

the honourable duty which they were called on to perform. The following instance will show that the same zealous spirit actuated the troops with the rear brigade of the Division. After the advanced force had left Quetta, the drivers of a convoy of 300 carts, laden with food supplies proceeding to the front, deserted and could not be replaced at the time. In this dilemma Captain Watling, Deputy-Assistant Quartermaster-General, arranged with Colonel Harpur of his own regiment (the 23rd Native Light Infantry) to have these carts taken on by the sepoys as drivers. Three hundred men, or about half the regiment, readily undertook the work and brought the convoy safely to its destination.

12. Although we had only brought the Kabul scale of baggage to Kila Abdulla, it was resolved to leave half of it behind at that place, in order to save time and facilitate the movements of the force on reaching its sphere of active operations at Kandahar. A few days before the advance took place the precaution was also taken to send out the Field Columns marginally noted,* to a distance of thirty miles from Chaman, with orders to prepare the water-supply at Gatai, and to forage east and west of the road at Murgha-Chaman and Shah-Passand; in the former direction, it was necessary to blow up the towers of Abu-Saiad Khan's Fort, on account of his general hostility and obstructiveness regarding supplies, &c. This duty was effectually performed by the Bombay Sappers under Lieutenant-Colonel Lindsay, Commanding Royal Engineer.

13. During the period that the road between Chaman and Kandahar was closed, Major Westmacott, the Road-Commandant of that part of the line, carried on the duties of the Intelligence Department; but on the assembly of the advanced force at Kila Abdulla, Sir Robert Sandeman was good enough to place the services of Captain H. Wylie, Political Agent, Pishin, at my disposal as Chief Political Officer. Captain W. H. Curzon Wylie, Assistant Agent, Governor-General, who was the bearer of Despatches from the Government of India to Sir Frederick Roberts, also accompanied Captain H. Wylie as Assistant; also Captain W. Loch of the same department.

14. It was also a matter of great importance that the road between Chaman and Kandahar should be made practicable for carts simultaneously with the advance of the column. Provision for this work also was made by Sir Robert Sandeman, who placed at my disposal the services of Major T. F. Dowden, R.E., Superintending Engineer in Biluchistan, and of Major E. D'O. Twemlow, R.E., Public Works Department, for that purpose. I was thus enabled to utilize the large number of carts which had brought supplies to Kila Abdulla, and open the way for successive convoys of wheeled transport.

15. Lieutenant H. O. Selby, R.E., Superintendent of Army Signalling, established heliograph stations at Kila Abdulla, the Kojak Pass, Gatai, &c., which in due time were continued to Kandahar.

16. As originally arranged, the force moved

* Murgha-Chaman Column.—Lieutenant-Colonel T. Bell, 27th N.I., commanding; Lieutenant-Colonel J. G. Lindsay, R.E., with three companies of Sappers and Miners, and Engineer Staff; Major R. Westmacott, Road-Commandant; 2 guns of Major Wace's Mountain Battery; 2nd Sind Horse; 27th Regiment of Native Infantry.

Shah-Passand Column.—Lieutenant-Colonel F. S. Iredell, 27th N.I., commanding; Major E. D'O. Twemlow, R.E.; Captain W. Loch, Assistant Political Agent; 2 guns of No. 2 Mountain Battery; 2nd Regiment Light Cavalry (dett.); 16th Regiment N.I. (dett.)

across the Kojak to Chaman (14 miles) on the 30th and 31st of August.

The next stage was Gatai, 16 miles. Unfortunately the water which ought to have reached that halting place before the arrival of the force on the 1st September from a karez seventeen miles to the east, had not been brought to within three miles and a half of it. The cavalry and artillery, therefore, under the command of Brigadier-General Wilkinson, had to push on to Mahomed Amin without halting, thus performing a very trying, waterless march of 26 miles with regularity and efficiency. On arrival at Mahomed Amin the channel of flowing water was found to be brackish. I may here mention, as a notable instance of good marching, that two squadrons of the 15th Hussars, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Luck, marched through from Kila Abdulla to Mahomed Amin, without encamping,—the entire distance of 42 miles being accomplished without a single case of sore back.

The infantry reached Mahomed Amin on the following day—2nd September.

17. On the 2nd September the Cavalry Brigade and other troops, marginally noted,* reached Mel Karez, and the infantry next day. On the 3rd September, this force reached Abdul Rahman, 26 miles from Kandahar, ready to proceed and join Sir Frederick Roberts' column at any moment.

18. On the morning of the 3rd September, however, whilst marching through the Takht-i-pul Kotal, I received Sir Frederick Roberts' Despatches, announcing his complete victory over the forces of Sirdar Mahomed Ayub Khan, two days previously. I afterwards received instruction to distribute my troops at convenient centres near Kandahar, where I could supply them from adjacent villages. This was soon arranged by a reconnaissance made by Brigadier-General Wilkinson, accompanied by Major Euan Smith, of the Political Department, who arrived at my camp from Kandahar that afternoon.

19. My cordial thanks are due to Brigadier-General H. C. Wilkinson, commanding the Cavalry Brigade, and to Brigadier-General T. P. Smith, R.H.A., commanding the Artillery, for the prompt and able support which they have at all times rendered me.

Also to Brigadier-General H. H. James, Brigadier-General T. S. Brown, and Brigadier-General G. F. Walker, commanding the three Infantry Brigades, and to Brigadier-General J. H. Henderson, commanding the line of communications, all of whom have rendered valuable aid.

To Lieutenant-Colonel J. G. Lindsay, R.E., Commanding Engineer of the Division, my cordial thanks are due for his prompt and efficient arrangements in organizing his department, fortifying posts, and executing many works of utility in connection with the advance. I beg to thank Lieutenant H. O. Selby, R.E., for his exertions as Superintendent of Army Signalling.

Major T. F. Dowden, R.E., was good enough to detach his assistant, Lieutenant W. H. Chippendall, R.E., to fortify the Gazaband Pass,—a matter of great importance at the moment it was undertaken. For this and other valuable services on the line I tender Major Dowden my best thanks.

* Brigadier-General H. C. Wilkinson, commanding.—D.-B., R.H.A.; 15th Hussars; 2nd Bombay Light Cavalry (dett.); 2nd Sind Horse; No. 2 Mountain Battery; Lieutenant-Colonel Lindsay, Commanding Royal Engineers, with Staff and Sappers and Miners; detts. 16th and 27th Native Infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel F. S. Iredell.