henry

* *Vide* Appendix, VI. VII. VIII.

Fane, and for the first time attempt any justification of myself.

First.—I am accused of obtruding upon his Excellency a medical report of the state of the thirteenth regiment, founded upon a casual communication from an irresponsible individual. To this I reply that Major Tronson called on me officially, with a message from the Commander-in-chief, directing me to forward the Major's leave of absence, as the corps was selected to remain in Affghanistan. On such authority I did advisedly consider that I should have been wanting in my duty, had I neglected laying a true state of the inefficiency of the regiment before him, without loss of time; and which was forwarded through the Brigadier to the Major-general commanding the division, and met their approval.

Second.—I am next accused of affording encouragement to the Assistant-surgeon in the report I called for; and he is also charged with lending himself to the designs of his superior, "as might have been expected." Never having practised such baseness, nor expected it from another, I could not bring myself, at the time, to reply to this aspersion; but to Sir Henry Fane I now assert myself as innocent and incapable of tampering with the Surgeon, as of creating the mortality and sickness which afflicted the regiment.

Sir John Keane appears to know Dr. Robertson only as in temporary charge; but Sir Henry Fane is well acquainted with his high character; and from the situation he has held for the last seven years, that of the sanatory depot at Landour, his experience must be unusual in the diseases in question, and the effects of climate on them; and to such he especially alluded in this sentence, which has been partially quoted, and, therefore, so misinterpreted as to be termed "gratuitous assumption," &c. &c.; "for the restoration of their

health, they would require a mild, equable, and temperate climate, conjoined with repose, shelter, and comforts which they are not likely to find here."

Third.—Experience has taught me that no government can be more anxious for the welfare of its soldiers, than the one I have the honour to serve under. It is, however, the very fact which his Excellency points to, "that on field service it may not be found at all times easy to procure what might be obtained in abundance in fixed cantonments," which confirms me in the opinion of the medical officer.

Fourth.—With regard to the fifth paragraph, I consider that I should have been obnoxious to the charge made against me in the third, had I returned the report I myself called for, or attempted to bias the medical officer's opinion. How such a proceeding on my part, or that of Dr. Robertson's, could lead the soldiers to believe that their comforts were uncared for, is to me incomprehensible, as they are, and must be, utterly ignorant of the matter in question. I beg to observe that the head clerk is a staff-sergeant, and known as trustworthy for the many years he has held the situation; and I am satisfied that he has communicated no part of my letter to any body—the original of which is in the private letter-book, in charge of the Adjutant: that of the Surgeon was not copied, but forwarded as received by me. Further, I cannot refrain from remarking that the very letter I received conveying this rebuke to me, was in the hand-writing of a clerk.

Fifth.—With reference to the sixth paragraph of the letter, his Excellency Sir John Keane appears not aware that Assistant-surgeon Robertson did confer with Mr. Superintending-surgeon Atkinson on the subject. That medical staff-officer gave it as his opinion, that the only proper mode of proceeding was the one I adopted—that is, "for the Assistant-surgeon to make a report to the Commanding officer, who

would forward the same to the Commander-in-chief; and that it was out of his province to interfere in the matter until such steps were taken."

On this charge I trust that I have now fully exonerated myself, and proved that in the conscientious discharge of my duty, I have acted strictly according to the rules of the service,* unactuated by any of the unworthy motives that have been imputed to me.

Among the reasons I assigned for declining the third class of the Dooranee order, I instanced that out of the past ten months' campaign I had served five in *actual command* of a brigade, and subsequently performed the duties of a Brigadier in camp. Upon this his Excellency remarks, that "*I* would appear to wish it to be inferred, that *I* have suffered some injustice, in having been deprived of the command of a brigade, and that *I* have given a colouring to this (forced) inference, by the mention of the Brigadier of Artillery having been *my* junior." My letter speaks for itself, and is too plain to admit of but one interpretation. It is as impossible as it would be disrespectful in me to disprove or contradict any thing which Sir John Keane may be pleased to assume. But I am convinced the Commander-in-chief of India will come to a different conclusion, and to his judgment and justice I defer, whether the bare fact of my having shown my services in this army to have been chiefly those of a Brigadier (as one motive for declining the lowest class of a foreign order), can be fairly charged against me, as a covert complaint of my having been deprived of such command. I can only aver, that I never entertained so improper or so unreasonable a thought, and that I never conceived nor expressed a dissent from the measures whereby I necessarily fell back on the command of my regiment, nor in any sense whatever regarded it as a matter of grievance. His Excellency, most

* *Vide* General Orders, her Majesty's Forces in India, 10th June, 1814.

unfortunately, impressed with this erroneous idea, proceeds to point out the course of events consequent on one common cause, in which Major-general Sir Willoughby Cotton, Major-general Nott, and myself, are involved. It is then remarked, "much scurrility and untruth has been written in newspapers on that subject in reference to General Nott, and the allusion you have now made, is in no manner calculated to place the matter in the clear light it should stand." Thus I am not only entangled in matters relating to General Nott alone, over which I have no control, and with which I have neither connexion, correspondence, nor interest, but am exhibited in painful parallel or participation with the scurrility and falsehood of a newspaper. If not transgressing the bounds of discipline, I would ask, if it be not a great stretch of power thus in one word to cast such reflections upon me, and in the next prohibit a reply. To these unhappy and most groundless suspicions I may reasonably attribute much of what I have suffered: if allowed to be heard, it would be difficult to exonerate myself from these multiplied suspicions and inferences; defenceless as I am, nothing is left me but to pledge my word of honour, that with regard to all newspaper matters, true or untrue, I have neither directly nor indirectly had any thing to do with them.

It is stated that a few days before the army reached Ghuznee, in consequence of two of the brigadiers, from severe illness, being unable to attend the outposts, I and another lieutenant-colonel were ordered to take our tour of that duty. I quote the general orders: "The following colonels, whose commissions are dated prior to the 26th December, 1833, are brought on the roster as brigadiers of the day, viz., Lieutenant-colonel Dennie, her Majesty's thirteenth light infantry, &c., &c.; Dated Kelat-i-Ghiljie, July 5." Whereby it is shown that I was brought on the roster as brigadier, on the 5th July, and that no brigadier of the army ceased to take his tour of duty

until the 20th, when Brigadier Arnold was passed over in consequence of sickness, and the army arrived before Ghuznee on the 21st. It is therefore inaccurately shown, that my appointment arose from the sickness of other brigadiers, whereas it was caused to avoid my clashing with a junior officer. It is further stated, "but you had no other command than that of your regiment, nor did you act as brigadier at the capture of the fort of Ghuznee." I have already shown that Major Tronson commanded the regiment on that occasion, and the orders of that day prove, as I pointed out in my letter, namely, that I was brigadier of the day.

As the remark of the Military-secretary, "that *some* of my offences would now be noticed," might lead to the deduction that there were still others, I have thought it right to append the correspondence relative to Captain Fothergill's death, (Appendix No. xiii.—B,) the only other one I know of, by which it will be seen that, notwithstanding my denial, Sir John Keane reprimands me for passing over his authority in recommending an officer for promotion to Sir Henry Fane. The proof of this is in Sir Henry Fane's own hands, my report to his Excellency containing no recommendation, but being verbatim that I sent to Sir John Keane himself, and also on the very same day, viz. that of Captain Fothergill's death.

I trust that the explanations I have now offered on these several accusations, may be deemed satisfactory by the Commander-in-chief of India.

In the conclusion of the Military-secretary's letter, a former mortifying remark, "of conceiving myself entitled to much greater credit than had been given me, which none else could see the justice of," is repeated in much more contemptuous terms: "It would seem that you are impressed with the idea, that your services during this campaign have been very important, whereas it is not so apparent to others as to yourself."

These reflections are coupled with advice, in a strain of sarcasm evidently written under the same feeling.

If in the eyes of his Excellency the Commander-in-chief of India, I stand absolved of the various offences which are generally, particularly, or by inference and suspicion, attributed to me; then do I feel assured he will regard me as harshly and unjustly dealt with. If my conduct in any instance has warranted the imputation of vain and preposterous pretension if by word or deed I have betrayed such immodest and absurd opinions of myself and services, as I am taxed with; then do I admit that I have rendered myself obnoxious to scoff: but if I have neither said nor done aught susceptible of this construction, nor deserving the sneers indulged in at my expense, then must I feel the indignity and injury very deeply.

The letters in question are before his Excellency, and contain intrinsic evidence of these truths. I submit whether their tone or language be that in which an English officer should be addressed, or he ought to receive. There are certain principles and observances never departed from by our highest authorities; and I appeal whether a superior officer be sanctioned in outraging the feelings of even the humblest individual in the service.

As Sir John Keane has thought proper to allude to the opinion of others with regard to me, I hope I am in every way at liberty to follow him. I however will content myself by merely saying, that on this point I have no reason to be dissatisfied, and am now free to confess, that it "was the fear of lowering myself in the opinion of others," which formed an additional motive for my declining the lowest class of the Dooranee order.

The nature of the subject has compelled me to be diffuse, and I fear that I have already pressed too much on his Excellency's time, but there remains one word, in judgment against me more feared by soldiers than almost any other, that of being

"litigious" or troublesome—from which, knowing its baneful influence, I must struggle to free myself. On that ground I would humbly ask, can this offence be imputed to me? I forbore to reply to the Commander-in-chief's decision in the matter of the Bolan Pass; I withheld from answering his comments on my conduct respecting my report of the sickness of my regiment; I withdrew silent from his presence at Ghuznee, and even now I do not address this letter in the spirit of remonstrance, but yield to a painful necessity in defence of my reputation, and all that is dear to me, against charges which I am told will be forwarded to the highest authorities.—I have the honour to be, sir, your obedient humble servant,

(Signed) W. H. DENNIE,
Lieutenant-colonel commanding her Majesty's Thirteenth Light Infantry.

To Colonel Beresford, Military Secretary to His Excellency the Commander-in-chief of India.

No. XIII.—A.

From Captain Barstow, Thirty-seventh N. I. to Colonel Dennie.

Camp, Cabool, 28th Sept., 1839.

SIR—In answer to your letter of this date, I beg to state, that every thing was done that human means could effect, to bring on the carts and bullocks, nor were any abandoned till these had failed.

I cannot conceive in what your arrangements were defective, or could I even at this present time suggest aught else that you might have done better. The baggage was ordered to proceed two hours in advance of the guns, and I am at a loss to account for the carts not having taken advantage of such protection, and of Captain Anderson's disobedience of orders.

You always were with the rear guns and carriages—the most troublesome and most dangerous post—and so far from your orders being wanting in firmness, they were most distinct and decisive.

The march commenced at eleven, P.M., on the third of May, and terminated at four, A.M., on the fifth of June, without a drop of water, and under extreme heat. The road in the pass is a great ascent, and deep shingle, which for wheeled carriages is most arduous. The horses were of the worst description of cattle, both in strength and temper. The troopers (a parcel of boys) could not be trusted with whip or spur.

I saw the bullocks come into Dadur, and from their wretched condition, I was utterly surprised that Captain Anderson should have attempted the passage of the Bolan Pass with them, and so remarked at the time to the officers concerned.

The defile was occupied in force: and from the rolling down of stones, and firing, much annoyance and delay was occasioned.

In addition to the ordinary load of knapsack, &c. to lighten the camels in this fatiguing forced march, the men carried great part of their luggage; as also food and a pot of water. When half the party dragged, the others carried their arms and water; and thus they relieved each other.

The enemy were always dislodged where they could be got at, (and it was on one of these occasions I was wounded,) and the heights occupied when practicable; but from the weakness of the detachment, and the men being obliged to do the work of the horses, as well as from the nature of the mountains, constant flanking parties could neither be afforded, nor were they possible.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

JAMES BARSTOW,

Captain commanding Thirty-seventh Regiment N. I.

From Captain Prole.

Camp, Cabool, 28th Sept., 1839.

AGREEABLY to orders by Brigadier Dennie, C.B., I moved off with three companies, at nine, P.M., on the third of May, in charge of the baggage, two hours previously to the march of the column, with the guns. I escorted the whole of the baggage and grain, collected on the ground in front of camp, and safely through the pass. Captain Anderson's carts were not with the baggage; they were not placed under my charge, nor did I see them any part of the day,

(Signed) W. S. PROLE,
Captain Thirty-seventh Regiment N. I.

From Ensign Wade.

Camp, Cabool, 28th Sept., 1839.

ON the last day's march from Ser-i-bolan, I know, the baggage, hospital doolies, &c. &c., were by Colonel Dennie's orders sent in advance of the guns two hours, and it was not until near the opening of the pass, that the carts (to the Colonel's expressed surprise, as he had ordered all the baggage on a-head) were reported far behind, and unable to come on.

I perfectly recollect Colonel Dennie telling Captain Anderson, that he would take no charge of his carts, at Candir, the first march from Dadur. But, notwithstanding, every thing was done to save them by the Colonel. The road is deep shingle, the last twenty-eight miles without a drop of water (this in the month of May); and the detachment were thirteen hours employed dragging the guns, (thirty hours march to Ser-i-ab,) and the heat excessive. Colonel Dennie remained

with the rear guns throughout, and I was repeatedly sent by him with orders, which were immediately enforced. These were given most plain and positive to me.

Whenever opportunity offered the enemy were driven from the heights.

(Signed) GEORGE WADE,
Ensign Thirteenth Light Infantry;
late Aid-de-Camp to Brigadier Dennie.

No. XIII.—B.

Camp, Cabool, 5th September, 1839.

SIR—It is with deep regret that I have to report the death of Captain George Fothergill, under my command, of diarrhœa, this morning.

I have the honour, &c. &c.

(Signed) W. H. DENNIE,
Lieutenant-colonel commanding her Majesty's
Thirteenth Light Infantry.

To the Deputy Adjutant-general, Bengal Column,
Army of the Indus.

Camp, Cabool, 7th Sept., 1839.

SIR—With reference to my reports of the 5th instant, I beg to recommend Lieutenant and Brevet Captain Stehelin, for the vacancy caused by the death of Captain George Fothergill.

I have the honour, &c. &c.

(Signed) W. H. DENNIE,
Lieutenant-colonel commanding her Majesty's
Thirteenth Light Infantry.

To the Military Secretary to H. E., the
Commander-in-chief, Camp.

Commander-in-Chief's Office, Head Quarters, Camp, Cabool,
9th September, 1839.

SIR—The accompanying letter having just reached me, and having read it to the Commander-in-chief, his Excellency desires me to refer it to you, and to request that you will call upon Colonel Dennie, to state what report he alludes to, dated the 5th instant, as no report of any kind was received here of such a date from him, nor has Captain Fothergill's death been at all reported to this office.

Colonel Dennie's present letter is considered very unsatisfactory, as it neither states when Captain Fothergill died, (if on the fifth, this recommendation should have been forwarded at an earlier period,) nor whether Lieutenant Stehelin is the senior lieutenant, or that he is now present with the regiment, or where he is.

I have the honour, &c. &c.

(Signed) R. MACDONALD,
Military Secretary.

To Brigadier Sale, C.B., Senior Lieutenant-colonel,
Thirteenth Light Infantry.

Camp, Cabool, 8th Sept., 1839.

SIR—In reply to your letter of this date, I have the honour to state, that on the 5th instant, the day of Captain Fothergill's death, the same was duly reported by me to the general of division, through the Brigadier, and to the Deputy Adjutant-general of the army of the Indus, for his Excellency's information, as also to the Adjutant-general of Her Majesty's forces, and to the Military-secretary of the Commander-in-chief in India. No recommendation was, however, made by me on this occasion, it being laid down, that such recommenda-

tion should be confined to the promotion-list, furnished monthly to the Military-secretary; and it was in consequence of a special message received through Brigade Major Squire from you, that "in the field, recommendation was necessary through his Excellency Sir John Keane," that my letter was forwarded.

The report of the 5th instant alluded to therein, has reference to that already made by me to the Deputy Adjutant-general of the army.

I beg now to add, that Lieutenant and Brevet Captain Stehelin is senior lieutenant of the regiment, and that he was appointed by his Excellency Sir Henry Fane, to remain in charge of the regimental depot at Kurnaul.

I have the honour, &c. &c.

(Signed) W. H. DENNIE,
Lieutenant-colonel commanding her Majesty's Thirteenth Light Infantry.

To Lieutenant-colonel Macdonald, Military Secretary, H. E., the Commander-in-chief, Camp, Cabool.

Head Quarters, Camp, Cabool, 9th Sept., 1839.

SIR—Having laid before Lieutenant-general Sir John Keane your letter of this day's date, containing the explanation of Lieutenant-colonel Dennie, relative to the recommendation he forwarded of Lieutenant and Brevet Captain Stehelin, without mentioning whether he was present, or that he was the senior lieutenant on the fourth day after Captain Fothergill appears to have died; his Excellency remarked, that Lieutenant-colonel Dennie's experience might have suggested to him, that the rules he alludes to, have reference only to regiments in quarters in India, and are not applicable to regiments serving

in the field and out of India, in so far that the officer at the head of the army of which they form a part, can be passed over in the recommendation for vacancies occurring among the troops serving under him.

It may be well, therefore, that Lieutenant-colonel Dennie should understand, in future, this part of his duty, whether serving in this or in any other army in the field.

Lieutenant-colonel Dennie's explanation, with copies of the rest of the correspondence, will be forwarded to the Commander-in-chief in India.

I have the honour, &c. &c.

(Signed) R. MACDONALD,
Military Secretary.

To Brigadier Sale, C.B., Senior Lieutenant-Colonel,
Her Majesty's Thirteenth Light Infantry.

No. XIV.

From Sir Henry Fane's Military Secretary, to Colonel Dennie, in Reply to his of 29th September, 1839.

21st October, 1839.

SIR—I am instructed by his Excellency the Commander-in-chief of India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th September, 1839, and the several papers which accompanied it. His Excellency has carefully perused the same, and he desires me to express his deep regret that any difference should have arisen between an officer of your rank and services, and the Commander of the force to which you are attached in Affghanistan.

His Excellency abstains from all further remark on the case laid before him: first—because he will have resigned his command, and have departed for England, before any measures

could be conclusively adopted in the matter; and, secondly, because, although he is fully aware of his authority for interfering in all complaints of her Majesty's officers, one against another, yet he is doubtful in how far he might be any degree authorised to interfere between an officer serving in the army of the Indus, and the *Commander-in-chief* of that army, over whom he has not any control whatever, and which army does not report to him. To some this doubt would not be a matter of any difficulty; but the objection to his entering on the nvestigation, grounded on the speedy lapse of his authority, you must perceive is insurmountable.

His Excellency has directed me to reserve the correspondence for your future directions concerning it.

I have the honour to be &c., &c.,

M. BERESFORD,
Colonel, Military Secretary

No. XV.—A.

Despatches from Colonel Dennie, Detailing his Operations over the Hindoo-Koosh.

North West Foot of Irak Mountain, 13th September, 1840.

SIR—For the information of the Major-general, I have the honour to report that at Gurdan Dewal, on the evening of the 11th, I received an express from Doctor Lord, informing me that a company of Captain Hopkins's corps had deserted, with their arms, to the Dost, who, with his son Mahomed Ufzil Khan, and the Wallee of Khooloom, and some thousands of different tribes, had advanced to, and captured Syghan, (the post recently abandoned,) and that the enemy was then within thirty miles of Bameean. Accordingly I marched that night through the Gurdan Dewal Defile, the outlet of which I gained

at day-break: about ten, A.M. that morning, I halted for a couple of hours to refresh the sepoys, and close up our rear, when I received a second despatch from Doctor Lord, apprising me that he had learnt "the Dost intended to occupy the passes with his force (turning Bameean), with the design of cutting us off, or preventing the meditated junction." I was advised to take the Calloo Ghât as my route, by which I should defeat this measure; but the state of my cattle, and the difficulties of that ascent, induced me to decide on the Irak Pass, and to anticipate or frustrate the enemy's object by immediately seizing it, or driving him out of it. The same day before dark, the crest of the mountain (thirteen thousand feet high) was gained, and its foot, on both sides, guarded by us. As we are now on the Bameean side of this great chain of hills, and within twenty miles of that place, I consider it safe. A movement of this nature could not be made but at some cost: the actual distance (only twenty-six miles) would not account for the number of animals that have fallen; but as they are all on this or the other side of the mountain, the whole of which I command, I hope to save all my provisions, military stores, and baggage. I am collecting every thing, and have written to Doctor Lord to afford me all the carriage in his power. I take the liberty of offering a piece of information, gained by my experience on this march—viz., that the Yaboo is the only animal to be depended on through a mountainous, destitute, and inclement country, such as I have traversed. The Indostanee camel is worse than useless in these steep ascents and descents, and perishes from cold.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient servant,

(Signed,) W. H. DENNIE,
Brigadier.

To Captain Douglas, Assistant Adjutant-General, Cabool.

B.

Bameean, 18th September, 1840.

SIR—My last communication will have apprised you of our having crossed the Irak Mountain. At the urgent representations of Doctor Lord, political agent, of the proximity of the enemy to Bameean, I continued to press on to its relief by forced marches, and arrived here on the 14th instant.

That same evening, having drawn out the Goorkah Regiment, I disarmed Captain Hopkins's corps of Affghans, who, although loaded, offered no resistance; and this essential duty, I am happy to say, was performed without difficulty. Finding no enemy in the neighbourhood, I proceeded to make arrangements for an advance on Syghan, where it appeared he really was in force.

These measures were, however, rendered unnecessary by his actual and unexpected presence.

Allow me now to congratulate you on your having obtained a complete and decisive victory over the conjoint army of Dost Mahomed Khan, and his Usbec allies, under the Wallee of Khooloom.

Last evening I received information, from my advanced posts, that bodies of cavalry were entering the valley from the great defile in our front (seven miles from hence). Wishing to draw them well on, I did not discourage their approach; but learning this morning that they had attacked a fortified village that was friendly to us, and as these people had claims on our protection, it became necessary to drive off their assailants.

230 of the 25th N.I.
270 Goorkahs,
80 Anderson's horse,
200 Jan Bazies.

From the reports brought in, I was led to conclude that only a few hundreds had entered the valley, and therefore took with me but one-third of our force, with a six-pounder gun and howitzer.

I confess I was taken by surprise, after driving in what proved to be only their advanced party, to find an army in my front. To have sent back for reinforcements would have caused delay, and given confidence to the enemy. It would have checked the forward feeling that animated the party with me, and gave assurance of success.

The enemy had got possession of the chain of forts before us reaching to the mouth of the defile. They drew up and attempted to make a stand at each with the main body, while their wings crowned the heights on either side; in dislodging them from the latter, I am sorry to say, the Goorkahs suffered. After four or five rallies, seeing our steady and rapid advance, the whole force opposed to us lost heart, and fled in a confused mass to the gorge of the pass. I now ordered the whole of the cavalry in pursuit, who drove them four miles up the defile, cutting down great numbers, and scattering them in all directions, many throwing away their arms, and escaping up the hills. Of the deserters from Captain Hopkins's corps, not a few here paid the penalty of their treachery, and their muskets and accoutrements were found in all directions.

The Dost, and his son Mahomed Ufzil Khan, and the Wallee, owed their escape to the fleetness of their horses, and were last seen with not more than two hundred followers around them.

The prisoners report that the ex-chief was wounded early in the day; his only gun, his kettle drums, with his camp, ammunition, and provisions, have fallen into our hands.

The number of the enemy was *at least* six thousand, and these chiefly Usbecs.

I can form no accurate estimate of their killed and wounded, but their loss must have been considerable.

I enclose a list of our casualties, and my order of the day, in

which I have endeavoured to express my sense of the conduct of the officers and men engaged in this brilliant affair.—I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

(Signed,) W. H. DENNIE,
Brigadier.

To Major-general Sir W. Cotton, G.C.B.,
Commanding in Affghanistan.

Return of the forces employed against the enemy, under the order of Brigadier W. H. Dennie, C. B., at Bameean, 18*th Sept.* 1840.

2 Captains,	7 Jemidars,
5 Lieutenants,	35 Havildars,
2 Ensigns,	11 Buglers & Drummers,
2 Staff Sergeants,	804 Rank and File,
7 Subadars,	7 Gun Lascars,

including native commissioned and noncommissioned officers.

Return of the casualties sustained by the force employed against the enemy, under orders of Brigadier Dennie, C. B. at Bameean, 18*th Sept.*, 1840,

4 Sepoys killed,	2 Halvidars wounded,
7 Horses do.	1 Naik do.
1 Lieutenant wounded,	16 Sepoys do.
1 Subadar,	5 Horses do.

one man dangerously of the thirty-fifth regiment; Lieutenant Golding's horse shot under him—all the men severely wounded of the Goorkah battalion.

Lieutenant Le Geyt severely wounded; one man dangerously of Anderson's horse.

One dangerously wounded of detachment Janbazee.

Orders by Brigadier Dennie, C. B.

Camp, Bameean, 19th September, 1840.

BRIGADIER DENNIE has pride and pleasure in recording his sense of the conduct of the troops employed against the enemy yesterday, and congratulating them on the success which rewarded their efforts.

The Brigadier begs to offer his particular thanks to Lieutenant MacKenzie, commanding the two pieces of horse artillery, to whose admirable practice the result of the day is mainly attributable. He requests that Captains Younghusband and Codrington will receive for themselves, and convey to the officers and men under their orders his sense of their merits. Lieutenant Golding, with the flankers on the heights, deserved for their coolness and steadiness every commendation. Anderson's horse, led by Lieutenant Le Geyt, severely wounded in the pursuit, distinguished themselves.

The Janbazees, headed by Captain Hart, proved themselves faithful and forward.

To Captain Shortreed, the Brigadier offers his best acknowledgments for the valuable assistance he afforded, as also to Lieutenant Broadfoot of the engineers, who gave him his personal attendance. Captain A. Connolly, and Lieutenant Rattray, volunteers on the occasion, will be pleased to accept this mark of their zealous exertions being fully appreciated.

C.

Syghan, 27th September, 1840.

SIR—In contemplation of my last report, I have the honour to state, that being unable to find any information that could be depended on regarding the routed enemy, and apprehending the possibility of their endeavouring to re-assemble at Syghan, thirty-seven miles from Bameean, I judged it advisable to move on that place and disperse them. Accordingly, on the

morning of the 27th, I marched with the detail in the margin, and reached Akarabad that day, where I learned, that Dost Mahomed Khan and the Wallee of Khooloom, with the remnant of their force had passed that place the day of their defeat, and pushed on without a hault to Ilyatoo, where they had left a garrison, and continued their flight forward. I reached Ilyatoo the following afternoon, and found it evacuated and set fire to; I then also learnt that the fugitives had not stopped at Syghan, and that the garrison that was left had also fled.

Three six-pounders, one twelve pound howitzer, six companies thirty-fifth Native Infantry, six companies Goorkah battalion, one hundred Anderson's Horse, two hundred Janbazees, one hundred Hazarah *Pioneers.*

My first object on arriving here was the destruction of the fort, which is a strong place, built on an isolated and high rock, quite inaccessible on three sides, and very difficult of approach on that of the gate, commanding also the entrance of the great defile opening into Toorkistan.

The retreat of the Usbecs was so precipitate on the news of our approach, that they left within the fort almost all the stores, tents, arms, &c., which had been abandoned by our troops when they fell back on Bameean.

The day following my arrival here, the Wallee sent in an emissary to Dr. Lord, political agent, with amicable proposals, declaring his renunciation of the cause of Dost Mahomed, his acknowledgment or submission to our power, and his resolution to fly before us. As I had no intention of, nor object in, pursuing him beyond this, (although I had no desire to undeceive him on this point,) I have halted here until Mr. Lord completes his negociations.

By authentic accounts, it appears that Dost Mahomed had entirely separated from the Usbecs, who had cast him off, and with about two hundred followers, were last heard of at Goree. The Wallee, with his own retainers, said to be about one-

thousand five hundred, is in the Kamarad valley, thirty miles from hence.

I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

(Signed) W. H. DENNIE, Brigadier.

To Major-general Sir W. Cotton, G. C. B.,
Commanding in Affghanistan.

D.

Bameean, 1st October, 1840.

SIR—My last report from Syghan, dated 27th ultimo, was written while negociations were in progress. I have now the satisfaction to acquaint you, that all the terms demanded of Meer Wallee have been acceded to by him, and that accordingly I marched back to Bameean, and arrived here yesterday evening.

Having accomplished all the objects contemplated in your instructions, I shall return to Cabool with the thirty-fifth native infantry and horse artillery, as soon as the convoy with provisions, clothing, and fuel arrives, which I hope will not be delayed, as the snow has already fallen on the hills around.

I have much gratification in communicating to you this successful termination of the operations I had the good fortune of conducting.

I find that in my last despatch I far underrated the force of the enemy, Dr. Lord having informed me that the Usbec chiefs in their interviews admitted that they had brought into the field between nine and ten thousand men.

That five hundred infantry, with three hundred irregular horse, and two guns, should have routed such a force under Dost Mahomed Khan and the Wallee of Khooloom, leaders who have been hitherto regarded by them as invincible, appears to

have produced the greatest impression, and one that I believe will not soon be forgotten.

I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

(Signed) W. H. DENNIE, Brigadier.

To Major-general Sir W. Cotton, G. C. B.,
Commanding in Affghanistan.

P.S.—Since writing the above the Wallee's vizier has arrived with the important intelligence of Dost Mahomed Khan having re-appeared at Hybuk, and again claimed refuge from Meer Wallee; but the Usbec chiefs, after their treaty, refuse to receive him. From this I infer no alternative being left him: he will be forced to give himself up to us.

No XV.—E.

Division orders by Major-general Sir W. Cotton, G. C. B. & K. C. H., commanding in Affghanistan, dated Cabool, 20th September, 1840.

THE Major-general commanding has the greatest pleasure in acquainting the troops that he has received accounts of a most brilliant action which took place on the 18th instant, at Bameean, wherein Brigadier Dennie, with two hundred and seventy of the thirty-fifth native infantry, two hundred and thirty of the Shah's Goorkah battalion, two guns, in conjunction with a party of Captain Anderson's cavalry, the Janbazees, and a few of Captain Connolly's escort, totally routed the combined forces under Dost Mahomed Khan, and the Wallee of Khooloom, wounding the former, and taking his tents, kettle-drums, baggage, and the only heavy gun he brought into the field, with a further loss to the enemy of five hundred killed, with a proportionate number wounded.

"The Brigadier speaks in the highest terms of the con-

duct of the troops, which shall be fully detailed to the Governor-general and the Commander-in-chief, when the official account arrives. In the meantime, the Major-general begs to offer to Brigadier Dennie, and to the officers and men engaged, his warmest acknowledgments for the signal service of the occasion.

The Major-general is happy to add that this brilliant achievement has been accomplished with comparatively trifling loss on the part of the troops engaged.

A royal salute will be fired immediately in honour of the occasion.

No. XVI.

Acknowledgment by the Government of India of the Bameean Victory, from F. H. Maddock, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India, to Major-general Sir W. Cotton, G.C.B. and K.C.H. commanding the Troops in Affghanistan.

Fort William, 2nd Nov. 1840.

SIR—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your despatches, dated respectively the 20th September, and 4th ultimo; the latter transmitting Brigadier Dennie's official report of the victory obtained over the combined forces of Dost Mahomed Khan, and the Wallee of Khooloom, on the 18th of September.

The Right Honourable the Governor-general of India in council, has perused with the highest satisfaction the Brigadier's account of the brilliant success of the action of the 18th September; he fully concurs with you in estimating the consequence of this achievement as highly important to the troops, who had the good fortune to share in the action; and he requests you to convey to Brigadier Dennie and the officers and

men of his force engaged against the enemy on the 18th of September, an expression of the cordial thanks of the Government of India, for their brilliant services on that memorable occasion.

Copies of your despatch of the 4th ultimo, and of the enclosed report from Brigadier Dennie, will be published in the official Gazette of the 4th instant.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. H. MADDOCK,
Secretary to the Government of India.

No. XVII.

Acknowledgment by Court of Directors of Bameean Victory.—Extract from a despatch from the Honourable the Court of Directors' Committee, dated 31*st December*, 1840.

WE have received, with the utmost satisfaction, the news of the brilliant and opportune success of the force under Brigadier Dennie. The previous retreat of our troops from Bajgah to Syghan, and then to Bameean, seems to have been wisely resolved upon and well executed; and the subsequent decision to engage the enemy was worthy of the courage and judgment of the officer in command. The conduct of Brigadier Dennie deserves our warmest acknowledgments, and that of the officers and soldiers under him, entitles them also to the highest praise.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) A. BURNES,
Resident at Cabool.

No. XVIII.

Letter declining the Second Class Dooranee Order, to Major-general Sir Willoughby Cotton, commanding in Affghanistan,

Cabool, 21st October, 1840.

My dear General—It would have been embarrassing to me, and I feared troublesome if not vexatious to you, had I personally obtruded my reasons on you for not replying to your official letters regarding the Dooranee Order. I therefore begged your Adjutant-general to deprecate your displeasure, and explain my objections.

That your kind intentions were neither ungraciously nor ungratefully received, and felt by me, I beg to assure you; and hope you will accept my apology for the repugnance I testified in those few words of excuse.

You are aware, that the cause assigned by Sir John Keane for refusing to me the second class, was "my not being a Brigadier, but a Lieutenant-colonel, and therefore only entitled to the third class;" and it is true that I had but the title, and did the duty of the superior ranks (without receiving the allowance.)

At present, however, by appointment of the Governor-general, and right of seniority, I hold that command which is that of a general officer, and the same as Major-General Nott and Sale's brigade.

Disclaiming all invidious distinctions, I would merely show how this rule of Lieutenant-colonel is observed in my *disfavour*, and violated in favour of Lieutenant-Colonel Wheeler, who at the same time with myself, is appointed to the second class. I am positive that no jealousy nor partiality has influenced such distribution, nor would I draw any comparison between the capture of Ghuznee and the battle of Bameean, with the

affair of Kudjah, for it is unmilitary as indecent in a subordinate to estimate his own services, the sole judge of which must be his superior: but the facts of my being a brigadier, and the results or consequences of the duties I performed, more important, as involving the safety of the army and security of the country, are undeniable; and, therefore, without presumption, I cannot regard the cases of Lieutenant-colonel Wheeler and my own as parallel ones; nor under the circumstances, consider that which is a compliment and honour to him, any such towards me.

Again, begging your pardon for this exposition, I have only to repeat, that if such be your opinion or even desire, I defer to it, and submit. At the same time I own, that my feelings would be relieved and gratified, were I spared the intended istinction, and my reward confined to your approbation.

I am, my dear general, most faithfully yours,

W. H. DENNIE.

No. XIX.

To Major Henderson, officiating Military Adjutant-general, Calcutta.

Cabool, 24th November, 1840.

SIR—On my return from Bameean, the enclosed papers were given to me by Captain Bygrave, field-paymaster.

The allowance of brigadier having been refused on my former application, it now appears, neither can those of regimental command be granted to me. Sixteen months have passed since I first addressed you on this subject, but I feel so assured my case has not been understood, or properly represented, that I am induced to detail it, and I beg you to lay the same before the Governor-general in council.

Two points appear to have been overlooked:—the one, that I was a considerable part of the time in actual command of two regiments of my brigade at Shikarpore, viz., the thirty-first and forty-second; and as I find Lieutenant-colonels Wheeler and Wallace, with similar commands in this army, received the allowance of brigadier, I am at a loss to perceive the difference between them and myself. The other point is, that the remainder of the period, or after my march from Shikarpore, I was still in command of part of the second brigade, *i. e.*, a wing, and head quarters of the forty-second, and engaged in most responsible duty and arduous service.

The second brigade had been left under my orders in Sinde, and the whole of our carriage, cattle, transferred by Sir John Keane—all communication had been for several weeks cut off between my post and the army; I was consequently ignorant of my supercession, when I received accounts that Captain Stockley, of the Bombay commissariat, was surrounded in the Fort of Jannadeera by the Beloochees, many of his escort cut up, and three hundred and fifty camels carried off. With what means I could collect, I proceeded to his rescue; and after driving the enemy out of all the forts in the neighbourhood, guarded the convoy across the desert, and delivered it over, without the loss of a camel, at Dadur. I beg to observe, that this march of more than one hundred miles, was made in the month of May, and in that country, and at that season, one of great hardship and difficulty.

This small detachment of two hundred Bengal sepoys, had to fight its way the whole route, and was exposed to much suffering from heat and thirst. I submit, that this is no parallel case with the transit of an officer within the provinces, from one appointment to another in palanquin or budgerow, and engaged in no military duty.

At Dadur, Captain Anderson, commanding two newly raised

troops of the Shah's artillery, with tumbrils, ammunition, waggons, &c., amounting to fifty carriages, claimed my protection through the Bolan Pass; opposed in like manner by a numerous enemy, greater part of the way; with horses that could not draw, and boys who could not ride; compelled to halt (for these reasons) every alternate day, in this mountainous and rocky defile, destitute of all provender; (our casualties of killed and wounded being increased by men dying and going mad), yet were all obstacles overcome, and the guns, with all I took charge of, safely brought into Quettah. From thence I marched with treasure over the Kojuk Pass, and arrived at Kandahar, head quarters of the army, on the day specified.

Out of nineteen camels I lost during that campaign, the greater part fell in the performance of this duty, and much of my property was destroyed.

Under all these circumstances, and considering the value of the public stores I was the means of protecting or recovering from the enemy, I trust I am not flattering myself in believing, that the government will regard this case as an especial one, and deserving of consideration.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

(Signed) W. H. DENNIE,
Brigadier, Army of Indus.

No. XX.

From Lieutenant-colonel W. H. Dennie, C.B., commanding Thirteenth Light Infantry, to Major-general Sir R. H. Sale, K.C.B., commanding.

Camp, Bootkhak, 12th October, 1841.

SIR—I beg, on my return to camp, to report the details of the progress, and completion of the affair with the rebels, in

the Khoord Cabool Pass, begun in so spirited a manner under your personal command this morning.

On receiving the charge of the troops, in consequence of your wound compelling you to leave the valley, I pursued your plan of operations, by pressing the enemy, as much as the nature of the ground would admit, on both flanks, and rapidly moving on the main column, and guns, with the intention of dislodging them from their breast-work, if still occupied; but this the insurgents had evacuated, though they ventured to dispute the possession of the precipitous heights, and to direct a well-aimed fire against our main force. Disconcerted, however, by the bold manner in which they were met by our skirmishers as they scaled the mountain-sides, and by the steady progress of the advance, they gradually abandoned their first position, and retired to the highest ridges and pinnacles of the Durra.

I had resolved from the first not to allow any lateral opposition to divert me from the main purpose of clearing the valley; and a little before seven, A.M. I had the satisfaction of reaching the southern gorge of the pass, and establishing there the thirty-fifth native infantry, and the guns in an excellent post, constituted by the walls of a strong and capacious, though deserted, fort. By this time our skirmishers had every where got possession of the heights, and the Affghan force, under Jan Fishan Khan, had also crowned the mountain, and displayed their banners on its summit.

You are aware that it was part of your original plan that the thirteenth light infantry should return to their encampment at Bootkhak; as the column marched back, the enemy again showed themselves on several points of the defile, and opened a fire, and some loss was sustained in repelling these attacks, and in withdrawing our flanking parties. The troops arrived at Bootkhak about two, A.M., a good deal harassed by the exertions of the morning. You will see by

the returns that the casualties have not been few, which arose from the great advantage afforded by the ground to an enemy trained in mountain warfare.

Permit me to add the expression of my admiration of the fearless manner in which the men of the thirteenth, chiefly young soldiers, ascended heights nearly perpendicular, under the sharp fire of the insurgents. The sepoys of the thirty-fifth rivalled, and equalled them, in steadiness, activity, and intrepidity. I am happy to say that no loss whatever of baggage of the native infantry was sustained, in traversing this valley of plunderers.

I have not yet received the casualty return of the thirty-fifth regiment native infantry, but have reason to believe that it is in amount about equal to that of the thirteenth, and am informed that they have one officer, Captain Younghusband, severely wounded.

No. XXI.

From Lieutenant-colonel Dennie, C.B., commanding Thirteenth Light Infantry, to General Sale.

Jellalabad, 14th Nov., 1841.

Sir—As commanding the rear-guard on the 12th instant, I have the honour to report, for the Major-general's information, that previously to the troops leaving their bivouac, a sharp fire was opened upon the loading baggage from the hills on our right, which afterwards was taken up along our rear. The picquets at either point kept the enemy for some time in check, but as his numbers and confidence increased, I deemed it advisable to reinforce them. Captain Oldfield, with his troop, also pushed those who had descended into the plain

back to the heights. Covered by our skirmishers (under Lieutenant Wade, thirteenth and Ensign Norton, thirty-fifth), extended across the valley and crowning the hills; the baggage safely debouched through the gorge in which the village is situated, and in about an hour afterwards I gradually retired in the same order. On clearing the narrow outlet at the other extremity, the enemy again pressed upon us, and were very numerous, completely enveloping our flanks and rear. As the country, however, soon opened in our front, and as the troops were perfectly steady, and could be fully relied upon; and as I was desirous to disengage them from the broken and close ground, and the fire of the village, and that of a large fort, I continued to retire, and permitted the confident pursuit of the Ooloos, until I had drawn them to the point which I had fixed upon in my mind. Here, whilst the squadron of the fifth light cavalry, under Captain Oldfield, was drawn up in line, I was joined by a rissalah of Anderson's horse, under Lieutenant Mayne, sent back by the Major-general, who had witnessed the heavy firing, and judged that the ground was favourable to the movements of cavalry. I now directed a combined charge, which was instantaneous and overpowering; bringing their right shoulders forward, they swept the plain, and bore down all opposition; not fewer than one hundred fell under their sabres, and the wounded were in proportion. The cavalry was ably supported by Captain Broadfoot, with his detachment of sappers, who carried all before them to the right, and cleared the hills, which had been covered by our assailants. The route was now general and complete. After the halt, necessary for the recall of the cavalry and reforming my party, I resumed my march, which for at least ten miles was not i terrupted by a shot. On the road then becoming difficult and contracted, a body of the enemy, encouraged by some Janbazees who had deserted at Gundamuc, again made their

appearance, but they preserved a distance at which their fire was harmless. On extricating the column from this ground, I once more awaited their approach, but instructed by the recent lesson, they could not be induced to cross the ravines, and thence until we marched into Jellalabad we saw no more of an enemy.

P.S.—We are happy in being able to announce that the intelligence of Captain Bygrave's restoration has arrived. Two officers only, Colonel Stoddart and Captain Arthur Connolly, now remain prisoners in the hands of the King of Bokhara; their speedy liberation is confidently expected.

THE END.

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