

6. The force, strength as per margin* marched at 6.30 A.M. on the 27th July, encumbered by an enormous quantity of ordnance and commissariat stores and baggage. This was unavoidable, as the hostile state of the country rendered it impossible to leave anything behind in safety, and I could not divide my already too weak force.

7. After proceeding about eight miles, large masses of troops were discovered, about four miles distant, moving in a diagonal direction across our right front, and it was evident that a collision with Ayub Khan's army must take place before we reached our destination.

8. Advancing on a village which lay about a mile in my front, I placed my baggage there, and on the higher ground beyond I deployed my infantry into line with guns in the centre, and the cavalry on the left, covering the movement with two horse artillery guns and a troop of cavalry.

9. It was difficult, on account of the haze and dust, to estimate the number of the enemy, but judging by the extent of country covered, I believe I am within the mark when I set down his strength at 25,000 men.

10. At 11.45 A.M. the fight commenced by the advanced guns under Lieutenant H. Maclaine coming into action on our left, followed shortly by two horse artillery guns and the smooth-bore battery in our centre. The remaining two 9-pounders were also brought up from the rear-guard.

11. In about half an hour the enemy began to reply from their right, gradually extending along their front, and concentrating their fire of thirty guns on our position.

12. The infantry were ordered to lie down, and the wing of Jacob's Rifles, which had been in reserve, was brought up on the flanks, which were threatened on the right by ghazis, and on the left by the enemy's regular cavalry.

13. In this position we remained for nearly three hours, our artillery making excellent practice, the cavalry holding the enemy's cavalry in check, and the infantry keeping up a steady fire on the ghazis on our right.

14. A large body of the enemy's regular infantry were on our left front, and about the middle of the day they advanced in line, but well-delivered volleys checked them, and they did not come on again.

15. Between 2 and 3 o'clock, the fire of the enemy's guns slackened, and swarms of ghazis advanced rapidly towards our centre.

16. Up to this time the casualties amongst the infantry had not been heavy, and as the men were firing steadily and the guns were sweeping the ground with case-shot, I felt confident as to the result.

17. But our fire failed to check the ghazis; they came on in overwhelming numbers, and

making good their rush, they seized the two most advanced horse artillery guns.

18. With the exception of two companies of Jacob's Rifles, which had caused me great anxiety by their unsteadiness early in the day, the conduct of the troops had been splendid up to this point; but now at a critical moment, when a firm resistance might have achieved a victory, the infantry gave way, and commencing from the left, rolled up like a wave to the right. After vainly endeavouring to rally them, I went for the cavalry. (I was obliged to go myself, having no staff officer left.)

19. The 3rd Light Cavalry and 3rd Sind Horse were retiring slowly on our left, and I called upon them to charge across the front and to give the infantry an opportunity of reforming; but the terrible artillery fire to which they had been exposed, and from which they had suffered so severely, had so shaken them that General Nuttall was unable to give effect to my order.

20. All was now over, and I returned to the infantry to do what might be done to save them from complete annihilation.

21. After retreating across the nullah, and through the gardens near the village, a small walled inclosure was reached, and in this about 150 men of different corps, with several officers, made a stand and checked the enemy for a time; but seeing that we were rapidly being out-flanked, and that our line of retreat would presently be cut off, I gave the order to retire.

22. A wide open plain lay before us, and with discipline utterly gone and the men all scattered the prospect was discouraging; but we succeeded in making our way without much loss for a distance of three miles, when we joined the guns and cavalry in rear of the baggage, which was by this time stretching for miles over the country towards Kandahar.

23. Small parties of the enemy continued to hover in our rear, but no vigorous pursuit was made.

24. After daylight we were fired on from every village we passed, until we reached Kokeran, when we met a small force under General Brooke, which cleared the way for us into Kandahar.

25. Of the four horse artillery 9-pounder guns and six smooth-bore guns with which we left the field, the whole of the former and one of the latter were brought safely into Kandahar; the five other smooth-bore guns had, one by one, to be abandoned during the retreat, the horses being unable to bring them on.

26. Of the conduct of the troops, generally, I have already spoken, but I wish to bring the artillery to special notice; their behaviour was admirable; exposed to a heavy fire they served their guns coolly and steadily as on parade, and when the guns were rushed, they fought the ghazis with handspikes, sponge-rods, &c.

27. In explanation of the unfortunate loss of the two horse artillery guns, the officer commanding the battery has reported that Lieutenant Maclaine, who was in charge of them, waited to fire another round of case after the order to limber up and retire had been given, and the delay was fatal.

28. The detachment of the 66th Regiment, under Lieutenant G. De la M. Faunce, which manned the smooth-bore battery, also behaved extremely well.

29. On Major Blackwood being wounded during the action, Captain J. R. Slade, R. H. A., took command of E.-B., R. H. A.

30. I beg to bring the conduct of this officer to very special notice. Captain Slade was not only conspicuous for his gallantry during the day, but

* E-B Royal Horse Artillery—Officers, 5; Non-Commissioned Officers, rank and file, 141; horses, 191; six 9-pr. M.L.R. guns. Smooth-bore battery of 6-prs. taken from the Wali's mutinous army, and manned by 1 officer and 42 men, 66th Foot. 66th Foot—Officers, 19; Non-Commissioned Officers, rank and file, 497. 3rd Light Cavalry—Officers, 6; Native Officers, 13; Non-Commissioned Officers, rank and file, 297; horses, 306. 3rd Sind Horse—Officers, 5; Native Officers, 8; Non-Commissioned Officers, rank and file, 247; horses, 252. Sappers and Miners—Officer, 1; European Non-Commissioned Officers, 2; Native Officer, 1; Non-Commissioned Officers, rank and file, 41; 1st Native Infantry (Grenadiers)—Officers, 7; Native Officers, 15; Non-Commissioned Officers, rank and file, 626. 80th N. I. (Jacob's Rifles)—Officers, 8; Native Officers, 14; Non-Commissioned Officers, rank and file, 608. Of these numbers, 34 Europeans and 50 natives were in hospital.