

duct of Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick Roberts in the exercise of his arduous command, and also to express the deep sense entertained by the Government of India of the irreparable loss sustained by the Queen and the whole Empire in the death of the brave men who have so nobly perished in the course of these operations.

4. Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick Roberts' despatch, together with this correspondence, will be published in the Gazette of India at an early date.

From Major-General G. R. Greaves, C.B., Adjutant-General in India, to Colonel Allen Johnson, Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department (No. 1628 Camp, Kabul, dated Head Quarters, Fort William, the 9th February, 1880).

I AM directed by his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief to forward herewith the despatches of Lieutenant-General Sir F. S. Roberts, K.C.B., C.I.E., V.C., dated 23rd January, 1880, reporting the events at Kabul during the period between the 8th and 24th December, 1879.

2. I am at the same time to transmit a copy of a letter which has been sent to Sir F. S. Roberts, recording His Excellency's sentiments in regard to the manner in which the operations have been conducted, and Sir Frederick Haines trusts that the Government of India will concur in the views he has expressed.

Copy of a letter from the Adjutant-General in India, to Lieutenant-General Sir F. S. Roberts, K.C.B., C.I.E., V.C., Commanding Kabul Field Force, No. 1626 Camp, dated 9th February, 1880.

IN acknowledging the receipt of your despatch, No. 1027, of the 23rd ultimo, with its enclosures, I am directed by the Commander-in-Chief to express to you the extreme pleasure with which His Excellency has read your reports, conveying as they do, in a most soldierlike and graphic manner, a full and vivid description of the events recorded.

2. Sir Frederick Haines desires me to congratulate you and the troops under your command for the ability and gallantry with which the operations from the 11th to the 23rd December, against overwhelming numbers, have been carried out from first to last, and I am to request that you will communicate His Excellency's sentiments to the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of your force.

3. The condition in which you were placed, owing to the defective information as to the extent of the combination against you, in having your force scattered in various directions, was most serious, and His Excellency considers that very great credit is due to you for the ability with which you extricated yourself from such a difficult position and concentrated your troops in the cantonment of Sherpur.

In this operation you were well and gallantly seconded by all ranks.

4. Sir Frederick Haines can quite understand the reluctance with which you surrendered the Bala Hissar and the city of Kabul to the enemy, but His Excellency is fully satisfied that the decision come to by you was, under the circumstances, the right one. The subsequent defence of the cantonment and the final dispersion of the enemy were most satisfactory.

5. The Commander-in-Chief has read with pride your reports of the acts of valour and devotion performed by individuals, and Sir Frederick Haines will take care that your recommendations, regarding those whom you believe

to have most distinguished themselves, receive his fullest consideration and support.

6. His Excellency deplores in common with the whole service the loss of so many gallant officers and men, British and Native, among whom the following appear to have been most prominent:—Major J. Cook, V.C., 5th Goorkhas; Captain N. J. Spens, 72nd Highlanders; Captain S. G. Butson, 9th Lancers; Lieutenant St. John W. Forbes, 92nd Highlanders; Lieutenant C. A. Montanaro, R.A.; Jemadar Jag Bahadur, Corps of Guides; Jemadar Jhunda Sing, 5th Punjab Cavalry; Troop Sergeant-Major Henry Spittle, 9th Lancers; Colour-Sergeant James Drummond, 92nd Highlanders; Colour-Sergeant John Yule, 72nd Highlanders; Kote-Duffadar Jiwant Sing, 5th Punjab Cavalry; Havildar Sham Sing, 5th Punjab Infantry.

The deeds of such men remain for ever in the memory of the army, which, while deeply mourning their loss, dwells with pride on the noble example of devotion they have set.

7. Turning from the consideration of these gallant acts, I am to express to you the pain with which His Excellency feels it to be his duty to refer to the affair of the 11th December, when so many casualties occurred in the endeavour to extricate the guns of F.A., R.H.A., which had eventually to be spiked, and left for a time in the hands of the enemy.

8. It is perfectly clear that, in obedience to your orders, Brigadier-General Massy, who commanded on this occasion, should have moved along the road towards Ghazni and not struck across country, as it must have been evident that the guns should have been kept to the road as long as practicable, and he should not have become engaged with the enemy until he had joined with Brigadier-General Macpherson.

His conduct in commencing an engagement with the small force under his command, composed only of cavalry and guns, without any infantry in support, against an enemy so numerous and determined as he reports him to have been, on grounds such as that described, is, to His Excellency's mind, quite incomprehensible. Brigadier-General Massy's subsequent operations in continually advancing arms of precision and long range, such as the guns of the present day are, and thus losing their fire for the time, and in afterwards dismounting 30 lancers with carbines to stop the advance of 10,000 men, show him to have been quite unable to cope with the difficulties of the position to which he had committed himself.

9. I am, by the Commander-in-Chief's orders, sending you with this, a confidential letter dealing with the matter more in detail, and containing His Excellency's instructions thereon.

10. The Commander-in-Chief is quite satisfied that the conduct of the officers and men under Brigadier-General Massy's orders, on this unfortunate occasion, was all that could be desired.

11. His Excellency after carefully reading your report of the circumstances connected with the temporary loss of the 2 guns of No. 2 Mountain Battery on the conical hill on the 14th December, is satisfied that everything was done which men could do to hold the position, but that owing to the overwhelming numbers and determination of the enemy, it was lost, and with it the guns.

12. In conclusion, I am to state that Sir Frederick Haines quite concurs with you in the reasons for which you originally decided on the occupation of the Sherpur cantonments in preference to the Bala Hissar, and he further agrees that you acted quite rightly under the circum-