

tion to the strength of the other branches. But there were strong reasons which made it desirable that the artillery with the column should consist only of mountain batteries. The whole question was one of grave importance, and it was not without due consideration decided that the force should proceed to Kandahar unaccompanied by wheeled artillery.

The object was to reach Kandahar in the shortest possible time; and it was not improbable that the main road would have to be left, should the Afghan army at Kandahar endeavour to make its way towards Ghazni and Kabul by the valleys of the Argandab or the Arghastan.

The nature of the ground throughout Afghanistan is such that artillery can never be safely employed with cavalry alone, unsupported by infantry. Nor is rapidity of movement so much required of artillery in countries like Afghanistan, as the power of being able to operate over the most difficult ground without causing delay to the rest of the troops.

It was not forgotten, moreover, that on arrival at Kandahar the column would be augmented by a battery of 40-pounders, a battery of field artillery, and 4 guns of horse artillery.

It is unquestionable that, had either horse or field artillery accompanied the force, the march could not have been performed with the same rapidity.

Before leaving Kabul, everything that was possible was done to lighten baggage. Ten British soldiers were told off to each mountain battery tent, usually intended to hold six, and fifty to a sepoy's tent of two *pals*, 34 lbs. of kit only being allowed for each man.

To each Native soldier 20 lbs. of baggage was allowed, inclusive of camp equipage.

Each officer was allowed one mule; and one mule was allowed to every eight officers for mess.

The amount of supplies which it was determined to take with the force was as follows:—

30 days' tea, sugar, rum, and salt for Europeans.

8 days' rum for Natives drinking spirits.

5 days' flour for Europeans.

5 days' rations for Native troops.

1 day's grain, carried by cavalry horses and transport animals, in addition to the ordinary load.

For the above, and for the carriage of footsore* soldiers and followers, it was found that the numbers of transport animals required, inclusive of 10 per cent. spare, were—1,589 *yaboos* (large Kabul ponies); 1,244 Indian ponies; 4,510 mules; 912 donkeys.

In addition to these, there were purchased on the line of march—35 *yaboos*; 1 mule; 208 donkeys; 171 camels.

The casualties were—410 *yaboos*; 106 Indian ponies; 217 mules.

The numbers of Native followers were—Doolie-bearers 2,192; followers in the Transport and other departments 4,698; private followers and syces of Native cavalry regiments 1,244; total 8,134.

The desertion of the whole of the Afghan drivers belonging to the Transport, shortly after leaving Kabul, and of the Hazara drivers directly their own country was reached, threw exceptionally heavy work upon the troops.

As regards supplies, the greatest difficulty would have been experienced but for the admirable arrangements made by Major A. R. Badcock

* European soldiers were allowed 2 per cent. of ponies; Native soldiers were allowed 2½ per cent.; Native followers were allowed 1½ per cent.

and the officers of the Commissariat Department,* and by Lieutenant-Colonel R. C. Low and the officers of the Transport Department.†

Sufficient praise cannot be bestowed upon all these officers. They never spared themselves; and often, after the longest march, and with the prospect of having to start off again at a very early hour the following morning, had to work on until a late hour in the night.

In the collection of supplies the Commissariat and Transport Departments were materially aided by Major E. G. G. Hastings and his staff of political officers.

Fortunately for the welfare of the cavalry horses and transport animals, a fair amount of green Indian-corn was almost everywhere procurable. Barley was very scarce; but the Indian-corn proved to be so nutritious that the large majority of the horses, ponies and mules reached Kandahar in excellent health and condition.

The reserve of flour had on several occasions to be indented upon; but by replenishing whenever supplies were to be obtained, we arrived at Kandahar with still about three days' flour in hand.

The force appointed for the relief of Kandahar moved into camp by brigades on the 8th August in the vicinity of Kabul, the 2nd Infantry and the Cavalry Brigade proceeding respectively to Indiki and Charasia. The 1st and 3rd Infantry Brigades encamped at Beni Hissar.

The following morning the march commenced. The route lay through the fertile Logar Valley, that line being chosen instead of the usual road by Maidan, on account of the facilities it offered for collecting supplies.

On the 15th August Ghazni was reached,—a distance of 98 miles having been marched in seven days.

At Ghazni I was met by the Governor, and received from him the keys of the city gates.

I placed my own guards and sentries in and around Ghazni,—deeming it best for the preservation of order, for the prevention of collisions between the troops and people, and for the execution of our demand for supplies.

The fort was visited by numbers of officers and men, but no disturbance occurred; and before the break of the following day the force was many miles on its way towards Khelat-i-Ghilzai.

No news having reached me from either the latter place or Kandahar, I determined to push on with all possible speed.

I may here mention that I frequently despatched messengers, while on the road, with telegrams reporting our progress. I am led to think that none of these messengers ever reached their destination, except those sent from Khelat-i-Ghilzai, and from between that place and Kandahar.

On the 20th August, shortly after reaching Panjak, I received a letter from Colonel Tanner, 29th Bombay Native Infantry, commanding at Khelat-i-Ghilzai, written on the 18th, to the effect that all was well with his garrison; that the neighbourhood of Khelat-i-Ghilzai was quiet, and that General Phayre, writing from Quetta on the 12th August, had stated that he hoped to be

* Captain A. T. S. A. Rind, Bengal Staff Corps; Lieut. C. M. FitzGerald, Bengal Staff Corps; Lieut. H. M. P. Hawkes, Bengal Staff Corps; Lieut. H. F. Lyons-Montgomery, Bengal Staff Corps.

† Captain W. A. Wynter, 33rd Foot; Captain G. H. Elliot, Bengal Staff Corps; Captain C. R. Macgregor, Bengal Staff Corps; Lieut. L. E. B. Booth, 33rd Foot; Lieut. H. J. Elverson, 2nd Foot; Lieut. R. B. W. Fisher, 10th Hussars; Lieut. R. H. F. W. Wilson, 10th Hussars; Lieut. C. G. Robertson, 8th Foot.