

# **DAMAGE BOOK**

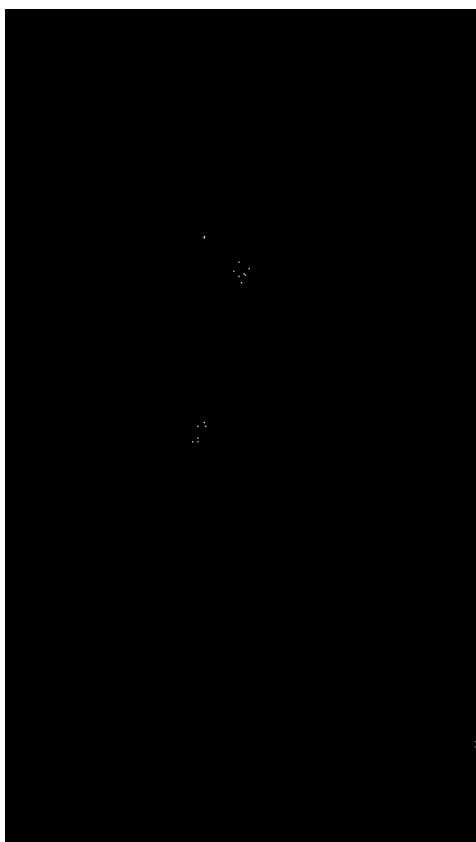
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RICHARD BAIRD SMITH.







# RICHARD BAIRD SMITH

THE LEADER OF THE DELHI HEROES IN 1857.

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE COMMANDING ENGINEER  
DURING THE SIEGE, AND OTHER INTERESTING LETTERS  
HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED.

BY

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NOTE", AND "THE MILITARY HISTORY OF THE  
MADRAS ENGINEERS."

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## P R E F A C E

NEARLY forty years have elapsed since the Siege of Delhi, during the Indian Mutiny in 1857, yet in all that time very scant justice has been done the memory of the man who was, above all others, chiefly instrumental in the capture of that important city, and this in spite of all that has been written by Kaye, Malleson and other historians of the great Mutiny.

It may seem strange that this is so, for the fall of Delhi in those days meant the collapse of the Mutiny, but the fact remains that many attempts have been made to give the credit of this grand success to others to whom the credit was not due.

The reasons for this desire to obscure the great merits of the principal actor are difficult to understand—but that the desire existed there can, I think, be no question. Any unprejudiced person reading the accounts written by Kaye, Malleson and other historians could, I think, come to only one conclusion, viz., that the one man to whom the fall of Delhi was chiefly due was Colonel Richard Baird Smith. Yet we find that much has been written ignoring his great services and attributing his success to others who, as principals, had but little to do with it.

It now seems necessary that the matter should be placed before the public properly, and that history should give honour where it is justly due.

Two and half years ago I published a work on "Addiscombe: Its Heroes and Men of Note", in which I gave brief memoirs of some of the most distinguished men who passed through that college, and at pages 461 to 470 will be found one of Colonel Richard Baird Smith, C.B., A.D.C. to the Queen.

In this I related as shortly as possible his brilliant services at Delhi, remarked on the want of support from General Wilson, and then said, "It seems clear that the man to whom the Capture of Delhi was mostly due was without a doubt, Baird Smith."—I consulted many works on the Indian Mutiny, including Kaye and Malleeson, and had the further advantage of seeing the private papers of Colonel Baird Smith, and I consider that I was amply justified in my strictures on Wilson, and in my eulogy of Baird Smith.

Knowing what had been written by the "Times" Special Correspondent and others, I was hardly surprised at receiving nearly two years ago, a letter from a distinguished officer who held an important position at the Siege, calling in question my statements regarding General Wilson and Colonel Baird Smith, and stating there were grave errors in my book injurious to others, and asking for my authorities. He stated at the same time that before long he hoped to publish an account of the Siege. I at once replied giving him the information he desired. It was clear from his letter that his view was directly adverse to the one I had published, and I resolved to await the publication of his work. Nearly two years have elapsed, but his book has not yet appeared.

The time has now surely arrived when the matter should be definitely settled once for all, as to whom the chief merit of capturing Delhi should be adjudged.

Now to whom are my remarks injurious? I am not told. I can at present only guess. I presume **that**

one of them is Sir Archdale Wilson, and that another might possibly be Sir Alex. Taylor.

I cannot think of any other to whom allusion may be intended, unless it is Lord Lawrence, who did grand service in sending the necessary reinforcements, without which it would have been impossible to take Delhi; but nothing that I have said or can say will injure him.

There were, of course, many men who did splendid service at the Siege, and without whose help it would have been impossible to take Delhi, but this in no way weakens my assertion that the foremost man in the Siege was Baird Smith.

Amongst the foremost may be mentioned Nicholson, Chamberlain, Charles Reid, James Brind and other Artillery officers,—Alexander Taylor and other Engineers,—Sir Hope Grant with his Cavalry and Horse Artillery, and the gallant Hodson, etc.; but from the day that Baird Smith joined, to the day he left (3rd July to 23rd Sept.) "Not a single vital act was done but under my orders and on my responsibility, and but for my resolute determination, humanly speaking there would have been no siege of Delhi at all; and even that assault, which gave value by its means to all the exertions that were made, would have ended in deplorable disaster had I not withstood with effect the desire of General Wilson to withdraw the troops from the city on the failure of Brigadier Campbells column." \*

These papers will, I think, show that General Wilson was hardly equal to the heavy task imposed on him, and that without such a man as Baird Smith insisting on his doing what was right in a resolute manner, General Wilson would have failed to capture Delhi.

H. M. V.

I Colonel Baird Smith's letter to his wife in 1859-60.



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# RICHARD BAIRD SMITH

## *PART I*

### CHAPTER I.

BEFORE taking up Colonel Baird Smith's great services at the Siege of Delhi, it will be useful to sketch briefly his career previously, as it will serve to show how eminently qualified he was for the position of Commanding Engineer, owing to his great talents and experience.

He was born on 31st December, 1818, entered Addiscombe in February, 1835, and passing out at the head of the College, taking 1st Prizes in Mathematics and Latin, obtained his Commission, 9th December, 1836. He was posted to the Madras Engineers, and arrived at Madras, 6th July, 1838. He only, however, remained there about a year, for in August, 1839, he was transferred to the Bengal Engineers. He was first employed in removing the wreck of the "Equitable" from the Hooghly, when his work was reported to be "very creditable to his professional service and skill."

In August, 1840, he was appointed to the Dooab Canals; and for the next 16 years he served in the Irrigation Dept., in the N. W. Provinces.

During this period he was twice called away from his civil duties for active service in the first and second Sikh wars; while from 1850 to 1852 he went

on leave to Europe. In the first Sikh War he reached camp a few days after the Battle of Ferozeshah, was attached to Sir Harry Smith's force on his diversion towards Loodiana, and was with him at the Battles of Buddiwal and Aliwal, where the aid he gave was cordially acknowledged in Sir Harry Smith's celebrated despatch, and often afterwards in private correspondence. Baird Smith was again mentioned with distinction at the Battle of Sobraon.

At the beginning of the Punjab Campaign, in 1848-49, Baird Smith joined the Head Quarters at Ferozepore, and marched to Lahore. He was detached to join Brigadier Colin Campbell, who was in advance, watching the movements of Shere Sing on the Chenab, and was with him in the affair of Ramnuggur.

He was then detached, under Sir Joseph Thackwell, on the flank movement by which the Chenab was crossed at Wazirabad, 25 miles to the east.

He conducted the passage of the force across that river on 1st and 2nd December, 1848. The operation commenced at 6 p.m. on 1st, and was completed by noon on the 2nd, the passage occupying only 18 hours. The force consisted of 28 Guns, 4 Regiments of Cavalry, 7 Regiments of Infantry with Baggage and Commissariat Trains.

This must be considered to have been highly satisfactory, as two-thirds of the work was done during the night, with only a few hours' previous preparation.

Baird Smith took part in the action at Sadoolapore on 3rd, and was also present at the Battles of Chillianwallah and Goojerat, and in the official reports of all these actions was honourably mentioned.

Early in 1850 he went to Europe, and while there undertook a mission to examine the Irrigation and Colmatage works of Italy, in Lombardy and Tuscany.

The result of this journey, which lasted 5 months, was a work on Italian Irrigation in two volumes, which

## OUTBREAK OF THE INDIAN MUTINY

passed through two editions, the second being published in 1855.

King Victor Emmanuel, to show Capt. Baird Smith "the esteem in which he holds his person, and the value he places on his uncommon talents," desired to decorate him with the order of Knight of St. Maurice and St. Lazarus. Owing to the rules in force, Captain Baird Smith was not permitted to accept the decoration.

On his return to India at the close of 1852 he visited the great Irrigation works at Madras, and afterwards wrote a work on them, entitled "The Cauvery, Kistna, and Godavery."

For the next three years he was employed on the Ganges Canal; and in 1856 he was appointed Director General of the Works, and Superintendent of the Canals, N. W. Provinces.

Hence it was that at the outbreak of the Mutiny in May, 1857, he was stationed at Roorkee, some 60 miles from Meerut.

It was on Sunday, 10th May, 1857, that the Mutiny broke out at Meerut, but it was not till daybreak on the 12th that Baird Smith received the first intimation of it, when he learnt that Major Fraser, Commandant of Sappers, had received an express from the General at Meerut, ordering him to proceed by forced marches, with his regiment to that place, as the native regiments were in open revolt, and had left cantonments with their arms.

Baird Smith immediately suggested the Ganges Canal instead of forced marches, and as Fraser at once agreed to this, Baird Smith within six hours had boats ready equal to the transport of 1,000 men.

Just as they were starting another express came to say that two companies were to be left for the defence of Roorkee, so only about 500 left in the boats the same afternoon, and got to Meerut, 60 miles off, in about 24 hours.

The same morning Baird Smith sent off an express to the Commandant of the Goorkhas at Deyrah, some

40 miles distant, to tell him he thought his Corps would be ordered down, and begged him to march on Roorkee, on the Ganges Canal, where he would have another fleet of boats ready for him in a day or two. Baird Smith thought that the Sappers at Roorkee might fancy that the march of the Sirmoor Battalion on Roorkee was a hostile movement against them, so he requested Major Reid, the Commandant, to march straight to the canal, and embark in the boats without entering Roorkee.

This was accordingly done; and Reid "considered that this forethought was the means of saving the place and the lives of the ladies and children." This occurred after the mutiny of the Sappers at Meerut, when they shot Major Fraser, the Commandant, and attempted to shoot Maunsell, the Adjutant.

From the day the Sappers left Roorkee, Baird Smith, with his usual vigour and promptitude, began to provide for the security of the community at Roorkee, and at once determined that the workshops were to be the citadel. Here he ordered the Superintendent to quietly equip three guns, and planned the defensive works that would have to be executed.

He also organised an Intelligence and Commissariat Dept., so that when the time came to occupy the place, all preliminary arrangements had been made.

On the 16th the workshops were occupied, and the women and children, then exceeding 100 in number, were moved into the workshops' rooms, and all decently accommodated.

The males were about the same in number, but chiefly clerks, and unaccustomed to arms. They had, however, about 50 trained soldiers and 8 or 10 good officers, and Baird Smith's chief reliance was on them.

However, such as the force was, it was organised into guards, placed under Commandants, and formed into a manageable body; and nothing was omitted or

neglected that could add to the defence of the place. The two companies of Sappers proved an embarrassment rather than a source of strength. They were all natives; there was reason to know that the prevailing spirit of disaffection had in some measure tainted them, and this caused much uneasiness regarding them.

Baird Smith put them under command of two officers well known to them, spoke himself to the best men among them, and gave over to their charge the care of all the Thomason College buildings.

Thus matters continued till the 18th : on the afternoon of which day it was reported that extreme excitement prevailed among the men of the Sappers,—that some Sepoys of the Corps had come in from Meerut, and reported that the regiment had mutinied there, killed poor Fraser, and had then been immediately attacked by the Europeans, and destroyed by grape from the guns. One company had marched the night before with the Engineer park to join the Commander in Chief, and the detachment at Roorkee was thus reduced to about 200 men.

At the time, Baird Smith believed the report to be a device of the enemy, as he had received letters of 16th from Meerut which mentioned nothing of the catastrophe. These letters he sent to the cantonments, asked the officers to explain them to their men, and to keep them quiet.

The day was, however, one of great anxiety, as a struggle between our small force and 200 trained and educated soldiers like the Sappers, was rather a serious contingency to anticipate.

All sorts of wild rumours were flying about, and to add to Baird Smith's personal anxieties the Doctor came to tell him that his wife was taken ill, and he had her in a woman's life and death struggle; while all around him was the heaving and agitation natural to such a time of crisis.

That evening it was reported that the Company which had marched the previous day, had been overtaken by the men from Meerut, had mutinied on the spot, refused to move forward, and insisted on returning to Roorkee to rejoin their comrades. It was added that they were resolved to attack us, burn Roorkee, and kill every European in it. Of this, however, Baird Smith had comforting doubts when he learnt that the men were accompanied by their European officers, not one of whom had been injured or insulted. Baird Smith sent out a party to observe the movements of the Company, and he had settled in his own mind that if they meant mischief they would march on the Roorkee Bazaar; if not, by a road that led direct to their own Lines.

The relief to Baird Smith's mind when he heard from his scouts that the Company was moving by the latter may easily be imagined, and he felt pretty certain that no collision was contemplated.

Baird Smith was on foot the whole night, the garrison kept to its arms, and everybody ready for a stiff struggle, if struggle there was to be.

At midnight the officers of the Sapper detachment came over to say that their men had refused to obey them any longer, and had sent them away not only without injury, but with courtesy and kindly personal feelings, escorting them out of cantonments, and protecting them against the few bad characters who were disposed to injure them. About an hour later, the officers of the returned Company reported themselves to Baird Smith, and it was evident that the Roorkee Mutiny was to be distinguished honourably from those which had preceded it, by the absence of all atrocity towards the Europeans, as the whole body, consisting of 6 officers, 6 sergeants, 6 women and 5 children, were now all safe within the workshop walls. About 3 a.m, Baird Smith heard that the Sappers were in mortal terror of his attacking them at daybreak with

the guns, and were bolting as fast as they could in confusion.

At daybreak Baird Smith sent out a strong body of Europeans, under Lieutenant Maclagan (afterwards General Maclagan, brother of the Archbishop of York), to clear the Lines, and when they reached them they found them tenanted by about 40 Sappers only, out of 300, and these declared they had no other wish than to serve the Government faithfully; the rest were clean gone, some across the Ganges, others to Delhi, but near the workshops they came no more; and so the darkest cloud that had hung over Roorkee passed away without one flash of forked lighting.

In the course of the 19th, authentic news was received of the dispersion of the Corps at Meerut, of Eraser's death, and the safety of the other officers of the Corps.

The country round Roorkee was in utter confusion—bands of robbers were murdering and plundering defenceless people. Government practically ceased in the land; and up to the end of May, Baird Smith heard not a single word from the Lieutenant-Governor.

At the end of May, a British force was supposed to be marching on Delhi, but the outbreak occurred on the 10th May, and four weeks elapsed before Delhi saw any British colours or heard British guns.

The immunity of Roorkee from the horrors which befell other places was due to the admirable and prompt measures taken by Baird Smith.

To show the strong heart and buoyant disposition of Baird Smith it will be useful to add an extract from a letter written by him to a friend in England, on 30th May:—"As to the Empire it will be all the stronger after this storm, and I have never had a moment's fear for it. It is not five or six thousand mutineer mercenaries, or ten times the number that will change the destiny of England in India; and though we small fragments of the great machine may fall at

our posts, there is that vitality in the English people that will bound stronger against misfortunes, and build up the damaged fabric anew.

"At this place we are all in high heart and spirits. We are respected and somewhat feared. Plunderers avoid us, because they know they will be attacked. We have confidence growing round us daily, our bazaar is full, and the people contented."

After passing some six weeks in this manner, and by his consummate management preventing at Roorkee the disasters which occurred elsewhere, Baird Smith was unexpectedly summoned to Delhi to take command of the Engineer Brigade of the army at that place.

On the 19th June Lieutenant Norman, Assistant Adjutant-General, wrote a letter to Baird Smith (which he did not receive till the 25th), informing him that the officer originally appointed Chief Engineer had broken down, that at that date the Engineer Department was altogether without a head, and that Baird Smith had been named to General Reed as eminently qualified for the direction of the Engineering duties. Time was considered so precious that it was thought desirable Baird Smith should start without waiting to hear again.

At the time Baird Smith received this summons the army had been before Delhi for seventeen days.

His first act was to collect together a large park of stores, and to organise a body of six hundred pioneers to serve at the siege.

On the 27th of June he was on his way, and joined on July 3rd, at 3 a.m., after a most laborious journey during the wet season, with swollen rivers to ferry across and only one boat available. On the day he crossed the Jumna he travelled 27 miles, and they were from 4 a.m. to 12 at night doing that distance.

On the night of July 1st Baird Smith and Captain Robertson had just completed a weary march of 25

miles, and had reached a dak bungalow at 2 a.m., when an express reached him, with a **note** from **the** Brigade-Major of Engineers to say that an assault was contemplated at dawn on the 3rd, and that all were anxious for him to be present.

As Baird Smith had been on horseback for seven hours, he went to bed for a few hours, then starting, he scrambled on, sometimes getting a fresh horse, sometimes an elephant, and for one stage the Rajah of Jheend's coach and four!

By three a.m. on the 3rd they accomplished the fifty-four miles, and arrived greatly worn out, but fully expecting to be plunged into the excitement of an assault, and quite ready to forget all the previous fag.

However, on arrival he found that, as had happened repeatedly before, the General's heart failed him at the eleventh hour, the risks were held to be too great, and the project was abandoned—and so Baird Smith entered on his functions as Chief Engineer.

It will be as well now to give an idea of the position of the army at Delhi, and the various movements which had led up to that situation. It will be remembered that the outbreak at Meerut took place on 10th May, when great atrocities were perpetrated, notwithstanding the fact that there were two thousand English soldiers in cantonment. "This was owing to General Hewitt's incapacity," and his supineness enabled the mutineers to get off to Delhi unscathed. "But for this the Mutiny<sup>1</sup> might have been stamped out in the blood of the mutineers." "Not a single effort was made to arrest their progress." "In truth our military authorities were paralysed. No one knew what was best to do, and nothing was accordingly done."<sup>2</sup>

"This was one of those rare occasions when it is right for a senior officer to be set on one side by

1 Dewe" White, "Indian Mutiny," page 15.

2 Rev. J. Rotton's "Siege of Delhi," page 6.

his junior." " Had Brigadier Wilson assumed his responsibility and acted with vigour he would have added to his fame." <sup>1</sup> But as he did nothing it is most clear that he had a great dread of taking responsibility, and this detracts greatly from his subsequent services.

General Anson left Umballa with a force against Delhi on the 25th May, and on the 26th was at Kurnal, stricken by cholera. The next day he died, and the command devolved on Sir Henry Barnard. Barnard resolved not to wait for the siege train which was coming from Phillour, but to press on and form a junction with the force from Meerut, under Wilson.

The column from Meerut did not march till the night of the 27th, and on the 30th Wilson reached Ghazi-ood-deen Nuggur, near the Hindun, where the enemy was met. They were defeated, and fled to Delhi; but being reviled for their failure, and reinforced, they marched back to the Hindun on the 31st, and attacked Wilson's force with artillery. Wilson's troops drove the enemy from their position, but they did not fly. They fell back in orderly array. Our troops were so exhausted by the heat that they could not pursue, and the mutineers made good their retreat to Delhi, but they had twice been beaten by inferior numbers in fair fight.

On June 1st the Goorkhas, under Major Charles Reid, five hundred strong, marched into camp. Meanwhile Barnard's force had marched down to Alipore, 12 miles from Delhi, arrived there on June 5th, and then awaited the Meerut troops. Wilson halted for orders, received them on the 4th, resumed his march the same night, and in the early morning of the 6th crossed the Jumna at Baghput. On the 6th, also, the siege train arrived. It had been ordered on May 17th—the gates of the fort at Phillour were opened on the 24th, so that it had been thirteen days on its way. On the 7th June the Meerut

<sup>1</sup> Dewe White, page 16.

## ARMY REACHES THE RIDGE AT DELHI 11

contingent marched into Alipore, and at 1 a.m. next morning the combined forces commenced the march on Delhi. Then followed the Battle of Badli-ka-Serai. After a strongly contested action the enemy were driven back. Barnard pushed on, drove the enemy within the walls of Delhi, and secured the finest possible base for our future operations against the city, the far-famed "Ridge."

During the first three weeks of the so-called Siege, the field force was engaged in repelling the enemy's sorties, usually three or four in each week; and as the Delhi field force did not muster more than 3,800 men, and as the revolted Sepoys in the city at this time numbered fully 12,000, the troops had not much leisure to strengthen their position.

However, various batteries were constructed to strengthen the position, and entrenchments made to make our posts as secure as circumstances would allow, but no definite plan of attack was decided on for some time. Three bridges over the Nujuffghur Jheel drain were destroyed, and the security of our rear thereby increased.

On the 28th June the Bhagput bridge was burnt by the Jheend force, and the canal water was turned off from the city by cutting through the high bank of the canal near the Poolchudder aqueduct, as it was reported that the rebels were trying to fill the fort ditch with water from the canal.

During this time the Commander was several times urged to assault the city, but feared to do so, considering his force unequal to the task. On the 29th the Engineer Brigade was strengthened by the arrival of Captain Taylor, and Major Laughton was recalled to the Punjab; and on July 3rd, as previously told, Lieutenant-Colonel Baird Smith arrived to take up the post of Chief Engineer, with Captain Taylor as his second in command.

## CHAPTER II.

IT is evident that Baird Smith at one time intended writing a narrative of the Siege, but for some unexplained reason he gave up the idea. This may possibly have been due to other important duties which left him little leisure for writing such a history, but it is also likely that he abandoned his intention because he felt that it would not be desirable, so shortly after the Siege, to tell the whole truth; and it was certainly foreign to his nature to discuss any matter publicly unless he was free to relate events with truth and justice.

Fortunately, we have fragments of his intended history : the first is a narrative of the operations of the Engineer Brigade, preliminary to the final attack of Delhi, a great deal of which is to be found in Colonel Thackeray's "Two Indian Campaigns."

The second is the commencement of a complete history of the outbreak at Meerut and the operations which led to the capture of the position on the 'Ridge'; but this account abruptly ends the day after the 'Ridge' was occupied. It is, however, a paper of very considerable interest and merit, and it is sad to think that he should have passed away without completing it.

He first deals with the subject of Regular and Irregular Sieges; he then considers our military position at the moment of the Great Mutiny; after this he

## COUNTRY AROUND AND IN DELHI

discusses the views and opinions of General Anson as well as the conduct of affairs at Meerut. The next point to which he addresses himself is how the Mutineers were attracted to various points, and then treats of the numbers of the Mutineers who assembled at Delhi. He arrives at the conclusion that the effective strength of the garrison of Delhi at its highest, mustered 20,000 regular troops and 10,000 to 15,000 undisciplined irregulars, all fully armed, and well provided with ammunition and everything that they required.

To oppose them he estimates that at first we had but 600 sabres, 3,400 bayonets and 24 field guns—and that our force was dependent for all their munitions of war on the remote magazines of Phillour and Ferozepore, distant respectively 220 and 280 miles from Delhi.

He then relates the advance of General Anson to Kurnal, and that officer's death.

General Wilson advances to Ghazi-ood-deen Nuggur, defeats the enemy on two successive days—then joins General Sir Henry Barnard; and, finally, follows the advance on Delhi, and the Battle of Badle-ka-Serai, ending in the capture of the 'Ridge.'

It is proposed here to give an extract from this paper which affords a graphic description of the topography of the country in and around Delhi. This will enable readers to fully understand the difficulties with which Baird Smith had to grapple when he came to Delhi, and it will also explain how favourable in some respects was the position on the 'Ridge.'

### ACCOUNT OF COUNTRY AROUND AND IN DELHI BY COLONEL BAIRD SMITH.

" The army having been thus permanently established in front of Delhi—its camp on the parade-ground, out

of range of the enemy's fire, and its advanced posts on **the** Ridge, it is now a convenient time to give some descriptive details of the topography of the country in which future operations were to be carried on, and of the character of the works on which the garrison relied for its defence.

"As already mentioned the Punjaub had become necessarily the base of these operations. The magazines of supply for all munitions of war were at Phillour and Ferozepore, distant from Delhi respectively about 220 and 280 miles. The Grand Trunk Road, metalled and bridged, extended as far as Kurnal, distant about 70 miles. Beyond Kurnal to Amballa the road was in progress, but altogether incomplete. No bridges spanned the numerous streams that carried the drainage waters of the Lower Himalayas across the line. These rivers which, during the cold and hot seasons, are broad, dry, heavy beds of deep sand, fill as with a sudden flash during the rainy season from June to the end of September, and pour down then from the mountains enormous volumes of water in very brief periods of time. While the floods prevail no passage is possible across the larger streams; but happily the rapid slopes of the country carry off the waters with great rapidity, and the obstruction to movement rarely lasts longer at its longest than twenty-four hours. Beyond Amballa, towards Ferozepore and Phillour, the roads are of the roughest, but still perfectly practicable at all seasons, though during the rains they are sometimes obstructive, and always laborious for heavy carriages, such as those of guns or ammunition waggons. It may be held that from fifteen to twenty days were necessary for the transport of supplies from these points to the camp before Delhi.

"The main approaches in the immediate vicinity of the city are two in number; *first*, the Grand Trunk

Road which, as already noted, does not pass through the military station, but keeping well to the right, winds through a succession of dense gardens and suburbs and ancient buildings till it enters the city itself through the Cabul Gate, and occupying thereafter a section of the great central street, named the Chandnee Chowk, it passes under the walls of the Imperial Palace, and issues again through the Calcutta Gate on to the Causeway that carries it to the Bridge of Boats across the Jumna. *Second*, the Cantonment Road which, diverging from the Grand Trunk line, near a small village called Azadpoor, about three or four miles from the camp, passes through the station, and crossing the Ridge, enters the city by the Cashmere Gate. There are numerous minor roads connecting the cantonment and city, but they are unimportant in a military sense, and need not detain us here. The two main lines referred to, were virtually in possession of the English army to within long range of the enemy's guns on the city walls.

"The main lines of road commanded by the Mutineers were, *first*, the Grand Trunk Road from the city, across the river, to the eastward and southward; and from the rich country through which it passed on the left bank of the Jumna, they drew abundant and unfailing supplies of provisions of all kinds, and occasionally of money, communicating at the same time without let or hindrance with all who sympathised with their cause in the districts east of the river. *Second*, the road towards Muttra and Agra, on the right-bank of the river, which, passing out of the city by the Delhi Gate, opened to the garrison the whole of the resources of the tract west of the river. And *third*, the line of road towards Rohtuk, which, though liable to be disputed from its vicinity to the English camp, was yet, so far as drawing supplies

from the districts was concerned, virtually in possession of the enemy.

"These three lines formed the main communications of the garrison with the country outside the walls; two were in its absolute and undisputed possession, the third was only precarious when used as a means of threatening the right flank of the British position. In addition to the roads in the vicinity of the city, that exercised a material influence on the nature and progress of the operations, there were also canals that were of strategic value, and whose bearings must be briefly explained.

"Away down in Central India, some four or five hundred miles to the southward of Delhi, there is found a complicated knot of mountain lands, formed by the intersection of two main ranges of hills, one of which traverses the Peninsula from west to east under the local name of the Vindhya, while the other runs northward, and is known to geographers as the Aravalli Mountains. It is with the latter only we are concerned here. Separating the tableland of Central India and the Valley of the Ganges from the Great Desert and the Basin of the Lower Indus with its tributaries, the Aravalli, after traversing nearly five degrees of latitude, finally disappears in the immediate vicinity of Delhi itself. To the south-westward of the city they shew themselves as low desolate-looking hills covered with scanty herbage and a few stunted trees, but inclosing among them, here and there, low-lying lands of considerable fertility, well wooded and planted with thriving villages. The waters shed from the hill sides, to the westward especially, have no very definite or effective lines of escape, and as a consequence of this, large gatherings of them occur in basin-shaped hollows, forming what are locally called Jheels. Among these, the largest and most important is the Nudjuffghur Jheel, so often alluded to in the

narratives of the Siege operations. This lake occupies one of the trough-like valleys between the two ranges of the Aravalli, and commencing only two or three miles from Delhi, runs south-westerly for nearly 30 miles, generally with a width ranging from half a mile to a mile, excepting at its further extremity, where it opens out into a broad expanse of water fully three miles in diameter. On its left bank it throws out two long narrow branches, about 8 and 12 miles in length and half a mile or so in breadth; the entire area of the lake under ordinary circumstances may be roughly taken at 25 square miles. By one of those remarkable coincidences, of which so many occurred to favour the English cause, as to suggest the idea of a special Providence in them, the rains of the year preceding the Mutiny had been of unprecedented magnitude, and the whole basin had been gorged with water, the area covered exceeding a hundred square miles. For many years past the drainage of this great sheet of water had been an object of anxious solicitude to the government, and extensive works had been executed for the purpose. The main Regulating Bridge carried the Rohtuk Road previously referred to, across the Jheel at a point about 4 miles from Delhi, and from this point a broad canal was carried along the rear of the British camp to the River Jumna. From the enormous accumulation of water in the Jheel during 1856, this canal, ordinarily dry during the hot season, was filled with a deep rapid stream of pure and wholesome water during the whole period of the Siege. It is scarcely possible to over-estimate the value of such a provision both to the health and comfort of the troops, for without it, the river, which was two miles distant, or the wells in cantonments, all brackish and bad, must have been the sole sources of water supply for man and beast; sanitary arrangements were facilitated, good drainage secured, abundant means of ablution

and healthy aquatic exercise were provided, and the Jheel Canal was not merely a good defensible line for military operations, but a precious addition to the comfort and salubrity of the camp. Westward of the Rohtuk Road Bridge several local lines of road were carried across the Jheel by bridges, distant 4 or 5 miles from each other, to which reference will have to be made occasionally hereafter.

"This Jheel Canal was one of the canals ultimately linked with the siege operations. The other was the Western Jumna Canal, which, in the vicinity of camp, intersected the Jheel Canal just at right angles, and flowing past the right flank of the position, entered the city by a culvert under the walls, near the Cabul Gate, and sub-dividing itself, turned one branch into the great Chandnee Chowk, supplying the Ellenborough Tank; while the other and main one traversed the King's Garden, and passing on by the walls of the palace, finally fell into the Jumna, close to the Negumbode Gate of the city. The whole course of this canal, from the vicinity of the Cabul Gate to three or four miles to the north-westward of the city, was flanked on both sides by dense masses of garden grounds thickly covered with fruit trees of all kinds, and underwood of the most luxuriant growth. The land was wet and swampy, and innumerable walls and ruins of old buildings traversing it in every direction, gave it defensive capabilities of a very high order, especially by irregular troops, who, behind such cover, scarcely felt their want of discipline or capacity to act in masses.

"Along the line of the Grand Trunk Road, and through the gorge of the Ridge by which both that road and the Western Jumna Canal were carried across the rocky barren country, there clustered a succession of village suburbs bearing the familiar names of Telewala, Trevelyan Gunge (a memorial of the present<sup>1</sup>

1 Sir Chas Trevelyan, 1859.

Governor of Madras), Pahareepore, Kissen Gunge, and Subzee Mundee. Of these, all, excepting the last, may be regarded as the enemy's ground, for though he was often driven temporarily from them, no attempt was made by the English force to hold them permanently. They were all strong positions, and Kissen Gunge pre-eminently so, from its massive masonry enclosures and commanding site on the slope of the right flank of the gorge.

"The belt of garden ground, after passing the flank of the English encampment, bent round to the northward and ran along the rear of the position occupying the rising land parallel to the Jheel Canal, and was abruptly terminated by a sudden descent into the marshy and malarious valley of the Jumna. Thus the British position was partially set, as it were, in a rudely semicircular framework of enclosure ground, on which the rank vegetation had degenerated into dense jungle, and where the different arms of the force were most cruelly impeded by a swampy soil, and an interminable succession of strong walls, or tenable ruins.

"The entire front of the position was efficiently covered by the Ridge, along the crest of which several large buildings were found well suited for occupation as permanent posts. The Ridge is formed of a hard compact semi-crystalline quartz rock, disposed in layers, and presenting occasional vertical cliffs on the city side. Its utmost height above the level of the site of the city does not exceed 80 or 90 feet, and its whole aspect is bare and rugged, save where artificial means have been employed to create a soil, and to rear on it some small flowering shrubs and fruit trees. No locality could well be less adapted for the construction of defensive works, for it is only by toilsomely scraping together the earthy gravel formed by the disintegration of the rocks, in occasional hollows that any earth can

be obtained, and such as is thus procured is so devoid of tenacity, and so full of fragments of rock as to be both difficult to work with and dangerous to the occupants of the works.

"Incomparably the most important position on the Ridge was known as Hindoo Rao's House. This consisted of a large modern building with many out-offices, forming the establishment of Maharaja Hindoo Rao, an old Mahratta nobleman closely allied to the reigning family at Gwalior, but for political reasons a resident of Delhi during many years. The old man was a well-known member of the local society, a keen sportsman, a liberal and hospitable gentleman, of frank bluff manners and genial temperament. He had built and generally fitted up his house after the manner of an English mansion, and it formed a roomy and convenient quarter for the troops. As he had died some time before the Mutiny, the establishment had been broken up, and the place was found empty. Round the house a small garden had been laboriously formed with earth brought from the plains below the Ridge, and excellent roads connected the point with the encampment, the city, and the various posts to the left.

"Hindoo Rao's picquet formed the extreme right of the position, and moving along the Ridge to the left, the next important point was 'The Observatory,' an ancient astronomical building of Hindoo architecture, which furnished cover within its dreary-looking walls for a considerable post. Still farther to the left was 'the Mosque,' an old and massive Pathan structure, of that stern style so characteristic of these fierce invaders, and so common among the Cyclopean ruins of those many cities, the wasted and abandoned forerunners of Delhi. The last of the posts on the Ridge was the Flag-staff Picquet, as it was called, from the **men being** sheltered in that Flag-staff Tower, **where**

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so many of the fugitives from Delhi tasted the bitterness of death on the morning of their flight, and from whose summit they watched, with the hopelessness of despair, the signs of wild tumult within the city walls, and of wavering fidelity in the sullen ranks of the Sepoys around them. The prolongation of the Ridge to the river was too much retired or thrown back from the city to require occupation, or to be exposed to attack, and the four posts described were sufficient to insure security to the entire front. The Ridge finally disappeared under the waters of the Jumna, at a distance of about two miles from the Flag-staff Tower. Past each of the important posts there ran an excellent road, macadamized with the red gravel from the Ridge, and connecting the cantonment with the residences of the civil officers and the city.

"These residences were scattered irregularly over the broad triangular plain that lies between the city, the Jumna, and the Ridge. They were separated from each other here and there, by one or more of the many ravines that carried the drainage water of the hilly tract towards the Jumna. On the extreme left of the plain, overhanging the river, stood the mansion of Sir Thomas Metcalfe, buried amid trees, and surrounded by an extensive enclosed park; Its stables and a large cow-house lying on the city side of the house, formed good and strong posts, ultimately occupied by detachments from the force; while a lofty mound in rear of them supplied an excellent position for the supports to both the advanced picquets. A tangled mass of ravines overgrown with brushwood and bordered by trees of considerable size, intersected the whole of the ground, and gave many covered ways of approach intangible by the enemy's fire.

"Beyond the Metcalfe Garden, and within 300 or 400 yards of the city walls, a summer palace of the Em-

perors, with lofty gateways, cool cloisters and arcades open towards the river, was placed, and known by the name of the Koodsia Bagh. Its interior was in ruins, but sufficient indications of its design and structure remained to shew it to have been one of the rich examples of that florid architecture of the later Moguls of which Delhi presents so many and beautiful illustrations. The broad space within the walls was overgrown with orange trees, limes, rose bushes and other shrubs, all growing in the wildest luxuriance.

"Between the Koodsia Bagh and the city walls, and not more than 150 or 160 yards from the latter, stood the Custom House, a large modern English building with the usual suites of out-offices attached to it, and surrounded by trees and garden shrubs. So close to the walls was it that, in looking at them from the front windows of the House, they seemed almost to overhang the place, and this very close proximity is a point to be remembered for future reference.

"The only other locality in this neighbourhood that need be specially mentioned is Ludlow Castle, the residence of the late Mr. Simon Fraser, the representative of the Government at Delhi, who was barbarously murdered in the palace on the first outbreak of the Mutiny. The house occupied the crest of a ridge sloping down towards the Cashmere Gate front of the city, and along the base of which ran the dry bed of a drainage channel, which extended the whole way from the river near the Koodsia Bagh to the Ridge, wrapping the city round with a natural parallel, and furnishing a well-protected line of communication from the right of the English position to the Jumna, which was of inestimable value.

"The many other houses on the plain were only indirectly connected with the operations, and these, already, it may be feared, very wearisome details, need

not be farther increased on their account. Their shattered aspect, blackened walls and charred roofs shewed that one common fate had befallen all, or nearly all; and many among the officers of the British Force, as they looked on these desolated homes, could remember that they had last seen them lighted up with a joyous hospitality, and brightened by the presence of some of the wise and worthy and beautiful among the victims of the accursed catastrophe. It cannot be matter of surprise to any that warm hearts were hardened, and stern passions roused by memories such as these.

"The general characteristics of the ground to the southward and south-westward of the city were much the same as those already described. But these localities were far out of the range of the movement of the force, and detailed descriptions of them may therefore safely be dispensed with at present. Some few of them will have to be referred to hereafter, when any note-worthy points relating to them can better be described than now.

"From the exterior of the place we now proceed to the interior. The popular aspect of Delhi has been so often described that we need not repeat the tale here. No Indian travellers, from the days of old Tavernier, or Bernier, or Sir James Rose, down to those of Bishop Heber, or Dr. Russell, have failed to exhibit its bazaars, its mosques, its palaces and its people in all the varied colouring and detail of which such picturesque elements were susceptible under the touch of hands eminently skilful in word-painting. To them, therefore, we may leave the external aspects of the city, and concern ourselves solely with its main features as a military position. Among these, the foremost are the Fortifications by which the place is surrounded. These are very nearly seven miles in circuit, of which about two miles form the River Front,

facing to the eastward, and the remaining five miles are distributed in unequal distances between what may be called the Northern, the Western, and the Southern Land Fronts. The Northern Front extends from the Moira or Water Bastion, which is washed at its base by the waters of the Jumna, to the Shah or Moree Bastion, a distance of rather less than one mile; and it was on this Front only that the British Force was ever strong enough to operate. Only one-seventh part, therefore, of the complete enceinte was even partially invested. While on the remaining six-sevenths the garrison had the freest ingress and egress without the possibility of impediment from the besiegers.

"Beyond the Moree Bastion the direction of the walls turned suddenly southward, running thus to the vicinity of the Ajmere Gate, for about a mile and three-quarters, or two miles, and forming the Western Front of the place.

"Trending then round to the eastwards for about an equal distance, the walls form the Southern Front, which terminates in the Wellesley Bastion on the river bank, and the Eastern or Water Front is included between that and the Moira Bastion, from which our circuit commenced.

"On the Land Fronts the Fortifications have the same general features. They consist of bastioned lines in which the bastions, relatively small, are connected by long curtains. The defect of flanking fire in this trace is remedied by the interpolation between the bastions as required, of one or more martello towers for single guns of large calibre on traversing platforms, placed in advance of the curtains, but connected with them by means of drawbridges. With the exception of a crown-work at the Ajmere Gate, there are no outworks to the place on the fronts facing inland. A berm of variable width, ranging from 15 to 25 feet, runs completely round the works, and rises to

a height of 8 feet above the bottom of the ditch. The ditch itself is also continuous on the land fronts, and is from 20 to 30 feet in width and about 20 feet in depth, the counterscarp being an earthen slope much water and weather worn, and by no means difficult of descent. The glacis scarcely merits the name, as it is but a short slope 70 or 80 feet in breadth, springing directly from the crest of the counterscarp, and provided with no special means of obstruction.

"There are no ramparts, but the bastions are connected by a simple wall about 13 feet in thickness at bottom and 8 feet at the springing of the parapet, which is 16 feet above the level of the berm. The parapet, a thin screen of masonry, is only 3 feet in thickness and 8 feet in height, pierced by loopholes for musketry, but affording little or no protection against artillery fire. The capacities of the different bastions are variable, but a fair general idea of them will be given by the statement that they carry from 9 to 12 guns each. When fully armed, the Land Fronts would mount from 120 to 140 guns.

"While considerable care had been taken, and much expense incurred, in rectifying the defects of the ancient works on the land side, those on the River Front continued to be of the utmost simplicity. Covered by the stream, they were secure against any regular attack; and against a coup-de-main, they were guarded by their height of about 40 feet, and by projecting palisades, which would have made escalade both difficult and dangerous. The general aspect of the front is, however, simply that of a long line of masonry wall broken by projections here and there, by which an imperfect flanking fire could be given; but of systematic defences there are none.

"About the middle of the Water Front there stands the Imperial Palace, a noble mass of building of truly

beautiful design, vast magnitude and exquisite detail. Its capabilities of resistance, however, against any serious attack are but feeble, for its defences, like those of the city, consist essentially of a lofty wail and a deep ditch, with most imperfect arrangements for flanking, or even direct fire, and with dead ground at almost every point of its enceinte: its military value was therefore of the most limited kind. Its interior was a mass of buildings of all sorts, ranging from miserable mud huts to the gorgeous dwellings of the Imperial family, traversed by narrow lanes, and having a few open spots laid out in garden ground. The place teemed with human beings: within its precincts, covering little more than an eighth of a square mile, about seven thousand souls are said to have been ordinarily concentrated, all in various forms and degrees the dependents of the nominal King. From the north-east face of the Palace projected the ancient Pathan fort of Selimgurh, a rude and massive structure, separated from the main buildings by a narrow branch of the Jumna, across which communication was maintained by a masonry bridge. This outwork was occupied in force by the garrison, and its northern face was armed with ten or twelve heavy guns which, commanding the ground along the river bank, from the immediate vicinity of the walls to the posts within the Metcalfe Park, played an important part in the defence of the place.

"Within the city the most noteworthy point was the distribution of the open spaces on which troops could act with comparative freedom, and within which they could be maintained in masses of respectable strength. By far the most important of these was at the north-east angle of the place, bounded on one side by part of the Northern, and on the other side by part of the Water, Front, and including within its limits the Church, the College, the Arsenal, Skinner's

House, and other minor points that must be referred to hereafter. It was entered by the Cashmere Gate, and it forms the only spot on the front of attack where an orderly formation of a considerable force was practicable.

"About a quarter of a mile in advance of this first space lay a group of gardens belonging to the King and to the estates of the Begum Sumroo. These were mainly commanded by the lofty houses that bordered them, and the ground was encumbered by large trees and an undergrowth of shrubs. Still, as contrasted with the general aspect of the town, these gardens were free and open, and were undoubtedly points of much importance on military considerations.

"The only other open space was situated between the southern face of the Palace and the Delhi Gate of the city. In former days, when the English garrison was cantoned within the walls of the place, this ground was occupied by the lines of the men and the residences of the officers, and bore the name of Durriagunj, or the river quarter; its position, however, removed it from the influence of the general operations, and it was therefore of less importance than the others.

"The highest point in the interior of the city was occupied by the great Mahomedan Cathedral, the Jumma Musjid, one of the noblest of the many noble structures of which Delhi can boast. This magnificent mass, which, with its fellows, drew from Bishop Heber the graphic remark that the later Moguls 'designed like giants and finished like jewellers,' stands on an out-cropping rocky foundation, and towers over the adjoining buildings, with a complete command. The possession of such a point was very important, and its capabilities, both for resistance and aggression against the city, were considerable.

"Beneath the walls a narrow roadway maintained an imperfect communication, but as its width rarely exceeded twenty or thirty feet, while at every point

it was overhung by high and strong houses, no space was afforded on which troops could form, and even free passage was difficult. This state of things obtained on the entire land Fronts, from the Wellesley Bastion to the vicinity of the Cashmere Gate, and necessarily influenced greatly the ulterior operations of the Siege.

" All the main streets of Delhi, with the exception of the Chandnee Chowk, are either extremely tortuous or very narrow. Even the Chandnee Chowk is not entirely straight, for at its western extremity, where it approaches the Lahore Gate, it makes a sudden turn that completely destroys its direct alignment. The massive buildings of the city are generally of stone or brickwork, closed with Oriental jalousies ; and many of the narrow lanes forming the only communications between them, are barred by ponderous gates of wood strongly bound with great bars of iron. Action in force against such localities as these was scarcely practicable, and in the midst of the succession of strongholds they supplied, a disciplined army was reduced under the force of mere physical conditions to isolated and fragmentary bodies of irregular combatants.

" Summarily, therefore, it may be said of the defensive capabilities of Delhi, that, as against a regular and formal attack with adequate means in men and material, they were extremely feeble; that, as against an irregular attack with ordinary means, they were respectable; while, as against such an attack with inadequate means, they were formidable; and finally, as against a coup-de-main by a feeble force unprovided with siege artillery or engineer stores, their strength was such that only political considerations of the most urgent and pressing importance, could be held to have justified the acceptance by the General commanding, of the frightful risks of failure involved beyond all question in a simple unsupported assault upon the place.

"During the long month that had elapsed between the dismal catastrophe at Meerut and the triumphant establishment of the British Force on the Ridge before Delhi, it seems incredible that no plan of operations had been provided in anticipation of events that could be calculated on with reasonable certainty. The provision of such a plan or plans was, as a matter of course, the special duty of the Chief Engineer of the Force, but this officer seems to have abdicated his functions, and to have left his work to be done by irresponsible juniors, or officers of other arms, or by any one who was willing to do it. Inevitably, therefore, there was much confusion in the progress of affairs from the 8th of June onwards. Sir Henry Barnard felt, and felt justifiably, that total stranger as he was to the localities, to the character and military capacity of natives, and to all the conditions of the terrible crisis he was suddenly summoned to confront, he had a right to expect that in the commanding officers of the Ordnance Corps, whose professional duties bore specially on siege operations, he should find his most competent advisers. From Major Laughton, the Chief Engineer, he could obtain no definite opinions whatsoever; and by Brigadier Wilson, the Commandant of Artillery, he was earnestly dissuaded from any active operations against the city. The actual course of events was therefore determined rather by the conduct of the besieged than by the councils of the besiegers."

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As soon as Baird Smith reached Delhi he set to work with vigour to comprehend the situation, and make himself acquainted with all the details of the position occupied by the Force, its capabilities, resources and future prospects.

The following were the impressions made, and the conclusions arrived at:—

"As regards the plan of defence adopted by the enemy, it was quite clear that two ideas pervaded it: first, to drive Sir Henry Barnard from his advanced position on the heights by incessant attacks on the position itself; and secondly, to force him to abandon that position by operations on his line of communication with the Punjab. Of these two ideas the enemy held the first with perfect clearness, and acted on it with an unswerving tenacity of purpose which repeated defeats could scarcely shake. The second was neither apprehended distinctly, appreciated properly, or acted on vigorously by him. It is scarcely necessary to add that this want of discrimination influenced most gravely the fortune of the Siege.

"The garrison, by the beginning of July, must have consisted of not less than from fifteen to eighteen thousand trained soldiers and irregulars, or even larger numbers.

"The besieging force numbered of all arms under five thousand five hundred: fighting men, Europeans and natives. An enterprising enemy might therefore, with perfect ease, have maintained one or more strong movable columns operating constantly on the communications, stopping convoys, harassing small detachments, disturbing the whole tract of country whence supplies were obtained, and finally, in all human probability, compelling the General to raise the Siege from the impossibility of procuring subsistence for his army in a position so utterly insecure.

"Instead, however, of obstinate and continuous operations of this class, the enemy was satisfied to make feeble efforts never sustained for any considerable time, and easily warded off by corresponding movements of columns detached from the Force. It was necessary, however, at the time now under notice, to take precautions against both forms of attack. The vast numerical superiority of the enemy converted the position of

Sir Henry Barnard's force from the very first into that of a besieged, instead of a besieging army.

"Commencing on June 8th, the attacks by the garrison on all points of the ground held outside the walls were incessant. The casualties of the Force day by day were most serious. Many of the bravest and best officers had been killed or severely wounded: the daily average of casualties among the soldiers averaged from thirty to forty, and on occasions of vigorous combats the loss rose from 100 to 150.

"It was scarcely possible to resist the conviction that the army was steadily and surely being used up by the ordinary process of the Siege, and it seemed as though a simple calculation would show how long such a rate of waste of life could be maintained in presence of an enemy by a force numerically so feeble; long it plainly could not be.

"To shorten the Siege, or limit the loss of life were the urgent necessities of the position. The former could be effected only in one of two ways: the first, by regular operations against the place; or, second, by an assault 'de vive force.' The insufficiency of artillery and engineer material for even the most limited formal operation made the first plan wholly impracticable.

"An official return supplied to the Chief Engineer on the 4th July, showed that in the Artillery Park the entire ordnance supplies of the force were:—

|                |    |      |           |       |
|----------------|----|------|-----------|-------|
| Round Shot     | 24 | Prs. | . . . . . | 150   |
| do.            | 18 | „    | . . . . . | 628   |
| Shells, Common | 8  | „    | . . . . . | 2,016 |
| do. Spherical  | 8  | „    | . . . . . | 192   |
| do. Common     | 24 | „    | . . . . . | 240   |
| do. Spherical  | 24 | „    | . . . . . | 43    |
| do. 5½ „       | —  | .    | . . . . . | 3,200 |

"These details tell their own tale, and no emphasis

need be added. Such fire, indeed, as the batteries on the Ridge were competent to sustain, was kept up by purchase from day to day of the shot fired by the enemy, which were sedulously picked up by the camp-followers. The whole supply of ordnance powder for seventeen siege pieces in position, was no more than 11,600 lbs., barely sufficient for one day's active firing; and even the musketry powder had sunk to 12,900 lbs.

"The Engineer Park was quite as insufficiently supplied for even the briefest formal operation. It is questionable whether batteries could have been maintained even if their first construction had been practicable, as reveting materials were in extremely small numbers. Hence there was no hesitation whatever in abandoning all idea of operations of this class.

"The second course, viz., an assault 'de vive force', was plainly a most desperate expedient in the actual condition of the Force at the moment. It could only have been justified by assurance of the highest authority that the critical emergency of political circumstances had been such that all risks must be run to achieve a success.

"The possibilities of success were sufficient to have warranted the General in making an attack even so desperate as that on Delhi would have been. The Chief Engineer came to this conclusion at the time, and adhered to it until circumstances to be explained hereafter had completely changed. Assuming, however, that an assault involving such undeniable risks might be deferred, systematic provision for reducing the waste of life on the Ridge was of the most urgent necessity; and though the means were small both in men and material, it was absolutely necessary that they should be used and multiplied if the positions were to be maintained for even a day.

" On the morning of the 5th July Sir Henry Barnard

received Baird Smith at a confidential interview which lasted three hours.

"Barnard explained to him in the most unreserved terms his views of the position of the force, and at first, especially, he was evidently and most justly impressed with the deepest anxiety for its safety, and felt acutely the heavy weight of personal responsibility that must attach to his own decisions.

"The general conclusions to which Baird Smith had come, as summarily detailed above, were duly submitted to him, and were fully discussed. Reserving his final decision at the moment, however, he appointed a second meeting at noon of the same day, when he expected to be prepared to give definite orders.

"There were no external signs of fatal sickness at that time apparent. A worn and anxious expression of face with a certain heaviness and dimness of eye, not at all natural to him, were the only signs of suffering that attracted Baird Smith's notice, and even these passed away as the discussion advanced, till the general cheerfulness of bearing under all difficulties, which did so much to win for him the warm affection of the whole force, resumed its usual flow, and Baird Smith left him for the present, hopeful for the future as it was his nature to be.

"Scarcely an hour or two elapsed before Barnard was stricken by a deadly attack of cholera, and on Baird Smith's return to head-quarters about 11 a.m., he was met by Barnard's medical attendants with the assurance that he could see no one, and that the worst was to be feared as to the issue of the disease. The anticipation was realised the same afternoon, and it was with the truest sorrow that the Army learnt of the loss it had sustained in the premature death of a chief admired by all for his undaunted courage, his unwearying activity, his single-hearted devotion to duty, and beloved by all for his

thoughtful care, courteous bearing, generous appreciation of the efforts of his officers, and the genial spirit he diffused around him. He sent a message to Baird Smith from his deathbed, that in the event of his professional reputation needing defence, he trusted to him, as having received his last explanation, to guard him from misrepresentation. His reputation has never been impugned. Few soldiers have faced sterner perils with a stouter heart, and none have surpassed him in devotion to the Crown, or in the resolute discharge of duty under physical and moral conditions so exhaustive that life sunk beneath the pressure."

On the death of Sir Henry Barnard the command devolved on Major-General Reed, C.B. He was incapacitated for work by severe and continuous sickness.

While the decision regarding the assault was pending, we had several severe actions with the enemy, in which our losses were very material to so small a force as ours, and it was finally resolved that the risks were too great.

## CHAPTER III.

MEANTIME Baird Smith's attention was sedulously given to strengthening the position of the Ridge, providing cover for the troops, clearing jungle, brushwood, etc., on the slopes, so as to diminish as much as possible the cover for the enemy; and finally, to the security of the communications, by the demolition of all the bridges by which the enemy could cross the Western Jumna Canal or Nujuffghur Jheel Drainage Cut, with artillery. On the 7th of July Lieutenants Greathed and Fulford with sappers and pioneers destroyed the Shalimar, Badli, and Shumapoor Bridges. These bridges had all superstructures of wood on masonry abutments and piers, and the demolitions were effected by small charges sufficient to clear away the masonry retaining the girders. The beams were required for use in the park, and it was important to have them.

On the 8th Lieutenants Geneste and Champain accompanied a strong column to Busaye, on the Nujuffghur Jheel, and there destroyed the Busaye Bridge, the only remaining work of the kind on the drainage channel within moderate distance of the city. On the 9th the remaining bridges between the camp and Alipore were dismantled by Lieutenants Stewart and Carnegie.

On the same day the Poolchudder Aqueduct, of which the demolition had previously been only partial, was completely destroyed.

On the 9th a party of the enemy's cavalry charged into the camp, and after causing considerable confusion and some loss, was repulsed with heavy slaughter. A general attack was also made on the position, and a strong force under Brigadier General Chamberlain, Adjutant-General of the army, advanced through the suburbs, clearing them of the enemy. Our losses were severe, two hundred and twenty-three killed and wounded; and so serious a diminution of the small force materially influenced future plans of operation.

The Engineer Brigade was happily strengthened this day by the arrival of three hundred Punjab Sappers under Lieutenant Gulliver, and six hundred unarmed pioneers under Lieutenant H. A. Brownlow.

The latter had been formed by Baird Smith on receiving orders to take command of the Brigade, by volunteers from the Roorkee workmen employed on the Ganges Canal. Strange to say, these men who were at once transferred from the peaceful tasks of day-labourers to the most dangerous duties of working parties in siege operations, never exhibited a symptom of fear, but worked under the hottest fire like veterans, and were invaluable. The casualties among them were inevitably very numerous, but there was no instance of their having hesitated to obey any order, whatever its consequences might have been.

Lieutenant Brownlow brought under their escort, a large supply of stores of various kinds for the Engineer park, drawn from the workshops of the Canal Department at Roorkee, under Baird Smith's control.

Between the 10th and 14th of July active work was carried on in strengthening the right flank of the position. Early in the siege a lofty mound, evidently a disused brick kiln, had been taken possession of, its crest roughly formed into a battery for three heavy guns, and an approach of easy slope cut along its interior face.

## STRENGTHENS THE POSITION

It will be found on the plan, marked "The General's Mound", so named from its having been a favourite position of Sir H. Barnard's during the many fights of which he was an eye-witness.

It was between this mound, and a mass of Mahomedan buildings abutting on the Nujuffghur Jheel Channel to the right, that the enemy's cavalry broke through on the 9th, and it was necessary to make the ground impracticable for horsemen.

Strong parapets, deep ditches, and thick abattis of trees and brushwood were carried over all the open spaces; provision was made for placing field guns in battery behind the bank on the right of the mound. The line to the Drainage Channel was thereby sufficiently strengthened to be safe against attack. Part of the ground in front of the Pagoda picquet (Sammy House) being wholly unflanked and supplying cover frequently taken advantage of by the enemy, it was determined that a small battery for two field guns should be constructed on the right of Perkin's mortar battery, a position commanding the ground in question. There being reason to anticipate another general attack on the right of the position, the battery was built of sandbags, for the sake of expedition. Covered by a screen of gabions, the pioneers completed the work between 3 and 11 a.m. on the 15th of July. About sunrise the enemy attacked, as expected, and the contest continued with variable vigour throughout the day. The position had been so strengthened in all its parts that no impression whatever could be made upon it. The troops remained quietly covered by their parapets, and the artillery inflicted heavy loss on the enemy from all the batteries on the right. Scarcely any casualties had occurred, until it was determined to move out and drive the enemy from the strong and rugged ground he usually held.

This was done of course, but with some loss; **and**

in the impetuosity of pursuit, the column followed the retreating enemy close up to the walls of the place. There they were received with a murderous grapeshot fire, and officers and men fell thick and fast. The Commander, Brigadier Chamberlain, was struck down by a dangerous wound, and before the troops could be extricated from their unfortunate position, 15 officers and 209 men were placed 'hors de combat.'

The total casualties of the 9th and 14th having thus risen to nearly five hundred, it was necessary to abandon all idea of any active operations against the place from the latter date.

Up to that time Baird Smith had considered an assault would have been successful, and had duly submitted to the General that the possibilities of success by assault were such as would justify the attempt being made, should the political necessity for it be so pressing as to warrant very grave risks being accepted.

It was no matter of regret to Baird Smith that his judgment on the point was never put to the test, it having been held that the risks were greater than the circumstances of the moment would warrant the General in meeting; but from this time Baird Smith's own views were entirely in accordance with that conclusion, and thenceforward but one idea regulated the operations of the Engineer Brigade, namely, to prepare by economy of men and material on the spot, and by collection of the same from every available point at a distance.

On the 17th of July the shattered state of Gen. Reed's health compelled the medical officers to urge his immediate removal to the hills, and he accordingly left for Simla that night, making over the command to Brigadier Archdale Wilson.

The proceedings of the Commanding Engineer, from the day of his arrival up to the time when General Wilson assumed command of the army, are duly

recorded in the following letter from Colonel Baird Smith, published in a communication from Colonel Lefroy to the "Times", under date May nth, 1858. This letter is most interesting, conclusively showing as it does, how from the very first General Wilson was influenced by Baird Smith's complete grasp of the situation.

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'TIMES'.

"Sir,

"The truly interesting letter of your special correspondent, from Lucknow, in the 'Times' of this day, contains a statement calculated to deprive one of the ablest and most gallant officers in Her Majesty's service of his just distinction, by attributing to Captain Taylor, B.E., instead of to Colonel Baird Smith, the merit of the assault by which Delhi was captured.

"Confident that it is the sole object of the 'Times' to preserve historical truth in all these details, and as your correspondent proceeds to say—'I have never seen Colonel Baird Smith in my life, nor have I spoken a word to Captain Taylor on the subject', I trust you will find room for the following extract from a letter from the former officer, dated Roorkee, 22 Nov., 1857, in which, in the confidence of private friendship, he gives his own narrative of that operation, and I shall be surprised if any one who reads it, believes him a likely person to wait, on such an emergency, for the counsel of a Junior.

"After relating the events at Roorkee, at which station his own consummate management alone prevented the disasters which occurred elsewhere, Colonel Baird Smith proceeds to say:—'After passing about six weeks in work of this kind, I was unexpectedly sent for to Delhi, to take command of the Engineer Brigade of the army at that place. I reached camp on the 4th of July

(3rd?) fully expecting to arrive in the midst of an assault on the city, an express having been despatched to meet me on the road, with intelligence of its being General Barnard's intention to attack at dawn that morning (4th), and to request that I would hurry on. I did so, and rode 54 miles on any cattle I could lay hands on, arriving about 3 a.m., to find everything as quiet as could be; the assault, as was the fashion of the day, postponed, and my labour very uselessly expended.

"I set to work at once to comprehend the situation. I found the force at that date to consist of about 6,000 men of all arms, excluding non-effectives, furnished with siege guns as follows—2 24-Prs., 9 18-Prs., 6 8"-Mortars, and 2 8"-Howr., in all 13 guns and 6 mortars.

"On any front of the city open to our attack, the enemy could bring from 25 to 30 guns (24 and 18 Prs.) and as many mortars as he had men to work. He had the clear superiority over us, and as experience had shown his practice to be not inferior to ours, his 25 or 30 big guns must have silenced our 13; but the matter was still more conclusively settled when the relative supplies of ammunition came to be compared.

"The return I called for from the artillery park showed that we had round shot, 24-Prs. 150, 18-Prs. 675, or 75 rounds for each 24-Pr. and 60 for each 18-Pr., barely a third of a day's firing for our breaching guns.

"For shells we were better off, but still very badly; and the Commandant of Artillery told me he had no hopes of receiving any large supplies soon. It was therefore very clear that all thoughts of a siege in even its most irregular form must be abandoned, as our artillery means were inadequate to even one day's open trenches. Of engineer means we had practically none at all, and so I put all formal operations quite on one side for the time being.

1 During July and August 3 24-Prs., 2 18-Prs., and 12 5½" Coehorns were added.

" 'I had then to consider the probabilities of success for an assault by escalade and demolition of the gates.

" 'I had been familiar with Delhi for nearly sixteen years, and knew the ground well.

" 'It offered singular facilities for an attack of this class by reason of the perfect cover that existed close up to the walls, and under which our columns might be formed without serious risk from the enemy's fire. The fortifications opposed no formidable obstacles to escalade. The counterscarp was an earthen slope, down which men could pass with but little difficulty.

" 'The ditch was dry; a berm wall of 8 feet and bastion faces of 16 feet high were no frightful heights to surmount. The main gate was known not to be retrenched, and to be easily destructible.

" 'The habits of the Mutineers were notoriously lax, and their capacity to stand face to face with our men of the smallest. We could muster about 3,500 men for the assault, all in the best possible spirit, and keen for the work.

" 'On the whole it seemed to me that a fair chance of success existed for an assault just at dawn, when natives are always asleep, and I accordingly recommended that we should make one at once, and prepared all the details.

" 'Events, however, interfered. Poor General Barnard, the most lovable of chiefs, died of cholera the very day my recommendation was submitted. He was succeeded by General Reed, who was incapacitated for work by severe and continuous sickness. While the decision was pending we had several severe actions with the enemy, in which our losses were very material to so small a force as ours, and it was finally resolved that the risks were too great. I did not concur in this view at the moment, but after the action of the 14th (July) I too came to the conclusion that the time had passed for a successful assault, and when

General Wilson succeeded General Reed (17th) I told him so.

"Looking back now from the ground of actual experience, I believe that if we had assaulted between the 4th and 14th we should have taken the place. But the same retrospect equally satisfies me that no evil consequences resulted from the delay, and even at the time I felt that the question was one on which difference of opinion might most rightly be tolerated, and I never had any disposition to join in blaming those who could not come to the same conclusion as I did.

"About the time of General Reed's leaving camp it was in contemplation to abandon our position before Delhi, to withdraw the army to the left bank of the Jumna, and resuming our communications with the lower provinces, to wait for reinforcements. The step was never deliberately proposed to me for my opinion, but a friend gave me a private intimation that it would be proposed, and that I had best be prepared for it. I hated the very idea of such a movement, regarding it as wholly uncalled for, weak and mischievous. I did not wait therefore for any formal reference on the subject, but on the day General Wilson assumed command, I took the opportunity of his sending for me to consult with me on the whole question of our position, to urge in the most earnest terms I could employ, the absolute necessity of our holding the grip we then had on Delhi like "grim Death," not receding a foot from the ground we held, and I cheerfully undertook the responsibility of making the position tenable against any assaults.

"I pointed out that even as we then were we had never met the enemy but to rout him utterly; that our communications, though exposed, undoubtedly had never been seriously impaired; that every want we had was abundantly supplied; that the health of the troops was wonderfully good, and that I could not

## HIS LETTER TO COLONEL LEFROY

think of a single sound reason for retrograding. Against such a step there were many excellent arguments:—All India would at once believe that we retreated because we were beaten; and in circumstances like ours a belief of this kind was equivalent to the severest defeat we could sustain. We must abandon our communications with the Punjab, and cease to act as a covering force to the province from which all the reinforcements we could hope for must be drawn.

" 'We must again fight our way to Delhi against re-invigorated enemies, increased in numbers and spirits, when we determined to renew the siege, and we must cease to perform the incalculably important function of checkmating the entire strength of the revolt, as we were then doing, by drawing every regiment of cavalry and infantry and every battery of artillery so soon as it mutinied, straight to Delhi, and thus saving our small and defenceless posts from being overpowered by them. A long discussion terminated by the General telling me he was glad to have had the case placed so fully and clearly before him, and that he was determined not to move from Delhi.

" 'He then requested me to state my views of our future proceedings. I recommended that we should remain strictly on the defensive, saving our men in every way we could; that we should order down from Ferozepore an efficient addition to our siege guns to enable us to secure the superiority of fire on the front I proposed to attack, and that so soon as these guns reached us we should assume the offensive with vigour.

" 'I undertook to have the engineer park in perfect working condition by the same time.

" 'To all this he agreed, and desired me to give him a memorandum of the additional ordnance I thought necessary, which was given accordingly, and from

that time forward we were guided by those plans, and prepared busily for the resumption of active work on the arrival of the siege train. I gathered in stores for our works from all quarters, and by the beginning of September we were ready for anything, having gabions, fascines, sandbags and tools of all sorts in abundance."<sup>1</sup>

The result of this interview between Baird Smith and the General was that, on the 18th of July, Wilson wrote to Sir John Lawrence—"I shall hold my position to the last, for it is of the utmost consequence that the enemy should be confined within Delhi to prevent their ravaging the country about. To effect this object it is absolutely necessary that I should be strongly reinforced as quickly as possible."

Only an extract of this letter is given in "Selections from Letters, Despatches, etc., preserved in the Military Dept of the Government of India, 1857—58", edited by George W. Forrest; but it is probable that on this date the extra siege train was ordered from Ferozepore. The siege train ordered from Ferozepore consisted of—

|   |     |          |
|---|-----|----------|
| 6 | 24  | Prs.     |
| 8 | 18  | Prs.     |
| 4 | 8"  | Howr.    |
| 4 | 10" | Mortars, |

besides 2 10" Howrs. from Phillour, and 3 heavy guns were said to be on their way from Phillour, either 18 or 24 Prs.

These, together with the guns previously at Delhi, made up a total of 63 guns for siege purposes.

While at Roorkee, a fortnight before Baird Smith had any thought of being personally concerned in the

**I The remainder of this graphic letter will be quoted later on.**

matter, he had sent to a friend a sketch of the plan he would recommend, and this was the plan he eventually carried out.

He was thoroughly conversant with Delhi and the neighbourhood, having been employed in the Canal Department of the province since the year 1840; and in September, 1856, he had paid a visit to Delhi with reference to some canal work within the city, and had thoroughly examined the city and its vicinity.

#### LETTER FROM BAIRD SMITH TO COL. LEFROY.

"I mentioned to you in a former letter that I had been personally familiar with the localities about Delhi for fully sixteen years.

"Two of the canals under my charge terminate there: one flowing through the heart of the city, and throwing out branches in different directions through Delhi. In connexion with this work different plans of improvement or extension have been submitted to me, and I made it part of my duty to examine the localities carefully. It was only in the month of September preceding the Mutiny that I spent ten days at Delhi, and almost every day was occupied examining parts of the city.

"My camp was pitched upon the ground we carried our operations over, and on the whole I had, before I joined the force at all, a tolerably minute knowledge of the important features of the ground both inside and outside the place."

Below are given two letters from Engineer Officers, confirming the fact that Delhi was besieged in the very way Baird Smith considered it should be before he left Roorkee.

COL. MACLAGAN, R.E., TO DR. JOHN SMITH.

" Simla, July 19, 1872.

" My dear Dr. Smith,

" I can very readily confirm Mrs. Baird Smith's recollections of what I may have written at the time, concerning her husband's views, before going to join the Forces at Delhi in 1857, with respect to the proper plan of the siege, if a siege should become necessary.

" I cannot at this distance of time recollect the details of what he said, and of what I afterwards wrote, but I can say this, that before he was summoned from Roorkee to take charge of the engineer operations with the army encamped before Delhi, he had described to me and others the direction in which he considered the attack should be made, and the plan which in his opinion should he followed, and which he would adopt if he had anything to say to it (He was well acquainted with the place), and that the siege afterwards, under his direction, was conducted in the manner he proposed.

" Colonel Drummond, who was also at Roorkee at the time referred to, is now here. I have taken the opportunity of speaking to him on the subject of your letter, and I have his authority to say that he can confirm in all respects what I have said above.

" Yours sincerely,

(sd.) "ROBERT MACLAGAN."

COL. DRUMMOND, R.E., TO MRS. BAIRD SMITH.

" Simla, 22 July, 1872.

" My dear Mrs. Baird Smith,

" I cannot only fully corroborate what Colonel Maclagan has written to your brother-in-law in Bombay

about the Siege of Delhi, but I can most positively state that I distinctly remember saying to your husband after his return from the siege, 'The place after all was attacked in the very way you thought it should be', or words to that effect, referring to a conversation we had on the subject before he left Roorkee to go to Delhi. I have mentioned the same thing to several people, and among others, I think, to Brownlow; and I daresay Mrs. Drummond will remember my saying to her that Baird Smith had made up his mind as to the proper way to attack Delhi long before he went there. Anybody who knew him at all knew how carefully he forethought things, and how complete his arrangements were for carrying out his designs.

" Yours sincerely,

(sd.) "H. DRUMMOND."

"The project of attack provided for a concentrated and vigorous attack on the front of the place included between the Water and Cashmere Bastions, provision being made at the same time for silencing all important flanking fire, whether of artillery or musketry, that could be brought to bear on the lines of advance to be taken by the assaulting columns. Due care was also taken to protect the exposed right flank of the trenches from sorties. The left was secured by being rested on the river, and by the occupation of the Koodsia Bagh, a very strong post in front.

"The best information procurable indicated that on the front of attack the fire of from 25 to 30 pieces might have to be subdued. To effect this, 54 siege guns were available." <sup>1</sup>

From July 19th, for a week, every exertion was made to strengthen the Subzee Mundi Serai and Pagoda picquets; and after that, attention was given to right

**I Col. Baird Smith. Despatch.**

flank and flank defences, and to the left flank and rear defences; and about the 22nd of July large numbers of men were employed in gabion and fascine making. This work was vigorously continued for the following month, so that by the end of August everything was ready for the final operations.

On the 7th of August Brig.-Genl. Nicholson himself reached Delhi, and on the 14th marched with his troops into camp. The siege train at this time was labouring down from Ferozepore, having started on the 12th of August.

## CHAPTER IV.

ON the evening of the 12th of August (six weeks after his arrival) Baird Smith, while out at one of our batteries, was struck by the splinter of a shell on his instep and ankle joint. The injury was at first trifling, and had he been able to give himself rest would have caused him but little trouble; but he insisted in carrying on his work as usual, as far as possible, and the wound in no way interfered materially with his duties as Commanding Engineer.

On the 20th of August, Wilson, still in doubt with respect to the sufficiency of his force for the capture and occupation of Delhi, wrote to Baird Smith as follows:

"My dear Smith,

"A letter has been received from the Governor-General, urging our immediately taking Delhi, and he seems angry that it has not been done long ago.

"I wish to explain to him the true state of affairs, that Delhi is seven miles in circumference, filled with an immense fanatical Mussulman population, garrisoned by fully 40,000 soldiers, armed and disciplined by ourselves, with 114 heavy pieces of artillery mounted on the walls, with the largest magazine of shot, shell and ammunition in the upper provinces at their disposal, besides some 60 pieces of field artillery, all of our own manufacture, and manned by artillerymen

drilled and taught by ourselves; that the fort itself has been made so strong by perfect flanking defences erected by our own engineer, and a glacis which prevents our guns breaking the walls lower than 8 feet from the top without the labour of a regular siege and sap—for which the force and artillery sent against it has been quite inadequate; that an attempt to blow in the gates and escalate the walls was twice contemplated, but that it was considered from the state of preparation against such an attack on the part of the rebels, such an attack would inevitably have failed, and have caused the most irreparable disaster to our cause; and that even if we had succeeded in forcing our way into the place, the small force disposable for the attack would have been most certainly lost in the numerous streets of so large a city, and have been cut to pieces.

"It was therefore considered advisable to confine our efforts to holding the position we now occupy, which is naturally strong, and has been daily rendered more so by our engineers, until the force coming up from below could join to co-operate in the attack.

"That since the command of the force has devolved on me I have considered it imperatively necessary to adopt the same plan as the only chance of safety to the Empire, and that I strongly urge upon his Lordship the necessity of his ordering General Havelock's or some other force marching upon Delhi as soon as possible. The force under my command is, and has been since the day we took up our position, actually besieged by the mutineers, who from the immense extent of suburbs and gardens, extending nearly to the walls of the town, have such cover for their attacks that it has been very difficult to repel them, and at the same time to inflict such a loss as would deter a repetition of them. They have frequently been

driven back, but they immediately take refuge under the grape fire of their heavy guns on the city walls, and on our retirement re-occupied their former positions; every such attack upon them has entailed a heavy loss upon our troops, which we can ill spare, and has done us little good.

"I shall be re-inforced by a siege train from Ferozepore by the end of this or the beginning of next month, when I intend to commence more offensive operations against the city; but I cannot hold out any hope of being able to take the place until supported by the force from below. As an artillery officer I have no hesitation in giving my opinion that the attack on Delhi garrisoned and armed as it now is, is as arduous an undertaking as was the attack on Bhurtpore in 1825—26, for which 25,000 troops and 100 pieces of artillery were not considered too large a force.

"I enclose a return of the original force which was sent down to capture this strong place, and also a return of the present effective force, including sick and wounded, from which his Lordship will see how desperate would have been any attempt to take the city by assault, more especially as the mutineers keep a large portion of their force encamped outside the city walls, who, on our assaulting the city, could easily attack and capture our camp with all our hospitals, stores and ammunition, unless a strong provision was made against it.

"Something of this sort I intend forwarding to the Governor-General, and shall be glad if you will return this with such remarks and emendations as your experience as Chief Engineer suggests.

"Yours sincerely,

(sd.) "A. WILSON."

Baird Smith once more came to the rescue with his intrepid and well thought out counsel. "He' immediately drew up a memorandum, stating his reasons most emphatically in favour of immediate action. He contended that although there was always hazard in an assault, the evils of inaction at such a time were so great, and the chances in our favour were so many that it would be better to risk the enterprise than to shrink from it.

"He demonstrated on scientific grounds that although the material resources of the enemy were far greater than our own, the superior forethought and skill, and the perfect union and combination absent from the designs and operations of the enemy, would give us an immense advantage over them. He represented most urgently to the General, that the breaches should be established, and the assault should be delivered with the utmost possible despatch, as the enemy once cognisant of our designs would strengthen their defences without and within the city, and render its occupation impossible.

"To these arguments, as before, Wilson reluctantly yielded, but in doing so threw the whole responsibility on the Chief Engineer.

"The General's words were:

" 'It is evident to me that the results of the proposed operations will be thrown on the hazard of a die; but under the circumstances in which I am placed I am willing to try this hazard, the more so as I cannot suggest any other plan to meet our difficulties.

" 'I cannot, however, help being of opinion that the chances of success under such a heavy fire as the working parties will be exposed to, are anything but favourable. I yield, however, to the judgment of the Chief Engineer.' (sd.) A. W.

"Baird Smith, transcribing the above, observed:—  
"This, I think, every one would allow, places on my

**I Kaye's "Sepoy War", Vol. III., pages 553-554.**

shoulders the undivided responsibility for the results of the Siege.

"'It would doubtless have lightened that burden greatly had I felt assured of the hearty support and concurrence of the General in command, but the withholding of these was not sufficient cause for hesitating, and I was too glad of even a qualified consent to immediate action to be careful as to the terms in which it was given.'

"Baird Smith was not a man to shrink from the responsibility thrown upon him. To say that he cheerfully accepted it would be a faint recital of the fact; he eagerly grasped it."

At a council of war which took place on the 23rd of August, Wilson yielded openly to the strong remonstrance of the Chief Engineer, as given above, and Nicholson who was present, saw no occasion to interfere by such very strong measures as, according to Lord Roberts,<sup>1</sup> he intended to use should Wilson refuse to follow the intrepid advice of his Chief Engineer.

The following extract from Nicholson's letter to Sir John Lawrence, dated Sept. nth, will show what he thought of Wilson's weak conduct, and how great he thought had been Baird Smith's difficulties, which Wilson had placed in his way.

"The game is completely in our hands, we only want the player to move the pieces. Fortunately, after making all kinds of objections and obstructions, and even threatening more than once to withdraw the guns and abandon the attempt, Wilson has made everything over to the engineers, and they alone will deserve the credit of taking Delhi. Had Wilson carried out his threat of withdrawing the guns, I was quite prepared to appeal to the army to set him aside, and elect a successor. The purport of his last memorandum in reply to the engineers (Chief Engineer?)

**I Lord Robert's 'Forty-one years in India.'**

ran thus—'I disagree with the Engineer entirely : I foresee great, if not insuperable, difficulties in the plan he proposes, but as I have no other plan I yield to the remonstrances of the Chief Engineer.'

" About the 23rd of August the enemy had gained tidings of the approach of our siege train from Ferozepore, and they had determined to send out a strong force to intercept it. To Nicholson was assigned the welcome task of cutting this force to pieces. In the early morning of the 25th, amidst heavy rain, Nicholson marched with his force out of camp, and took the road to Nujuffghur—the sun was sinking when the enemy was espied. Our troops came to a stream which had, owing to rains, become a river. This was crossed, and the enemy attacked—the resistance was resolute and the conflict desperate—the Sepoys fought well, and there was a sanguinary hand-to-hand encounter. Many of their gunners and drivers were bayoneted or cut down, and those who escaped made their way to the bridge crossing the Nujuffghur Canal. But the attacking party pressed closely upon them. The swampy state of the ground was fatal to the retreat. The leading gun stuck fast in the morass, and impeded the advance of the others. Our pursuing force fell upon them, and before they made good their retreat captured 13 guns and killed 800 of their fighting men.

" Meantime the Punjabees attacked the village on the right as well as the other one. A stubborn resistance was made, but a party of the 61 st being sent in support, the despairing energies of the mutineers were suppressed. Nicholson was master of the field, and the enemy in panic flight. Our circumstances were not very cheering, except for the thought of the victory we had gained; for our baggage had not come up, and our soldiers were compelled to bivouac hungry, weary, and soaked as they were, in the morass, without food or anything to console them. Next morning (26th) having collected

their spoil, and having blown up their bridge, they commenced their march back to Delhi, which they reached that evening. After this there was quiet for a little space in camp."<sup>1</sup>

"In the early morning of the 4th of Sept. the siege guns from Ferozepore, drawn by elephants, appeared upon the Ridge, with an immense assemblage of carts, laden with ammunition, sufficient it was said, 'to grind Delhi to powder.'"<sup>2</sup>

"Baird Smith's project of attack had been prepared for some time in anticipation, but there was still some disposition to wait for further reinforcements ; fortunately this was reasoned away, and on the 7th of September General Wilson issued an address to the army, manly and spirit-stirring, and wise in the cautions it conveyed."<sup>3</sup> "It is said to have been written by Baird Smith"—and this is more than probable, as it was just the kind of address such a prudent, prescient and intrepid man would have written.

"The force assembled before Delhi has had much hardship and fatigue to undergo since its arrival in this camp, all of which has been most cheerfully borne by officers and men. The time is now drawing near when the Major-General commanding the force trusts that their labours will be over, and they will be rewarded by the capture of the city, for all their past exertions, and for a cheerful endurance of still greater fatigue and exposure. The troops will be required to aid the Engineers in the erection of the batteries and trenches, and in daily exposure to the sun as covering parties.

"The Artillery will have even harder work than they yet have had, and which they have so well and cheerfully performed hitherto; this, however, will be for a short period only; and when ordered to the assault

1 See Kaye's "Sepoy War", pp. 652—655.

2 Kaye's "Sepoy War", Vol., III., p. 5

3 Kaye's Vol. III., p. 555.

the Major-General feels assured that British pluck and determination will carry everything before them, and that the bloodthirsty and murderous mutineers against whom they are fighting, will be driven headlong out of their stronghold, or be exterminated; but to enable them to do this, he warns the troops of the absolute necessity of their keeping together, and not straggling from their columns—by this can success only be assured.

" Major General Wilson need hardly remind the troops of the cruel murders committed on their officers and Comrades, as well as their wives and children, to move them to the deadly struggle. No quarter should be given to the mutineers; at the same time, for the sake of humanity, and the honour of the country they belong to, he calls upon them to spare all women and children that may come in their way.

" It is so imperative, not only for their safety, but for the success of the assault, that men should not straggle from their column that the Major-General feels it his duty to direct all commanding officers to impress this strictly upon their men, and he is confident that after this warning the men's good sense and discipline will induce them to obey their officers, and keep steady to their duty. It is to be explained to every regiment that indiscriminate plunder will not be allowed, that prize agents have been appointed, by whom all captured property will be collected and sold, to be divided, according to the rules and regulations on this head, among all men engaged; and that any man found guilty of having concealed captured property will be made to restore it, and will forfeit all claims to the general prize; he will also be likely to be made over to the Provost-Marshal to be summarily dealt with.

" The Major-General calls upon the officers of the force to lend their zealous and efficient co-operation in

the erection of the works of the siege now about to be commenced. He looks especially to the regimental officers of all grades, to impress upon their men that to work in the trenches during a siege, is as necessary and honourable as to fight in the ranks during a battle. He will hold all officers responsible for their utmost being done to carry out the directions of the Engineers, and he confidently trusts that all will exhibit a healthy and hearty spirit of emulation and zeal, from which he has no doubt that the happiest results will follow in the brilliant termination of all their labours."

"And then began a work almost unparalleled in the history of modern warfare."

On the evening of the 6th a light battery had been erected upon the plateau of the Ridge, to the left hand of the 'Sammy' House, to keep the ground clear, and to protect the operations going on below. This battery contained eight pieces, under the command of Captain Remington. The first heavy battery was traced out on the evening of the 7th.

"Then night and day worked the Artillery and Engineers, as those services with the lustre of long years of past activities upon them, had never, perhaps, worked before.

"The formation of this battery was a very difficult piece of work, it was but 700 yards from the enemy's works. The working parties were interrupted by some discharges of grape from the Moree Bastion—but the fire soon, fortunately, died away, and the work went on without any further interruption. Before the morning sun shone upon the scene, the carriages, the cattle and the camp-followers were cleared away, the ammunition was stored and the guns ready for work.

"But all the exertions of the Engineers, under the vigorous direction of Alec Taylor, had not sufficed to fix the platforms.

"No men could have done more, but they had set

themselves a task which could not be accomplished in a single night." <sup>1</sup>

"When this was reported to Wilson he was disposed to withdraw the guns. But the man in command (James Brind, afterwards Sir James Brind, G.C.B.) was not one to go a step backward. Let the Moree batteries roar as they might, he would not give the order for the withdrawal of the British artillery. His restless bravery never halted. He had now the honour of commencing the attack upon the enemy's works, and on that morning, in that unfinished battery, the service was one of extreme danger.

"The morning light revealed our designs to the enemy, and they poured down from the Moree a pitiless shower of shot and shell, and endeavoured to take the battery in flank. Only one gun was mounted when the fire commenced. Then Brind dragged a howitzer well to the rear, and fired over the parapet. As gun after gun was mounted on its platform the inequality of the conflict ceased, and before the heat of the day had passed, the fire of the enemy had slackened, and before sunset it had feebly dwindled away into total quietude."

Baird Smith thus wrote to Brind:—"No. 1 Battery was unquestionably the key of the attack, and on its success depended the opening of Delhi to our assaulting columns. The progress of the other batteries depended essentially on its efficiency; and but for your moral courage, clear perception, and unwavering resolution in arming and working it in spite of all obstacles, consequences would have followed, causing the greatest embarrassment."

On the 8th, Battery No. 2 was traced out in front of Ludlow Castle, 500 yards from the Cashmere Gate. No attempt was made to complete this battery in one night.

The work was pushed forward on the nights of the 9th  
**I Kaye, Vol. III., pp. 558-561,**

and 1 Oth, and before dawn of the nth the battery was completed, armed and unmasked.

"Battery No. 3 was traced by Captain Medley on the evening of the 9th. With a boldness which was not rare, the Engineers traced this battery within 160 yards of the Water Bastion. Seeking for a fit site, Capt. Medley discovered a small ruined building, an out-office of the Custom House, and traced the battery inside the small ruined building, the outer wall of which concealed the work and gave cover to the workmen.

"This battery was finished and armed on the night of the nth.

"Another Battery, No. 4, for mortars, was traced and armed on the night of the 10th, in a safe spot in the Koodsia Bagh, about 300 yards in rear of No. 2 Battery."<sup>L</sup>

"By this time the mutineers had become alive to the fact that it was not from the right, but the left that the real attack was to issue; and they set to work to mount heavy guns along the long curtain, and mounted light guns in other convenient places. They also made in one night, an advanced trench parallel to the left attack, and 350 yards from it, covering the whole of their front. This trench they lined with infantry. The heavy guns could not be mounted in time to anticipate the attack, but the light guns on the morning of the 11th opened an enfilading fire; while the infantry in the new trench opened a hot and unceasing fire. For a time there was no answer, but at 8 a.m. No. 2 Battery replied, and for the rest of the day the guns of No. 2 pounded away at the walls.

"During the night the mortars from No. 4 Battery kept the enemy on the alert with incessant fire. The rebels, however, were by no means idle, they maintained a most effective front and enfilading fire on Nos. 1

and 2 Batteries, which gave great trouble; and at one time it was proposed that Major Reid should make a night attack on them, and arrangements were accordingly made for that purpose, but the order was countermanded, and it was resolved to wait the effect of No. 3 Battery.

"No. 3 Battery was completed on the night of the 11th and morning of the 12th, and at 11 a.m. on the 12th, Lieutenant Greathed, of the Engineers, with some Sappers unmasked the embrasures. The battery was commanded by Major Scott, with Fagan as his second in command.

"At once the six guns of the battery opened with tremendous effect, and in a few hours the breach seemed almost practicable. The rebels showed no faint heart—they continued to pour in a heavy and continuous musketry fire, and at this time the gallant Fagan was killed.

"Throughout the day all the batteries poured in a fire from 56 guns and mortars on the devoted city, when the exertions of the Bengal Artillery were splendid."<sup>1</sup>

The fire continued that day, that night, and the following day—the enemy still responding, and with considerable effect. Baird Smith wrote in his despatch: "These batteries opened fire with an efficiency and vigour which excited the unqualified admiration of all who had the good fortune to witness it. Every object contemplated in the attack was accomplished with a success even beyond my expectations; and I trust I may be permitted to say that while there are many noble passages in the history of the Bengal Artillery, none will be nobler than that which will tell of its work on this occasion."

On the afternoon of the 13th it was considered that two sufficient breaches had been made, and Baird Smith directed that they should be examined. This dangerous duty was entrusted to four engineer officers.

<sup>1</sup> See Malleon, Vol. II., pp. 24-25.

Medley and Lang for the Cashmere Bastion, and Greathed and Home for the Water Bastion. They postponed the examination till 10 p.m., and the artillery officers in the batteries were requested to fire heavily on the breach till that hour, and then cease firing. They were all successful in their examination, and although fired at, returned untouched to report that the breaches were both practicable; but that the musketry parapets in the Water Bastion had not been so sufficiently destroyed as they would be if cannonade were prolonged somewhat.

Baird Smith on receipt of these reports did not—>. hesitate. The dangers of delay, and the worn-out state of the men in the batteries far outweighed any considerations which the condition of the musketry parapets in the Water Bastion might suggest. He at once advised General Wilson to deliver the assault at daybreak on the 14th. At 2-15 a.m. on 14th, Wilson wrote to Baird Smith: "From what I can judge on reading this (the reports) I should say the assault on the Water Bastion is hopeless, there is no approach to it apparently. What do you propose? I have received no note from yourself. Must we trust solely to the Cashmere Bastion and Gateway? You are determined I shall not have a moment's sleep to-night. Please reply quick to this, as it may change all our plans."

Wilson, it appears, ordered the assault at 11 p.m. on the 13th, the columns to assemble at the places agreed upon at half-past three a.m. on the 14th, yet we see that three and a quarter hours after he suggests the hopelessness of the assault on the Water Bastion.

Baird Smith no doubt at once reassured him, and the assault took place as intended by him. Though preparations had been made to advance to the assault at 3-30, some slight delay occurred, and the day was dawning ere the columns were in motion.

"The precise direction which each column was to

take was laid down, and Baird Smith had mapped out in oil paper for each commander, a plan of the operations entrusted to him and to the other leaders, to be taken with him for his guidance."<sup>1</sup>

"The despatches relate how we attacked at four points, how all the attacks somehow or other so far succeeded that our 4,000 men were placed inside the city, with but little loss in the actual assault, but a heavy one in driving the enemy from the interior.

"There were of course the ebbs and flows of fortune—some parties carrying all before them, others being driven back, but by nightfall we were in full possession of about one-third of the city, incomparably the best part of it for our purposes, and I felt so confident that no force could dislodge us, that I urged a cautious and systematic advance on the sections still in the hands of the mutineers."<sup>2</sup>

"The reason in the delay which occurred in the signal to advance to the assault was this.

"What Baird Smith had anticipated was now coming to pass.

"During the night, while our batteries were quiescent, at the time when the breaches were being examined, the enemy endeavoured to fill up the main breach with sandbags and chevaux-de-frise—so orders were in hot haste sent down to the batteries to open fire again.

"This was done promptly and effectually. Soon the ramparts were cleared—then our guns ceased firing, and the signal for assault was given."<sup>3</sup> After the successful assault, "when Wilson rode down with his staff to the city, and map in hand, learned distinctly all that had happened, his first thought was that the only hope of preserving his army from utter destruction

<sup>1</sup> Kaye, Vol. III., p. 581.

<sup>2</sup> Baird Smith's letter to Col. Lefroy.

<sup>3</sup> Kaye, Vol. III., pp. 585, 586.

was to withdraw his columns to their old position on the Ridge.

"Happily, Baird Smith was with him, and when the General put the critical question as to what was then to be done—asking whether he thought we could hold what we had taken, the answer of the Chief Engineer was prompt and decisive— 'We must do so.'<sup>1</sup>

"Neville Chamberlain, from Hindoo Rao's house, sent down a strong appeal in favour of continued action. But it was to Baird Smith's opinion that Wilson deferred, and the merit of the 'holding on' is due to the brave pertinacity of the Chief Engineer".

Thus on every occasion when necessary, was it Baird Smith who infused strength and resolution into the proceedings, and insisted on Wilson doing what was right and proper. There were, however, still great difficulties to be met, "and on that 15th of September a great cloud hung over us. The enemy had purposely left immense supplies of intoxicating liquors stored in the city, open to the hand of the spoiler. The Europeans fell upon the liquid treasure, with an avidity which they could not restrain; and if the insurgents had then seized the opportunity, it is hard to say what calamity might have befallen us, but fortunately for us, they did not take advantage of it.

"The General ordered the destruction of the liquor; so the streets ran with spirits, wine, and beer, and the stimulants so much needed for our hospitals, and a large amount of valuable prize was sacrificed to the necessities of the hour."<sup>2</sup>

"On the 16th our troops shook themselves free of the humiliating debauch."

During the preceding night the enemy had evacuated Kishengunj, outside the Kabul Gate; on the morning of the 16th we took possession of the Magazine.

<sup>1</sup> Kaye, Vol. III., pp. 618—619.

<sup>2</sup> Kaye, Vol. III., p. 621.

The following extract from a letter from Colonel E. T. Thackeray, V.C., C.B., Bengal Royal Engineers, to Mrs, Baird Smith is interesting as showing how much engaged Colonel Baird Smith was with the movements in the city after the assault

"I remember well being sent for by Colonel Baird Smith to the quarters in the city occupied by the Head Quarter Staff, on 16th September, and his giving me detailed instructions regarding the advance of the troops to the Magazine, which was about to take place, and his kind consideration for all those under his orders.

"Sir John Kaye and Colonel Malleson both shewed that the influence of Colonel B. Smith in determining the storming of Delhi, and in impressing upon the Commander the necessity of persevering, was paramount.

"Yours sincerely,  
(sd.) "E. T. THACKERAY."

Wilson was still very despondent "We have a long and hard struggle still before us. I hope I may be able to see it out."<sup>1</sup>

"Meantime our artillery and engineers were putting forward their strength in strenuous endeavours to bombard all the great buildings of Delhi, and to occupy the houses which afforded cover to the enemy and impeded our progress in'o the city. Ever to the front, ever active, ever fertile in resources, the Engineer Brigade had much work to do, and did it well in this conjuncture<sup>2</sup>

"On the evening of the 17th the state of affairs was this: our troops had endeavoured to advance up the streets towards the palace, but in almost every instance they had been repulsed.

<sup>1</sup> Wilson's letter dated 16th Sept.

<sup>2</sup> See Kaye, Vol. III., pp. 623-626.

"The Magazine and the Bank had been captured, but the Lahore Bastion was still in the enemy's hands. No advance had been made in that direction since the 14th"; since the brave Nicholson at the head of his column, made his grand attempt to urge his troops to follow him, when he was most unfortunately shot through the body, and had to be gently removed to the hospital on the Ridge, where he died on the 23rd; but he lived to hear that the palace of the Moguls was occupied by British troops—that the King was in our hands, and that the undaunted Hodson had shot the princes with his own hands.

Taylor had returned to the city after two days' rest in camp, and it was resolved to work through the houses, and not along the open streets. The progress was not, however, rapid. On the evening of the 18th they were little further advanced than in the morning.

"The veterans of the brigade did not fall in very readily with the views of the young engineers, so Taylor, with the approval of Baird Smith, went to the General, and got an order to the Brigadier commanding at the Kabul Gate, to place at his disposal 500 men to carry out the proposed design. Early on the 19th the advance began in earnest, and towards night-fall we were in possession of a building behind the gorge of the Lahore Bastion; and the enemy seeing their danger, escaped under cover of the night, and the Bastion became our own. Meantime an attempt had been made to carry the Lahore Gate by assault, but it was unsuccessful."<sup>1</sup>

Even on the 18th Wilson was still in a most depressed condition: he wrote "We can, I think, hold our present position, but I cannot see my way out at all." But the next day he was more hopeful—"We are progressing more satisfactorily: bombarding the city, and gradually seizing strong posts in advance of our present

<sup>1</sup> Kaye, Vol. III., pp. 626, 627.

position"; and on returning to his head-quarters in the city, he learnt that the Lahore Bastion had been occupied—and this being secured the fall of the Lahore Gate speedily followed.

On the 20th morning it was found that the place was well-nigh abandoned, and soon the capture of the defensive works of Delhi was complete. The Palace was occupied, and the British standard hoisted.

On the 15th Baird Smith was at the temporary head-quarters at Skinner's House. On the 16th night he was out by himself reconnoitring for a good position from which to shell Palace, etc., and had fallen into a trench, cut across a lane he was traversing; owing to his weak foot he had not been able to protect himself, and hurt his arm considerably. But he did not give way. As soon as his assistant (Mr. Harry Marten, who had been with him throughout the operations) had written some telegrams to Brigadier Chamberlain, he commenced dictating his despatch.

This kind of work went on daily, and on the evening of the 21st Baird Smith ordered the Engineer Brigade to take up its quarters in Durriagunj, and told Mr. Marten that they (Baird Smith and his assistant) would go there that night. Mr. Marten considered that this would be risky, as there might be still many rebels lurking about, and that they would be quite alone. Baird Smith at once pooh-poohed the suggestion, and they went there accordingly.

On the 22nd the brigade were all in its quarters, and there was no more fighting to be done at Delhi. The state of Baird Smith's health now obliged him to ask and obtain permission to make over the Chief Engineership to Captain Taylor.

The excitement over, reaction set in, and Colonel Baird Smith was so unwell and maimed that he had to travel in a cart to Kurnal, and from there **went** on to Roorkee in a palanquin, which place he **reached**

on the 29th, having left Delhi on the 23rd, the day that Nicholson died.

But little has been said of the state of Baird Smith's health during the siege, as it in no material degree interfered with his duties as Commanding Engineer.

Since the siege, however, it has been made the foundation of statements calculated to deprive him of the credit of taking Delhi, and giving that honour to his second in command.

These attempts are most unjust, and the state of Baird Smith's health so far from diminishing the great credit due to him for his grand services, should and did intensify the merit of what he had done.<sup>1</sup>

The events related in this chapter are narrated as follows, by Baird Smith himself, in the letter to Col. Lefroy, of which a part has been already cited.

"On the 5th Sept. the new guns came into camp, and with their aid we were now able to place fifty-six pieces in battery.

"Of these, 34 were 24 and 18 Prs. or 8" Howrs., 10 10" and 8" Mortars and 12 Coehorns.

"We had also received material additions to the force, both in infantry and cavalry, sent by Sir John Lawrence, who did noble service for us at the crisis.

"Our supplies of shot, shell, and powder were abundant, so there was no just cause why we should not begin in earnest at once.

"<sup>4</sup>My project of attack had been prepared for some time in anticipation, but there was still some disposition to wait for further reinforcements. Luckily, however, this was reasoned away, and on the night of the 7th—8th our first siege battery was constructed for ten pieces, and opened fire on the morning of the 8th against the Moree Bastion.

I The extracts of letters from Baird Smith to his wife during the siege, will show this most clearly, and those written by his assistant, Mr. Marten, will tend to strengthen the case.

" This work commanded the ground over which our columns of assault would have to pass, so it was necessary to demolish it. It also commanded the site of No. 2 Siege Battery, and we could not begin that till its fire was subdued. Right nobly your brother blue-coats did their work from the night of the 9th. I felt quite justified in ordering No. 2 Battery to be begun. It was originally designed for twenty pieces, 11 24-Prs. and 9 18-Prs., but two of the old guns had run so much at the vents as to be dangerous, so it was executed for 18 guns, directed against the Cashmere Bcution and adjoining curtain, with the object of effecting a breach in the latter, and silencing the fire from the former. No. 3 Battery for ten pieces was directed against the Water Bastion. (I assume you have a plan of Delhi.) This battery gave us more trouble than the others. The site first selected turned out a bad one, and we then pushed forward for a better, and found it about 180 yards from the walls of the place.

"So in we went, and planted our guns, thus so far changing the original plan of attack as to substitute an assault by regular breach at this point, for an escalade as first contemplated.

" By the 12th the whole siege works were complete, and each pouring an iron stream into the place; No. 4 Battery for 10 mortars, 4 10" and 6 8", feeding the stream from above.

" By the afternoon of the 13th we had two capital-looking breaches—one in curtain to right of Cashmere Bastion—the other in right face of Water Bastion.

" The musketry parapets were riddled to uselessness at both points, and things seemed all ready for the last blow.

" I had the breaches examined during the night of the 13th, recommended instant assault to prevent the enemy executing any works in the city, and so at sunrise on the 14th we went in and won.

"The despatches will tell you the rest, or have told it: how we attacked at four points, how all the attacks somehow or other so far succeeded that our 4,000 men were placed inside the city with but little loss in the actual assault, but a heavy one in driving the enemy from the interior.

"There were of course the usual ebbs and flows of fortune, some parties carrying all before them, others being driven back, but by nightfall we were in full possession of about one-third of the city, incomparably the best part of it for our purposes, and I felt so confident that no force could dislodge us, that I urged a cautious and systematic advance on the sections still in the hands of the mutineers. I dreaded much our little force getting entangled in a succession of isolated street fights, and as we had, at a moderate estimate, 20,000 men opposed to us, each of whom behind a wall was nearly as good as one of our men, any mistake seemed likely to be dangerous. We brought in as fast as we could our heavy guns and mortars, opened sharply with the latter on the enemy's quarters, and kept up a constant fire on them. We breached the Magazine wall, and took it without loss, and by keeping small columns working their way steadily through the houses, we turned some of the enemy's strongest positions, captured his guns, drove him further and further back, losing ourselves very few men. This sort of work continued for five days, and the enemy so little liked it, that on the 20th he fairly gave up the place to us, flying in extreme confusion, leaving his camp in our hands; and a column of pursuit drove the fragments of the garrison across the Jumna, so dispersed as to have lost all power of doing further harm.

"Thus terminated this momentous struggle. It was a fair trial of strength between ourselves and the mutinous army; we unaided by any other than local

resources; they under conditions the most favourable they could have had, with the command of about 300 guns, the resources of the largest arsenal in Upper India at their disposal, a city full of houses that were each a little fort to defend.

" 'It may truly be said that all India were waiting spectators of the combat.

" 'Defeat to us would have been terrible disaster, to them the death of their cause.

" 'I humbly trust and believe that God helped the right, and gave us the victory because His own Glory, our good, and their ultimate good too, were involved in such an issue.'

"Such, Sir, is the plain and manly account given by this gallant officer of his own proceedings. His subsequent wound and shattered health which compelled his return to Roorkee, are matters of less public interest.

" I do not think your columns have ever contained an account of the Siege of Delhi more interesting to the military reader than the foregoing, and I think that it amply vindicates his right to all the honours of the Commanding Engineer.

"I have, etc.,

(sd) "J. H. L.

"(Colonel LEFROY, R.A.)

"May 6th, 1858."

On the 5th March, 1858, Field Marshal Sir John Fox Burgoyne, G.C.B., wrote as follows to Colonel Lefroy.

"My dear Colonel,

"I return Colonel Baird Smith's letter to you, which I only received yesterday.

"It contains a plain, unvarnished statement of a

sensible man, and manifestly an excellent officer, of events of deep interest, and I have read it with much more gratification than the ordinary flashy, and what they call graphic letters that are every day published in the papers.

"It would be quite worth while to make a pretty full abstract of it in the third person, and have it put on record in print; and it would then afford some valuable materials for the future military historian.

"I do not remember to have heard of Colonel Baird Smith having received any particular honours or reward for the brilliant service he performed, and surely he highly deserved them. - '

"I fear that his having resumed his old quiet post has. put him out of sight, and so proverbially out of mind.

" My dear Colonel,

" Yours faithfully,

(sd.) "J. F. BURGOVNE.

"War Office."

## CHAPTER V.

"THE general direction for the conduct of our engineering operations, often even in minute details, emanated from Baird Smith.

" His thoughtfulness in respect of everything that could in any way contribute to our success is patent in the masses of manuscripts which lie before me. In his own handwriting may be read all his original conceptions, and his amended designs; but these last were rare, for it was but seldom, except under pressure of altered circumstances, that he saw any good reason for modifying his first projects." '

" It was said that Baird Smith knew Delhi well, and in truth he did. He knew Delhi well inside and out."

The extracts of letters from Baird Smith himself, and from his assistant, given at the end will show this most clearly.

In the foregoing account Baird Smith's services have been sketched out, and I feel quite sure that his title to be considered the one man to whom the capture of Delhi was mostly due is well sustained. Any unprejudiced person who reads this statement as well as the letters attached, must come to this conclusion; and if not, I can only say that he is excessively hard to convince.

We first see Baird Smith at Roorkee, as a man of great energy and intelligence doing his utmost, and successfully, to protect Roorkee from attack, and making every arrangement for forwarding troops in the direction of Delhi by the Ganges Canal. While so engaged he gives his attention to the capture of Delhi, and early in June, long before he had any idea that he he would be personally engaged in the operations, thought out a scheme for the capture, which he sent to a friend.

Then suddenly he is called for to Delhi, and after staying two days at Roorkee to make arrangements for the preparation of a force of pioneers, and<sup>1</sup> the collection of stores and tools on which he could lay his hands, he promptly starts, and after a troublesome journey reaches Delhi at 3 a.m. on the 3rd of July, having on the 2nd made a forced march of 54 miles, with the view of being present at a contemplated assault on Delhi arranged for the 3rd, but only to arrive to hear that this, like previous proposals of the like nature, had been abandoned. However, he at once set to work to master the situation, and on the morning of the 5th had a long conference with the Commander, Sir Henry Barnard. At this meeting he proposed that without delay an assault "de vive force" should be made, and Barnard resolved to give his final decision at noon. Meantime, sad to relate, Sir Henry Barnard is seized with cholera and dies. General Reed succeeds. He was in very bad health and indisposed to undertake such a serious responsibility. This being so, Baird Smith loses no time in strengthening our position on the Ridge in every possible way: first on our right flank—the key of our position, and then on our left. He also turns his attention to the destruction of various bridges which might possibly be useful to the enemy in their operations. On the 17th of July, General Reed retires to the hills in very

bad health, and General Wilson succeeds to the command.

Baird Smith having heard that a proposal for retiring from our position is likely to be made, at once resolves to show Wilson how impossible and dangerous such a movement would be. He has a long interview with the General, and places his views before him in the most forcible manner.

The General, after a long discussion, is thoroughly convinced by Baird Smith, thanks him for having placed the matter so fully and clearly before him, and asks him to state what the future proceedings should be. 'Baird Smith then recommends that we should remain strictly on the defensive, saving our men in every possible way, and at once send for a siege train from Ferozepore; that as soon as this reached us, we should assume the offensive; and he undertook to have everything ready for the siege by the time the heavy guns should arrive. Accordingly, from that time forward they were guided by these ideas, and Baird Smith set busily to work to prepare for the siege; gathering in stores and tools from every available quarter.

Wilson was not so steadfast as Baird Smith was, and on the 20th of August wrote a letter to Baird Smith which he proposed to send to the Governor-General, intimating that he could hold out no hope of being able to take the place until supported by reinforcements from *bclozv*.

Baird Smith promptly comes to the rescue, and writes a memorandum stating his reasons most emphatically in favour of immediate action, and represented that the breaches should be established and assault delivered with the utmost possible despatch.

Wilson reluctantly yields to his arguments, but throws the whole responsibility on Baird Smith, and *he* eagerly grasped it.

He felt, however, that he had not the hearty support

of the General, but was too glad of a qualified consent to be careful about the terms of it.

On the 5th of September the siege train arrived, but even *then* Wilson was disposed *still* to wait for reinforcements; but this was got over, and on the 7th Wilson issued a stirring address to his troops, which was said to be written by Baird Smith himself.

Accordingly, on the 7th the siege works commenced. The work of constructing No. 1 Battery was a very heavy one, and in spite of every exertion the battery was not completed in the morning. Wilson hearing this, was disposed to withdraw the guns, but Brind who was in command of the battery, would not hear of it. It is almost certain that if Wilson had really given such an order there were those in the camp who would have put Wilson on one side, and placed another in command. This strong measure was not requisite, for the work went on, and after tremendous exertions the battery was completed, and the masonry of the Moree Bastion began to crumble.

During the next four days the severe work went on, and by morning of the 12th all the batteries were finished; and all through the 12th and the 13th the batteries continued their breaching operations.

On the 13th night the breaches were examined by order of Baird Smith, and next morning the assault was made.

Even after the assault had succeeded Wilson remained dissatisfied with the result, and at one time, on the 14th, was thinking of withdrawing again to the Ridge; but that ever steadfast guide was at Wilson's elbow, and told him that he 'must hold on.' Wilson for the third time yields to Baird Smith's determination, and in five days Delhi was completely in our hands.

I cannot do better than add here an extract from Malleson regarding Baird Smith, which must, I think, bring conviction to every one that the principal moving spirit at Delhi was not Wilson, but Baird Smith.

"The Chief Engineer of the army before Delhi **had** brought to the performance of his duties the large mind, the profound knowledge, the prompt decision which had characterized him in his civil work.

"Neither the shock and pain caused by a wound, nor the weakness and emaciation produced by a severe attack of camp scurvy aggravated by diarrhoea, depressed his spirit or lessened his energies. Refusing to be placed on the sick list, though assured that mortification would be the consequence of a continued use of his wounded leg, Baird Smith clung to the last to the performance of his duty. The advice which he gave to General Wilson proved that never was his courage higher, never were the tone and temper of his mind more healthy, than when bowed down by two diseases, and suffering acutely from his wound, he seemed a livid wreck of the man he once had been." <sup>1</sup>

I think that every one after reading these papers, must see that in my remarks in "Addiscombe: Its Heroes and Men of Note" I was thoroughly justified in saying that "It seems clear that the man to whom the capture of Delhi was mostly due was without a doubt Baird Smith, and that without detracting, in any way, from the brilliant services of Nicholson, Chamberlain, Reid, Brind, Johnson, Alexander Taylor and many others, the palm should be presented to Baird Smith."

Colonel Baird Smith on reaching Roorkee at the end of September, was unable to leave his bed for three weeks, and about the middle of October went up to Mussooree. By the beginning of November he was "Nearly as good as ever again," and was once more able to walk.

On his recovery he was appointed to the military charge of the Saharunpore and Moozuffernuggur Districts, which he held along with his duties as Super-

<sup>1</sup> Malleeson, Vol. II., pp. 4, 5.

intendent-General of Irrigation; and in 1858 Lord Canning appointed him Master of the Mint at Calcutta.

"This appointment afforded leisure for other public services which made his manifold powers of usefulness better known.

"His crowning service was the Survey of the Great Famine of 1861, the provision of relief, and the suggestion of safeguards against such calamities. But the labours of the journeys, investigations and reports, followed by the long continued and depressing wet weather of the season, appear to have revived the disease originally produced by the exposure and , fatigue of Delhi."

"In December, 1861, he left Calcutta for home, and had to be carried on board. The sea air revived him somewhat, but before the vessel reached Madras he had passed away.

"His body was landed at Madras, and he was there buried with military honours; all the Engineer officers and many other distinguished officials attending the ceremony."

It is quite clear from the above that the man to whom the capture of Delhi is principally due was Colonel Baird Smith, for he was the man who strengthened and secured our position from the assaults of the enemy. It was he who put strength into the proceedings throughout, and although receiving "no moral or material support from the General, whose whole soul seemed to be absorbed in providing, as as well as he could, for protecting himself from blame in case of failure, by shewing that the Chief Engineer would have his own way, and would pay no attention to his advice," insisted on the General following his lead to victory. As regards Captain Taylor, his second in command, he acted nobly in his own duty, but he was in no way responsible for the direction of the

siege operations, which entirely lay with Colonel Baird Smith. Baird Smith always heartily acknowledged the grand work done by Taylor as his head assistant, but as regards his own part in the operations Baird Smith most emphatically "acknowledged obligation to none but to God, and the capacity He has given me, such as it is."

The following extract will show his own views on the subject—

EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO MRS. BAIRD SMITH,  
DATED THE 12 . . . . 1860.

"You may, I think, dismiss from your mind, all sense of trouble about injustice done to my work at Delhi. It is just as certain as that I am alive to say so, that, from the day I joined to the day I left, not a single vital act was done but under my orders, and on my sole responsibility. I know well that but for my resolute determination in the matter there would, humanly speaking, have been no Siege of Delhi at all; and even that assault which gave value by its success to all the exertions that were made, would have ended in deplorable disaster, if I had not withstood with effect, the desire of General Wilson to withdraw the troops from the city on the failure of Brigadier Campbell's column. Nobody does a heartier justice to Taylor's devotion, capacity and unwearied zeal than I do. No personal consideration would for one moment induce me to detract even in the faintest degree from them. But he was throughout my most able and most trusted subordinate, working wholly at my risk, and on my responsibility in the one department entrusted to him, viz., the Executive duties.

" But to suppose that these duties, important though they unquestionably are, are either the sole or most important ones that fall on a Chief Engineer in such

a siege as that of Delhi, and under such a chief as Wilson is a great mistake.

"If Taylor had not been there to do the field work, I am quite satisfied there were other men in the brigade who would not have failed, though I don't think any of them would have done so well, because none of them had his practical experience in the details of such work. But on the other hand, I have what is not, I hope, a presumptuous confidence that if I had not been there, there was no other man in the camp who could have influenced the course of events so much, and secured even from the most impracticable of Commanders an equal respecter his judgment as I did; and in doing so, from first to last I acknowledge obligation to none but to God and the capacity he has given me, such as it is. . . . I care so little to talk of myself that I may have been too little self-assertive, and cried out my claims to justice too feebly, but men must act according to their natures, and I feel no inclination to contradict mine.

"If we had failed at Delhi, there would have been no word of Taylor or anybody else.

"He and all the rest would at once have said, 'We only carried out the Chief Engineer's orders—the plans were all his, and his is all the responsibility; Wilson would have said, 'I certainly agreed to Baird Smith's proposals, but I utterly disapproved of them, and gave him distinctly to understand that the undivided responsibility for the results rested on him.' This was quite true, and his thoughts were never how he could help me, but how, in the event of failure, he could save himself, and transfer all the blame to me.

"Success quite alters the course of events. Then subordinates, or their friends for them, rush forward to claim credit where they bore no risk, and if they can pluck a flower from the chaplet of the man who

bore all the risk, they are not very scrupulous in doing so. However, I have long ceased to feel any excitement about conduct of this kind, and in the clear consciousness that the work God gave me to do was done wholly, thoroughly and successfully to the utmost of my strength and ability, and under circumstances that intensified whatever merit it had, I do not seriously concern myself about other results. I do not myself find much fault with Russell. He clearly knew only the camp gossip, or interested details told him by men themselves, or their friends, about what took place at Delhi—personal knowledge he had none. Still it was needful to make his letters spicy and interesting. He knew that some detraction from prominent Delhi men would be very grateful at Lord Clyde's Head Quarters, where the Capture of Delhi was always an offensive topic, so he just followed his function, not meaning any particular harm, and he never alluded to me personally otherwise than in most unobjectionable terms, especially after my letter to Lefroy was published in the 'Times'."

The extract following will show what a very distinguished man, himself a hero, thought of the conduct of the Siege.

EXTRACT OF LETTER FROM GENERAL SIR JAMES BRIND,  
G.C.B., R.A., TO MRS. BAIRD, 13 BELMONT PARK,  
LEE, DATED 8 JUNE, 1870.

"I return your letter to the Editor of 'Good Words', with many thanks for the confidence you repose in me as one of your late noble-hearted husband's most cognizant comrades, admirers and friends. **I had not read the narrative you bring to notice, but I now see from it, and the many references to the services performed at Delhi, and afterwards, that the requests**

of many friends may induce me to try and correct misstatements however perpetrated; and furnish information regarding those who knew and did their duty as faithfully and successfully as those who secured the favour of the notoriously prejudiced writer for the 'Times'; but on this deeply interesting subject I hope soon to consult you, when in answer to my last enquiry I know your convenience. I have much to tell you regarding Mr. Kaye and the long promised work (2nd Volume of the Mutiny). I can support most fully what you so feelingly and modestly have brought to the Editor's notice. No one has a better opportunity for judging the relative merits of the Chief Engineer and his subordinate officers during those eventful days than myself, and with reference to the Chief and his second in command, Captain (now Colonel) A. Taylor, I do not hesitate to say they were both unsurpassed for ability, zeal and true British spirit and fitness for their respective duties throughout the Siege of Delhi, by any engaged there. If, as I believe to be true, the Chief Engineer wanted the great physical strength and power of enduring exposure, for which Captain Taylor was so conspicuous, it must be conceded by all who knew the strong man in planning, superintending, and in the vitally momentous council, that the Executive Field Engineer *could not* have carried out the operations in the respects which properly and gloriously devolved upon Colonel Baird Smith! Second to none in the Delhi Field Force for patient endurance under severe suffering, and that moral courage which, united with Nicholson and some other like spirits, under God's blessing crowned our exertions with success. *No man was cooler, or more encouraging to others under danger from the outside foe, and the still more serious enemy within the garrison, than the Chief Engineer,*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The italics are mine.—H. M. V.

*to ivhose memory, in connection with this and his other great services', justice has yet to be done.*

" Ever yours most sincerely,

(sd.) "JAMES BRIND."

From Nicholson, Baird Smith had great support, as that noble officer's views were the same as his own, and every one knows that by his defeat of the rebels at NujufTghur he secured the safety of the siege train which was on its way from Ferozepore. Again, the brilliant and determined way in which Sir Charles Reicf" held, throughout the operations, our position on the right, was of the utmost benefit to the siege operations, as it was truly the key of the position, which if lost would have led to almost irretrievable disaster.

Colonel Baird Smith describes the strategical importance of Major Reid's position in a letter to that officer dated the 14 January, 1859. This letter, in addition to others relating to Capt. Alexander Taylor, is introduced as illustrating the noble character of Colonel Baird Smith, by showing how unstinted was his praise when he thought it was really earned. He thus expressed himself:—

"To any one who had personal opportunities of judging of the importance of the position you held at Delhi it would be difficult, I may in truth say, an impossible matter to exaggerate it. The whole question of our ability to maintain our position in front of the place hinged from first to last on the practicability of holding the Ridge, and the tenure of the Ridge depending necessarily on its exposed right flank—with its accumulation of defensive works—being successfully maintained against all attacks. This conclusion was quite as clear to the enemy as to ourselves; and the possession of the 'Paharee', as we well knew, was the one great feature in the operations from which they

never departed, and to attain which they launched against your picquets wave after wave, so to speak, of new and fresh troops as these successfully joined the garrison. If they had displayed but a tithe of the perseverance and resolution shown in their attacks on your position in operating on our rear, and our only line of communication, it has always been my conviction that our position would have proved an untenable one. Happily for us, and for India, they concentrated their best and most sustained efforts on that point where, by what I have ever thought one of his happiest conceptions, Sir Henry Barnard had placed the man of all others in the force best qualified to hdKf with an invincible tenacity and an almost superhuman vigilance, such a post.

"These are not mere words of course, they express my heartfelt belief; and if I were ever to write the history of the Siege, they indicate the spirit in which I should conceive myself bound by a simple sense of justice to bear my testimony to your services and merits; and as it is founded on a thorough knowledge of both, I should have no fear of being accused of exaggeration. Holding, then, as I do, that the right flank was, as it were, the very heart of our position, and that injury to it must have been fatal to the force—certainly so far as its strategical efficiency was concerned—and probably even to its very existence, I do not think that the man to whom under God we owe mainly our safety and that of the Empire from such crushing disaster, has been worthily rewarded by having received only what you have done, nor do I think that you have overestimated your just claim to consideration."

Colonel Baird Smith always acknowledged in the heartiest manner his sense of Capt. Taylor's most valuable services.

By referring to his letter to his wife, quoted a few pages back, this fact will be accentuated.

In his official despatch dated 17 Sept., 1857, he thus writes of Taylor.

"To my 2nd in command, Capt. Taylor, Director of the Trenches, I have been indebted for the most constant, cordial and valuable assistance throughout the whole period of the operations. Gifted with rare soundness of professional judgment, his advice has been sought by me under all circumstances of difficulty or doubt, and I find that I cannot express too strongly to the Major-General my sense of the valuable services this officer has tendered."

In a letter to a friend in the Royal Artillery, quoted on *page* 576 of Kaye's 3rd Volume, he thus expressed himself:

"I would not willingly do the very faintest injustice either to Captain Taylor or to any of the other officers of the brigade to whose noble co-operation, given always without reserve, and in the most cordial spirit, I was so deeply indebted, and for which I have done my best upon all occasions to express my gratitude. These feelings are especially strong in reference to Taylor, whom I found to be ever, not only the most energetic and competent of seconds, but in all relations a true and right-hearted gentleman. I should be ashamed of myself if I permitted any petty feelings to influence me in estimating his worth; and I feel assured that no credit which may be due to me will ever be really diminished by my doing the amplest and heartiest justice to every man who worked under my orders."

The officers of the Bengal Artillery in every possible way did their duty most nobly. Perhaps if any of those were to be singled out for special praise, it would be Major Brind, who had command of the Key Battery No. 1. Everyone indeed did their duty most splendidly—but this fact in no way lessens the very great merit of the Chief Engineer in designing the operations to

be undertaken, and in carrying them out, in the teeth of great and continuous obstruction from the Commander, to a glorious victory.

This memoir cannot be more fitly closed than by a transcript of the inscription placed on the monument erected to his memory in the Cathedral of Calcutta.

The inscription was composed by Colonel Sir Henry Yule, K.C.S.I., C.B., and is a truthful record of Colonel Baird Smith's public life.

"In memory of Colonel Richard Baird Smith, of the Bengal Engineers, Master of the Calcutta Mint, C.B., A.D.C. to the Queen, whose career, crowded with brilliant service, was cut short at its brightest. Born at Lasswade, N.B., December the 31st, 1818, he came to India in 1838. Already distinguished in the two Sikh wars, his conduct on the outbreak of revolt in 1857, showed what a clear apprehension, a brave heart, and a hopeful spirit could effect with scanty means in crushing disorder. Called to Delhi as Chief Engineer, his bold and ready judgment, his weighty and tenacious counsels played a foremost part in securing the success of the Siege, and England's supremacy; and the gathered wisdom of many years spent in administering the irrigation of Upper India, trained him for his crowning service in the survey of the great famine of 1861, the provision of relief, and the suggestions of safeguard against such calamities. Broken by accumulated labours, he died at sea, December the 13th, 1861, aged scarcely 43. At Madras where his career began, his body awaits the resurrection unto life; whilst here the regard and admiration of British India erect this cenotaph in honour of his virtues and public services."

## *PART II.*

### COLONEL BAIRD SMITH'S LETTERS TO HIS WIFE DURING THE SIEGE.

THIS valuable collection of letters written by Colonel Baird Smith to his wife at Roorkee consists of seventy-five letters; sixty-six from the camp at Delhi, and nine during his journeys from Roorkee to Delhi and vice-versa.

He had resolved that he would write daily to his wife, but owing to stress of work he was unable to do so; still he managed to send her sixty-six letters in eighty-two days.

Fifty-one of these letters were written when General Wilson was in command.

It would appear that he had been warned by a friend that Wilson was likely to be captious, but for some time he got on well with him. By the end of July he begins to think his friend was right, and as time goes on he finds the General frequently obstructive, so much so that in August he has more and more trouble with him, and during the siege operations he finds him literally the greatest obstacle extant to vigorous exertions, and believes his mind to have been off its usual balance, as the General 'cuts' him, and only communicates officially through the Staff!

No one can fail, I think, to be struck by the cheery

nature of his letters, and how strong, helpful and hopeful he is throughout; contrasting wonderfully with the General who is always desponding, except when immediately under the influence of Baird Smith's stronger and more buoyant nature.

The latter never gives way or desponds—never croaks. Throughout he insists on his scheme of attack, and always, though with difficulty, carries the General with him.

He never gets support from the General, but is always giving support to him, and insisting on his doing what is right; on all occasions he is for vigorous action, when action is possible; and although sometimes chafing at inaction, and the obstruction of the General, endeavours when possible to keep his temper under control, in the interest of public duty.

He is always thinking of his work, and doing his utmost to carry it out in every way regardless of self. All matters were fully attended to. Strengthening position so as finally and within a month to make it really impregnable. Giving his earnest attention to sanitary measures for the improvement of the health of the camp. He urges the General to save his men by ordering them not to advance too much in pursuit of the enemy so as to get under the command of the guns of the fortress.

Making the utmost endeavours to get everything ready in his own department for the coming siege, and doing his best to help other departments; kind and considerate for those under him, working out his scheme in the fullest details, and insisting on carrying it out intact in the teeth of great opposition.

The siege works were finally carried out most successfully, though not quite so quickly as he wished, owing to difficulties placed in his way by others.

Prudent, prescient and energetic in the highest degree, he achieved a grand success in spite of the General.

Even when the General thinks of retiring again to the 'Ridge' he places an emphatic veto on it, and presses onwards to victory.

Then, when all is over, and success is complete, he resolves to take the rest which is his due, and absolutely necessary; but very shortly is again as busy as ever, attending to the re-organisation of his department, as well as to the military charge in the Districts of Saharunpore and Mozuffernuggur.

The force under his command at this time consisted of 1,500 men and 10 guns, their duty being to watch the river frontier of these districts—a length of 60 miles. The Government were certain that whatever could be done by vigour and foresight, with small means, would be done by the Commander to whom this trust was given.

LETTERS FROM DELHI FROM COLONEL BAIRD SMITH  
TO HIS WIFE.

No. I. " Saharunpore, 27th June, 1857.

"Here we are safe and right so far. Of course Captain Read's<sup>1</sup> arrangements for our third horse broke down, and we had to drive two the whole way. In spite of this, though, we throve better than Robertson<sup>2</sup> and Spring<sup>3</sup> who had four horses, and yet managed to get two falls with them. We arrived in very good time; had a few drops of rain by the way; found Brownlow<sup>4</sup> not in his own house, but in Mr. Spankie's,<sup>5</sup> where we all had breakfast, and met the Saharunpore public. We move on again this evening, and have every prospect of a quiet march.

1 Capt. H. E. Read, 30th N.I., Supt. Deyra Dhoon Forests.

2 Capt. A. C. Robertson, H.M.S., Dep.-Supt. Ganges Canal.

3 Capt. Spring, II.M. 24th.

4 Lt. II. A. Brownlow, B. Engr.. now Lt.-Genl.

5 Robert Spankie, Magistrate, Saharunpore, who protected the Hill Stations and sent men and materials to Delhi for Engineer Park.

"The little Goorkas have just given the Goojars on our route a very severe lesson, killing some 250 of them in fair fight. This was just at the Ghat we have to cross. So it will smooth and secure our way for us.

"I am getting a lot more of the things we need, and Brownlow is bringing up no end of stores.

"<sup>1</sup>Do not expect to hear from me for two or three days, as we shall be quite out of the post, and will not come within it till we arrive at Kurnal.

"The weather is very pleasant as yet for this rough and ready sort of work, and I hope it may keep so till we get to Delhi."

No. 2. "Saharunpore, 28th June, 1857.

"It poured incessantly here all yesterday, and all last night, so marching was a hopeless business, and the whole of our little camp world was damped almost to death, in spirits at any rate, if not in flesh. However, a blink of sunshine will set them all right again, and there seems some small promise of it to-day.

"I hope to get off in a few hours, and will march all day. I separate my personal party from the convoy, which proceeds by a safer and better though longer route, under Brownlow and Mr. VVilcocks. They too will get off to-day, I hope. We go straight across to Kurnal, and all going well, expect to be there to-morrow some time or other. Robertson<sup>1</sup> goes with me.

"Spring<sup>2</sup> also leaves to-day. I got a capital night's rest, and am quite up to a steady good day's work. Mr. Marten<sup>3</sup> and the office people are of my party, but we shall have to leave one of our tents with Brownlow, as we cannot otherwise get our traps on the elephants."

1 Capt. A. C. Robertson, II.M.S.

2 Capt. Spring, H.M. 24th.

3 Mr. Harry Marten, Col. Baird Smith's Civil Asst.

No. 3. "Bank of the Jumna,  
2-30 p.m., Monday, June 29th.

"Here we are in the agonies of passing the river, and I have borrowed a pen that won't write, but it will suffice to tell you that so far we have got on very well, though of course in a scrambling fashion enough. We left Saharunpore yesterday afternoon about half-past three, with of course the usual host of difficulties; but we made thirteen miles before nightfall, and are likely to make fifty to-day, but we shall still be a few miles short of Kurnal. It is rough work, but I ~~iwmc~~ felt better in my life than under it."

No. 4. "Camp Koonjpoora, near Kurnal,  
"June 30th, 1857.

"Last night we reached this place, having been on the move from about five in the morning till nine at night. We dined at the fashionable hour of half-past eleven at night. Strange to say, this utter irregularity seems rather to agree with me than otherwise. We are now waiting for breakfast, after which Robertson and I ride in to Kurnal, leaving the camp here till later in the day, so as to spare cattle and servants as much as possible, since they had a terrible day of it yesterday. We got across the Jumna with no other difficulty than that caused by the decided objection of the horses to getting into the boats. We had to drag them in with ropes, hoist them in with poles, and take other liberties with them. None of us feel any the worse from the exposure. Indeed it was a much better day for us than to-day when there is scarcely a cloud in the sky. I value clouds even more than Ruskin ever did, though not for his reasons. I shan't hear anything from camp till we get to Kurnal, and my future movements must

be guided thereby. We are only about 6 miles short of it, and will soon canter in.

" 1 p.m. Kurnal.—We go on to-night again and reach Gurchunda."

No. 5.

"July 1st, 1857, Paniput.

"This is written under very quaint circumstances in the Post Office at Paniput, about ten at night. We are all well, and getting over the ground comfortably enough. We have just passed Major Laughton, in the dark, however, so we had no conversation with him. As it is frightfully *hit* in this pokey little place, I will only say 'God bless you.'"

No. 6.

"Camp Sureoli, July 3rd,<sup>1</sup> 1857.

"We finished our march last night about one, and about four I was roused out of bed by a very urgent letter from Chesney, begging me to try and be in camp to-night. The distance was 50 miles, and the chance of accomplishing it very seedy-looking. However, I determined to try, and started at 8 a.m. for this place, 18 miles from our halting place. Robertson and I came together. We halted at a place called Kallee, and had some breakfast, and a feed for our horses; and then set off again, reaching this place about 2 p.m. You may fancy that the heat was rather terrific, but it has done us no sort of harm, and I have met here an old friend in Captain McAndrew,<sup>2</sup> who gave me a dinner on the night of the battle of Ahwal, and does the same to day. May it be auspicious. We are to have the Raja of Jheend's carriage to take us one stage, an elephant to take us the second, and we hope to get horses for the final one

<sup>1</sup> 2nd?

<sup>2</sup> Capt. George McAndrew, 47th N.I., Asst. Comr. Lahore Division, season of 1841.

in to camp. If so we shall be there about midnight, having travelled 50 miles since 8 this morning. I had hoped to have caught the mail-cart, if suddenly summoned in this fashion, and in fact did catch it, but found it occupied by two men who would not let the coachman stop to hear my story. I don't feel a bit tired, and am keeping in excellent health, but getting, oh! so black — I expect to be burnt to a coal-colour before we are done with this sort of thing. We shall leave after we have had some dinner, and all going well, I hope my next letter will be from camp.

"The reason I am summoned so suddenly is that an assault is to be made to-night, and it is extremely desirable I should be there. I shall arrive probably two or three hours before it is made, but will not assume command till it is over, as the Acting Chief Engineer<sup>1</sup> has had all the labour of making the arrangements, and I certainly won't deprive him of any of the credit that is his fair due."

No. 7.

"Delhi, 3rd July, 1857.

"I got in here this morning about 3 a.m., terribly tired of course, after a fifty-two miles' journey, and I came in to find that, as usual, the scheme of action was all over, and nothing was to be done, so my exertions were useless. We got over the ground easily enough, and I have just had a couple of hours' sleep, and am quite jolly again. I hope to get out this afternoon to see how things look; as yet, of course, I have seen nothing, and feel rather blind in my work.

"The enemy is perfectly quiet to-day. He did intend attacking, and *may* do so yet, but it is rumoured that they have had an internal riot which for the day has paralysed them,"

I Capt. Alex. Taylor.

No. 8. "Camp Delhi, 4th July, 1857.

"There has been a good deal of pounding this morning. The enemy detached a party last night to our rear, to interrupt the communication with Kurnal, and were followed from camp and attacked, though with what results we do not yet know. They are, however, good, as usual. I am in great anxiety about Mr. Marten and my camp people. They were to have arrived this morning at the place where the enemy were last night, and no doubt they have fallen back. The escort party I sent out had dispersed, some having been taken by the enemy, but our party is probably quite safe, and will turn up in time. I am much pressed for time to-day, and as you see, for paper, so I must be content with a short note."

No. 9. "Camp Delhi, 5th July, 1857.

"Still quite quiet here; and yesterday's scrimmage, for it scarcely deserves any other name, ended in no great harm to anybody. I am grieved to say, however, that our old General, whom at first sight one learns to love, is lying at the point of death. I had a long talk with him this morning, and left him about seven, not looking worse than usual. I went down at eleven, and was received with the news that the poor old gentleman was dying. He has been terribly harassed for the last month, and has sunk under the weight of his anxieties and troubles. I am very sorry we have lost the good old man. I fancy Brigadier Wilson will command the Field Force, and it is some comfort that he will be a commanding officer, at any rate.

"I am glad to report to you that after rest for a night or two, I have got into a flourishing state of health again. I was a good deal knocked up by the

scrambling and discomfort, but that has passed away now. I can't say much for the prospects of usefulness before me, but it is early to talk of those yet, and so I'll keep them for a while. At present we can do but little in any shape or form. However, the good time will no doubt come, and will be taken when it does.

"I can scarcely tell you of any domestic details as I have been very roughly put up since I left my own camp. However, Mr. Marten came in all safe and sound this morning, and the whole camp with him. The tents are pitched, and I dressed in the little bechoba<sup>^</sup>this morning. It was very hot, but it was a comfort to be in a place of one's own. I mean to sleep there hereafter."

No. 10. "Camp Delhi, 6th July, 1857.

"I have only time today to write a very few words as, having had to attend the funeral of poor old General Barnard, the dak hour has come suddenly upon us. We continue to keep well, but make no perceptible progress in our work. It is rather heart-breaking, but I suppose it will come to a crisis soon. It ought to do so, and all I can do to bring it on I am doing.

"We have, however, as yet no General. The new man, General Reed, being a feeble valetudinarian scarcely able to ride. I saw Mr. Baillie<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Dickens last night—both were looking well, but sharing the general feeling of dissatisfaction in the camp."

No. 11. "Delhi, 7th July, 1857.

"We are still standing fast, and the mass is terribly inert, and not to be moved to action easily.

**1 Lt. G. Baillie, B. Art.**

I sent in my 'ultimatum' yesterday, strongly urging an immediate assault, and stating that in so far as this Dept. was concerned every (preparation?) for it was made, and ready for final orders. I greatly fear, however, that final orders are still a long way off, as people do so slip through your fingers here, and when you think you have pinned them to a resolution, you find they have wandered from it wholly. Oh for a *man* to command us! We are perfectly, rather ignominiously safe, and there lies Delhi, Mosque, and Minaret, and inaccessible. However, I am working in my usual fashion, and will, I daresay, effect something in the end." «'

No. 12.

"8th July, 1857.

"I was up this morning at 1 a.m., out in the sun till 1 p.m., writing ever since, and now I am clean done, and can scarcely keep my eyes open.

"We went out with a strong force to destroy a bridge<sup>1</sup> very near the enemy's position. We had 18 guns, about 400 cavalry, and 1,000 infantry, and a very pretty show it was. We reached the ground just at daybreak, when the sappers began work at once. When the explosion took place it was beautiful, and the necessary demolition of the most perfect kind. The enemy not only never looked near us, but bolted into the city as soon as we made our appearance. We had done everything by 9 o'clock, and Mahommed Khan was ready with an 'al fresco' breakfast."

No. 13.

"Delhi, 9th July, 1857.

"This has been a bewildering sort of day. Our first disturbance to-day was a grand shouting in camp, which turned out to be a regiment of Native

1 Busaye Bridge, over Nujuffghur Jheel Channel

Irregular Cavalry running 'a-muck' or something like it. The Mutiny fever had seized them, and we had allowed a large body of the enemy's cavalry to get right into camp. They were soon knocked on the head, a lot of them killed, the rest running away. Then came news that the enemy was out in force on the right of the camp. I went out, and joined the General remaining a while with him, and then going all over the position to see how matters stood. The enemy was, as usual, heartily beaten, and is said to have lost about 1,000 men. What our loss has been yet, I don't know, but nothing serious, I believe. Then it rained the whole day, and I was soaked through and through, but I changed as soon as I came in, and am none the worse from it, and every other moment has been taken up with work. However, things don't mend in appearance, and though we beat the enemy always we produce no final results. In the Brigade we are all at one, and it is as clear as noon-day that our sole chance of taking Delhi is by an assault, which grows more and more difficult with every day's work. I hammer this into everybody, but I can't see yet that I produce much effect. However, I have put my opinion on record, and though I dislike my position very much, in being able to do so little, still I must be patient.

"We all continue very well here in spite of our difficulties. Brownlow came in this morning in great spirits, and brought all his people with him, except about 30 who ran away."

No. 14. "Camp before Delhi, 10th July, 1857.

"The affair of yesterday has cost us about 50 killed and 100 wounded. Captain Robertson was in the thick of it with his regiment, but got out all right. I greatly grudge the loss of so many men at a time when every life is precious to us. But we

**cannot of** course refuse the attack, and so we go on. I keep jolly enough myself, but an army without any real head is no pleasant machine to belong to, and I find myself half wishing I were sick. This, however, is a faint-hearted notion, and we must face our difficulties, not shirk them. There is no real danger in our position, but the inaction is most oppressive to mind and body."

No. 15.

11th

July, 1857.

"I sent in my project of attack on the 6th, but as yet they have not taken any notice of it. I saw the General deep in the papers yesterday morning, and perhaps he may make up his mind on one side or the other in time. I hear it has been determined to wait for General Grant, and how long that implies, it is difficult to say. However, all things are in God's hands, and I am content to wait His issues, having done all I could."

No. 16.

" 12th July, 1857.

"I suspect it is determined that we are not to assault, a foregone conclusion which will be communicated to me only after it has been come to. It seems to me we have almost passed the time for a successful operation of the kind, though I would have tried it. Anyhow, it is infinitely desirable that we should arrive at a final conclusion, as our future work must depend a good deal on what that may be. I believe the Adjt.-General comes to me this evening to talk over matters, when I hope some issue will be arrived at."

No. 17.

"Camp Delhi, 13 July, 1857.

"I suspect it has been determined not to assault, the risks are considered too great. However, don't

say anything about this. I have still held to my recorded opinion that our only chance lay in this, though I could not deny that it had great chances against its success. If nothing active is done here, it will be, I hope, elsewhere, and that we may not remain here useless and inactive.

"The news from Agra is not good, and the people who have shut Mr. Colvin up in the Fort, have now left him there, and are coming to Delhi. I suppose they will come out, give us one fight more, and then lapse into quiet like the rest. I have no sort of fear for ourselves; our position is, I believe, impregnable by any such enemy, and we will hold our own firmly, if compelled to do no more."

No. 18.

" 14th July, 1857.

"The enemy is out again to-day. I went out with Chesney to the battery on the right to see what was going on.

"Yesterday I had what, to my own mind at any rate, seemed a final and decisive interview with the old General, and the result is that he informed me he thought the project of an assault too hazardous, and should it fail, carrying with it consequences too formidable to be risked. The old man had evidently been taught his lesson, and he repeated his conclusion to me as though from a book. I could only say that, looking more to the benefits of the success I anticipated, than to the results of a failure I did not anticipate, I had come to the result that an immediate assault was best, though I could not and never had denied, that if it failed, the failure must be disastrous. And so our confabulations ended; and I fancy we are now to remain vigorously on the defensive, and make a sort of gigantic Roorkee of our camp.

"I am grieved to say we have lost poor Walker;

I Lt. Edmund Walker, B. Engr.

he died last night, and was buried this morning. I started to go with the party, but was so out of sorts as to be obliged to give in. Since then Mr. Pococke has been taken ill, and lies in a very precarious state. I don't like our position. It is too crowded, and is very ill-ventilated; and I must try to get a more open one for the camp. We have at last got a doctor to ourselves, which is some gain, though he is not very well equipped.

"You will have seen the sad news from Jhelum, where the very day he arrived poor Spring<sup>1</sup> had to go into action with the Mutineers of the 14th N. I., and it is feared was mortally wounded. I llbpe it is an exaggeration, though I fear it is not so.

"Now I must finish up with pleasant thoughts and cheery words.—Dissatisfied and disappointed as I am in many respects, still I am willingly here, as it is God's will that I should be so, to bide His future, and I have little anxiety about it.

No. 19.

" 15th July, 1857.

"The enemy was thoroughly defeated yesterday, driven back from every point, and pursued just too far, as our men got under fire from the walls of the city, so close were they, and suffered severely for their temerity. It is foolish doing this, as it produces no sort of result except bad ones, and deprives us of our best men. The casualties among officers were severe yesterday, and the Engineers came in for a considerable share of them. Walker of the Bombay Engineers, Carnegie and Geneste were hit; the two latter very slightly. I understand about 12 officers in all were wounded, but how many men, I don't know yet. However, I should say that now all chance of an immediate assault was at an end, so that we shall

1 Capt. Spring, H.M. 24th.

probably wait here till we are sufficiently strengthened for a regular siege. It will be more satisfactory in some respects, but less so in others to finish the matter in this way, and anyhow there seems little choice open to us now.

"I was all round the position this morning, and lost my horse in the process, from the stupidity of the syce, who left me and fell behind, so I had to indent on Captain Robertson for a dooly, and very pleasant travelling it was, I was so achy in my legs after my walk."

No. So.

" 16th July, 1857.

"You want to know how my day passes. I get up about 4, and immediately set off to go round the batteries and defences, to see if I can do anything for their security. I have generally a lot of demands from the Artillery Officers and others, and when I return arrangements are made for satisfying these. I get home about 8, and work till breakfast-time, about 9 or 9-30. I breakfast on some fish, of which we have a daily supply, tea and toast, and then back to my writing-table again. The Daily Reports of the Field Engineers are then gone over, abstracted for the General's information and sent off; all routine business is disposed of, and then I take up the matters connected with our future progress in our work, all of which I am getting into form for future use. These occupy me till the afternoon, when, unless people call, I go out again round the works, and get back in time to dress for dinner. I go to bed almost immediately after dinner, and so the day ends. It does not look tempting, does it? However, it has not been of my seeking, and so I take it quietly. I only hope it may please God to enable us to make a move soon, and bring this weary contest to a close.

No. 21.

" 17th July, 1857.

"Another change! The kaleidoscope scarcely gives more, or more varied, only they are generally more beautiful. General Reed has resigned the command of the force, and leaves this evening for the Hills. He takes with him a whole lot of the staff, some of whom you saw at Roorkee.

"Our new Commander is Brigadier Wilson, with the rank of Brigadier-General; it is one comfort connected with the change that we have at last a *man*, be he good, bad or indifferent he will be a real and not a sham commander. It has been such miserable work since I joined from the want of a head for whom one could feel the faintest sense of respect, that I welcome one of strong, though from all accounts sometimes perverse, will and resolution. At any rate, what is to be done will be done decidedly, and a marked course will be adopted. This is infinitely preferable to the weak uncertain ways I have lately had to contemplate, that I will cheerfully compound for occasional erratics. He has just sent for me, telling me he wishes to have a long quiet talk about our present position and future prospects, and I am to go to him in the cool of the evening, as he says his tent is always so full he can have no quiet there. I hope I may get on with him, as much of my own comfort in work depends on it. We'll hope for the best.

"I went up to the batteries yesterday in your red coat, and was instantly assailed by everybody as insane for making myself so conspicuous, as the enemy would be sure to pick me out, and perhaps pick me off. I will be more careful next time."

No. 22. "Camp before Delhi, 18th July, 1857.

"The General and I had our long talk yesterday, and on the whole found our views of things reasonably in accordance. He was decidedly opposed

to an assault as being a desperate measure, and I concurred so far in opinion with him that, though I did not think it a desperate measure when I joined, or for some time afterwards, I admitted that our losses in Brigadier Chamberlain's two actions had been so grave that the last of them had turned the scale in my opinion against an assault, by leaving us too few troops to insure that moderate prospect of success I had originally indulged in. So the fate of the assault was finally settled. Then he asked me what further plans I had to propose. I told him that my view of matters was that we should maintain our present grip on Delhi like grim Death, that nothing short of the contingency of the last extremity of disaster should induce us to relax it, and that we should maintain our position here till we were strong enough in men and material to assume the offensive in a decided way; that we should send off to healthier climates, by successive convoys, all our sick and wounded—now, alas! exceeding 1,000 in number; that we should clear the army as much as possible of "impedimenta" of all kinds, and keep ourselves lightly equipped with as much as possible of the bone and flesh of the Force ready for work. To all this he seemed very heartily to concur, and said that, looking to our actual circumstances, he could think of no more judicious course to follow, and meant to follow it. He added that if he had 2,000 men more he would be prepared for a regular attack of batteries, and I told him I was ready for this whenever he was. And so it was agreed that I was to strengthen the position as much as my means would permit, and he was to be very cautious in the use of the troops during the enemy's attacks.

"We have now four wounded officers, all within the last few days.

"The enemy is out again to-day, and our guns are hard at work.

No. 23. "Delhi, 19th July, 1857.

"I was out till late this morning at the advanced posts. We had another action with the enemy yesterday. He began work very early, before the men had had their breakfasts, and kept firing away all day. Our casualties, however, were very few, and he was as usual beaten back at every point. Those who are learned in such matters, declare they never saw him fight worse or with less spirit than yesterday. It is scarcely possible it can be otherwise, as being beaten continually can't improve any one's taste for fighting, and that has hitherto been the history of the Mutineers."

No. 24. "21st July, 1857.

"I am very tired indeed this morning. The enemy came out in considerable force yesterday afternoon, and I went up to the batteries, where I remained for about three hours. The fire was rather smart during the time, but no casualties occurred. It was late before I got home, and this morning I went out again all over the position to see that things were in order, coming back late, and rather knocked up.

"I am glad to say that, though there was a great deal of apparent fighting yesterday, we lost no one. How far it may be true, I can't say, but report has it that the enemy has lost 600 or 700, and is thoroughly discouraged in his attacks on the batteries, which he now considers quite impregnable, and does not mean to attack any more. We'll see 1"

No. 25. "22nd July, 1857.

"We had a quiet day yesterday, and bid fair to have another to-day. In the middle of the night the enemy evidently got up a great alarm about nothing, and kept for some time firing vigorously

with great guns and muskets too. He seemed to fancy we were going to assault, but he was mistaken, for we were quietly in bed. I fancied he had at last carried out his long threatened intention of making a night attack on our camp, but as everything seemed quite quiet, I went off to sleep again. We have fair grounds for concluding that the Mutineers are beginning to see unpleasant signs ahead of them, and to be really discouraged. They know that reinforcements are coming from below and above, from the Punjaub and Calcutta. They can make no impression on us here, and we brush them off like foul blue-bottle flies, and will 'before long crush them, as I believe the moment our Punjaub reinforcements come we will go at them in form. I will be very glad of it, as our present position is, though prudent, certainly not pleasant."

No. 26. "Camp Delhi, 24th July, 1857.

"It is very difficult to say *when* we shall be able to do anything really efficient to bring this long business to a close. All depends on the period of arrival of reinforcements in men, and especially in siege guns and ammunition. At present we get everything in dribblets, which seem to do little more than supply our daily waste. The enemy came out again yesterday, and though as usual completely beaten back, still inflicted some loss on us, especially in officers, of whom we had one killed and three or four severely wounded. He seems now disposed to work round to our right, and come into the open ground there. It is rather too good to hope for, but if he does we will attack him at once, and I have no doubt will give a good account of both him and his guns. At the same time it is a provoking way of working, and will not help us much to our ultimate objects.

"I had an opportunity to-day of saying my say to

the General about the doings or not-doings of Major Bagot at Saharunpore, and I believe positive orders have been sent to him to have less respect for the Goojars, and more faith in his Goorkhas.

"I am sorry to say poor young Jones<sup>1</sup> died last night.—I greatly fear Mr. Dickins<sup>2</sup> too is in a bad way.—It is very saddening to see so many fine young fellows dropping round you."

No. 27.

25th July, 1857.

"I daresay in time you will be as learned as possible in the maxims of Marshal Vauban, who is the great siege authority of all time, and^ias well-nigh exhausted the subject in his own lifetime, leaving other folks very little to do. But we can't respect his instructions very rigidly, seeing that most of the means and appliances he proposes, are not to be had at Delhi. We must, however, do our best with such means as we actually have.

"At this time, our chief function seems to be to draw all the Mutineers upon us, and keep them off other people, which we do certainly satisfactorily enough, but I wish our role were somewhat changed. I mustn't grumble, however, as it is all the working out of a great plan which will be successful in God's good time. I can't say that my own impressions of General Wilson agree as yet with Drummond's. It is the rule to be captious, and criticism is easy, and to self-love pleasant. I find the General rational enough in all I have to do with him, and as yet, at any rate, am in no mood for complaint."

No. 28.

"Delhi, 27th July, 1857.

"We have had very heavy rain all yesterday and last night. The same cause has damped the

<sup>1</sup> Lt. Edward Jones, B. Engrs.

<sup>2</sup> Lt. Thos. E. Dickins. B.A., P. W. Dcpt.

enemy as well as the country generally since; for two days past he has been very quiet indeed, and has scarcely fired a shot. I went out prowling for information last evening beyond the advanced posts, and came on an enemy's sentry. He was very civil in his bearing—didn't attempt shooting, but just crossed the road when I did, and after we had looked at each other for a little while, and I found I couldn't possibly get to the place I wanted to go to, I turned back and walked quietly away. I had a great deal of walking about, and was very tired with it all, but no harm was done.

"I also wrote to-day to Lord Dalhousie, giving him a full account of the state of things here at present, and our prospects hereafter. It will be well that he should know the real state of the case, and be able to explain it to others if need be.

"The health of people in general has mended since I set vigorously about sanitary arrangements near camp, and we have had no new officers sick lately, while four have returned to duty."

No. 29.

(No date) ? 28th July.

"There is evidently a very heavy storm brewing, and I wish it would break, as it is intolerably close and sultry.—We were alarmed yesterday by hearing that the General was very ill; so ill that the doctors had forbidden his doing any work at all, and we began to fear we were going to have another change of chiefs. But this morning he is much better again, and I hope the attack, said to be fever and dysentery, has been only a passing one.

"The enemy continues singularly quiet. It is either the precursor of some grand attack, or he is becoming convinced that he gains very little by attacking us at all, and means to leave us alone till we attack him. I fancy the point will be settled in a day or two, as,

if in that time he does nothing, I will begin to think that the latter cause is the correct one. However, it won't do to come to premature conclusions on such a point."

No. 30.

"Delhi, 29th July, 1857.

"There is nothing very special to tell you of to-day. The enemy is so quiet that the European soldiers insist he has evacuated Delhi. However, I suspect the wish is father to the thought, and I saw this morning from the batteries quite sufficient numbers to prove that a good many remained still. It is certain though that he attacks neither with the persistence, nor the vigour he formerly showed. So far as it goes this is all right, and it is now simply a question of time when we shall put an end to this sort of thing, and bring matters to a crisis. It won't be my fault if this is delayed a day longer than we can help. It will be a great mercy when it is all over, as I have never had to do with a campaign in which the moral support was less. There would be disaster and disgrace in defeat, but there is scant honour in victory, and one has the feeling that the whole we do only tends to repair of a gigantic blunder of our own growing for years and years, and of which we have been disgracefully ignorant till its effects burst on us as they have done. In no case can one's self-love take much comfort to itself, contemplate the case how we may. The errors must be corrected, but you can't sponge out history, and this business will stand for ever against us as an astounding instance of a ruling Government and Community having been taken utterly by surprise."

No. 31.

"Camp Delhi, July 31st, 1857.

"The enemy has come out to-day in force, after threatening to do so for a long time past, and not

doing it. We scarcely yet know what he really means to do, as his plans whatever they are, are still misty. But come where, when or how he may, he will meet a warm reception, and probably return all the worse for it."

No. 32. "Camp Delhi, 1st August, 1857.

"Yesterday was a very unsettled and uncomfortable sort of day. The enemy moved out in the morning in rather unusual force to get into our rear, and intercept a large convoy that was to come in this morning. He made a somewhat vigorous attack in front; at the same time there was a great lot of cannonading without much harm being done to anybody. The poor General, who is not quite well yet, sent for me in a great hurry, and I had a long talk with him. I recommended measures somewhat more vigorous than he was prepared for, and it ended in a sort of 'mezzotermine.' Luckily, a tremendous thunder-storm broke, the enemy walked back into the city, and our difficulties disappeared bodily."

No. 33. "Delhi, 3rd August, 1857.

"The day before yesterday the enemy kept us on the alert the whole day. He moved out a strong force of artillery, cavalry and infantry on our right flank, with the avowed intention of turning it, and getting on our line of communication with Kurnal and Umballa. He made a bridge across the Nujffghur Jheel escape, but just as he got his guns and cavalry across, a tremendous rain-storm came on, the escape rose, carried off the bridge, and left the guns in a very awkward position. This seems to have frightened him a little, and he withdrew from his advanced position, and went back to the city. There had been a good deal of firing in front all day, which increased

towards the night, and all through the night the attack was maintained, guns and musketry firing with great vigour. He took very little by the effort; beaten back of course he was, and after an enormous expenditure of ammunition. Our casualties were very few indeed, including only one officer, who was killed while walking along behind a breastwork. The enemy continued firing till about 10 or u, and then it died away. At present everything is perfectly still."

No. 34. "Camp Delhi, 4th August, 1857.

"The enemy was perfectly quiet all yesterday. Native report has it that he lost 3,000 men in the night attack, but that is absurd. I fancy the real loss a few hundreds. We have intelligence of four victories won by General Havelock, who is said to have captured every gun the Mutineers had. The broken fragments are said to be pouring into Delhi, where the sight of them cannot be particularly encouraging to the garrison. I think myself that a very few months will settle this storm, and that it is now rapidly advancing towards this end."

No. 35. "Delhi, 5th August, 1857.

"I am afraid I must miss the post to-day, as I have had a long letter to write to the General, one of those unpleasant letters that one must write when you think a man is going wrong, and it is your special business to tell him so. He is very amiable, however, and will not think the worse of me because I tell him honestly and openly what I think of any circumstances that present themselves. If he does I can't help it, I *must* do what seems to me right, and leave the issues to work themselves out in due course.

"We have been perfectly quiet all yesterday and to-day. The enemy is said to be greatly disheartened

by the results of the actions of the 2nd and 3rd, and numbers are now reported to be leaving the city. The Neemuch and Nuseerabad Brigade has lost 900 since the action, of which the majority are said to be deserters. The rumours of reinforcements coming to us also produce their effect, and there can be no doubt that the spirit of the Mutiny is dying out. There is one thing pleasant to myself in this. Our own force feels, and the enemy admits that the position we occupy has been made quite impregnable. I am constantly told 'Ah, you have made this a very different place to what it was a month ago; we lose no men now comparatively to what we did then.' As this was my first object when it was settled we were to hold our own here, it is satisfactory to find by general consent that it has been accomplished. We are making efforts to-day to destroy the enemy's bridge, as yet without success. One of the infernal machines, popularly called 'devils,' stuck on a sandbank, and exploded, apropos to nothing in particular, with a diabolical row. There are five more to go off, so it is to be hoped one will reach its destination. These all act by explosion. We send off a huge raft this evening which is to act by pressure and obstructing the water-way. I wanted these operations to be connected with some others against the enemy himself, but the General doesn't like anything at all risky, and so when we've demolished the bridge we've got only to stand and admire our success, but get nothing from it."

No. 36.

"Delhi, 6th August, 1857.

"Here is this dear old General a-fidgeting again about his rear. I try to comfort him three times a day with the assurance that though we must *watch* it well, there is no real cause for anxiety about it. It is his mania, however, and it costs me an awful

amount of note-writing when the enemy moves in that direction as he is doing to-day. Nothing would please me more than that he should come out, and we get at him in the open plain. True the country is in a most impracticable state, but if he can move, so can we, though the General thinks not, and rates his mobility higher than our own, which is absurd, as Euclid says."

No. 37.

"7- 8. '57.

"I had a small quarrel with General Wilson last night, but as I wouldn't have any half-and-half arrangements of the matter we came to a clear understanding; and seeing then that he was quite in the wrong, he explained how he was worried to death by many contretemps, and would be very grieved indeed if he hurt my feelings. Of course I begged he would forget the momentary impatience I had shewn, and I took some shame to myself that I had thought so little of his causes of derangement, and so much of a small annoyance of my own. It all arose out of a blockhead of a man, Mr.—, having undertaken to do some road work, and afterwards repudiated it without telling me anything about it. The General thought it my business, and in a note made use of the expression—'the work you tried to throw on —'. I could not stand that, so I sent him —'s own letter to me, saying he would, be most happy to undertake it, and I told him when he knew me better he would learn that to throw my work on anybody else was the last act I could have imputed to me with justice, and he must now judge for himself as to whether in the present case it was truly imputed or not. If he had continued the injustice, I would have placed my resignation in his hands, but I was quite disarmed by his frank admission, which he followed up by a declaration that I had his entire confidence, and so we 'kissed and made friends'

again. I don't at all like this sort of thing, but it does good to take your position on the very first occasion, and it saves trouble afterwards."

No. 38. "Camp Delhi, 8th August, 1857.

"I was out rather late in the batteries last night, and the fire was very smart, in sound at any rate; round shot, shell, rockets and musket balls buzzing about, but doing marvellously little harm. There was not a single man hurt during the time I was there, about an hour and a half. It was very pretty to see the rockets with long tails of fire streaming across the dark sky. At first I thought they were shooting stars, as I did not know the enemy had rockets,

"However, as one charged with musket balls broke over my head, I ceased to believe in their starry nature. They (I mean the Mutineers, not the rockets as grammar would indicate) have now maintained an almost continuous fight since the first, and the spies say it is to be their critical effort. If after the seventh day they fail to take our position and dislodge us, they are going to give in, and desist from their efforts, what to do afterwards is not said. To their minds I suspect there is an awful significance in our quiet self-possessed waiting, and I daresay many of them will disappear before the final struggle comes."

No. 39. "Camp Delhi, 9th August, 1857.

"I have been out at the batteries since before 12 o'clock, and it is now 4, so all chance of catching to-day's dak is out of the question. Nicholson, who has just come down from the Punjab, wanted to see the position, and the General himself had got into one of his nervous fits, and wouldn't be satisfied with any assurance but my own that matters were all right. The enemy has put a new heavy-gun

battery just at the extreme right of the position, and the officer in command thinks that he and his men forthwith are to be sent into the middle of next week. However, I satisfied his mind that no such catastrophe was impending, and with a little help from our own artillery we could put the obnoxious battery's pipe out, which was done accordingly by a couple of hours' good fire."

No. 40. "Camp Delhi, 10th August, 1857.

"The enemy keeps up at present a general fidget all over the position, and pots away at every point. I rode to Metcalfe House this morning, our most advanced position on the left, through a small hail-storm of shot, shells and musket balls. However, they all went over my head, making their various noises which you can tell with perfect ease, after a little practice, from one another. An Irish rifleman rode up to me in a very excited state, and said, 'Och, sir, and take care of yerself, don't be going on there.' 'Why'? I asked.—'Why, because a big shell has just busted,'—'But,' I suggested, 'if it has burst it isn't dangerous any longer.' 'Oh, but, sir, there'll be a lot more like it in a minit.'

"However, I went on, as the road was really the best I could take, and though various shells 'busted' none of them came near me. This sort of thing goes on just now all over the position, but our casualties are wondrous few, and the enemy seems to have rather tired of the thing already, as since the morning he has been very quiet."

No. 41. "Camp Delhi, nth August, 1857.

"We have been tolerably quiet all night. There was a good deal of firing at the Metcalfe picquet, and five of our unlucky Beldars were sufferers—

one killed, three severely and one slightly wounded. I have been protesting against employing these men in such dangerous work, and as if to give emphasis to my protest, about 100 of them ran away in pure fright of the shot and shells. I daresay more will follow unless some change takes place.

"Yes, the change of tone and the substitution of a feeling of implicit confidence in our position for one of hopelessness and despondency, are the results of my work, and I am very glad of the change; for in war the moral powers are perhaps even more than physical ones, and the best way to ensure a position being impregnable is to create among its defenders the conviction that it is so. This has now been fairly done here, and as the Mutineers recoil from it, broken down more and more after each attempted assault, the conviction is intensified, and our strength added to by every effort to shake it. This is only Scene i. I hope Scene 2 will show the enemy a new phase of our capacity."

No. 42. "Camp before Delhi, 12 Aug., 1857.

"There has been a pretty little action this morning, which has resulted in our having captured four of the enemy's guns. Yesterday afternoon the General sent for me to have a talk about the present activity of the enemy on our left, and the necessity for checking it. Curiously enough, I said to Chesney before leaving my tent, 'I wonder if the General has been thinking out the same train of thought that I have, and has come to the same conclusion. I am clearly of opinion that the time has arrived for our active attack.' On going down I found it was just so; the General had decided that we must read the Mutineers a lesson, as they were becoming too aggressive, and the details were all arranged. About 1,100

infantry were told off for the work, six guns, and some cavalry to protect them, to parade at 3-30 this morning, to march down to Ludlow Castle, a large house occupied by the enemy, drive them in, and sweep round by the river side and the Metcalfe Park grounds, capturing any guns met with. I was out about 3 a.m. when only a small part of the Column had assembled. It, however, swelled gradually: one of the first officers I met was Captain Robertson, with 100 men of his regiment, and by about a quarter to 4 all the troops had assembled. It was a beautifully moon-lit and star-lit night, perfectly still and quiet, except for the hum of a crowd, that rose and fell on the fresh breeze, said breeze being delightful on the Ridge. At about a quarter past 4 the Column moved on, and continued to march undisturbed by a single shot, till in the immediate vicinity of Ludlow Castle. Then all at once there rose a loud burst of musketry, which continued steadily increasing in intensity for some time, then decreased, and in less than an hour had almost died away. The enemy had been completely surprised, and no thought seemed to have been further from his mind at the moment, than that our troops were about to attack. We captured four guns—2 6 Pounders, 1 9-Pounder, and 1 12-Pounder Howitzers, terms that won't convey much meaning to you, but shew that the enemy had field guns out, and we got them all. It is a doubtful question yet, whether he had 2 heavy guns out also, but if he had he never fired them both, and I have heard no one witness positively that he fired even one of them more than once. So the matter is doubtful at present; but there is no doubt that 4 guns are in camp, and they are a good result of about two hours' work, the best we have had for a long time, and the effect of the operation will no doubt be excellent. Our own loss I do not know yet."

No.. 43. "Camp Delhi, 13 Aug., 1857

"You are not to be in any alarm when I tell you I was wounded last evening. It is nothing more than rather a smart bruise from the splinter of a shell, which burst right in front of me at one of our batteries, and making a great crash, sent bits of itself and fragments of stones flying in all directions. What hit me was either a rounded bit of shell, or a stone, I am not sure which, as it was over in a second, and I just felt a hard flop on my instep and ankle-joint, and there was an end of it. The pain was considerable at first, but it was that ridiculous sort of pain like having your funny-bone hit, and you don't quite know whether to laugh or to cry. I preferred laughing as it happened; and as I found I could move my foot quite freely, I felt pretty sure no bones were broken. I am very thankful it was so mild, as it might easily have been much worse. It was fomented with hot water for several hours last night, and the Doctor says if I'll lie quiet for a day or two, it will be all right again. Poor young Nuthall who hadn't been an hour or more in camp, got a thump, though a slighter one, on his hand from the same shell. I was taking him round the position, and this was his welcome. You must feel quite at ease about me, and I will be walking about again the day after to-morrow, I hope .... I want this to go off to-day without fail: I must stop."

No. 44. "Delhi, 14 Aug., 1857.

"I am glad to say my foot bids fair to be all right again to-day; anyhow, I've got off my bed, and am sitting up to my work, which is a mercy, as I can't say I enjoyed writing on the broad of my back. I am still obliged to dispense with a stocking, as on trying to pull one on this morning I found the

pain rather too much. But I have no sort of doubt but that in a day or two all signs of the thump will have disappeared. I am beginning to suspect that Wilson has a good deal of the ancient dame in him. He so prefers small designs, and incomplete conceptions, to doing anything *thorough*, that I fancy his mind is of limited range. Still, so far, I like him, and find him pleasant to deal with. I only wish we could 'egg' him on to do something final and decisive, but at present that looks rather hopeless. It seems as though the rains were breaking up. Although it is very early for this, still I am in some respects glad of it, as it will, I think, be better for you and the little one than the steamy weather of the rains. I should think that so soon as the European troops from below begin to show themselves in earnest, you might all resume your ordinary habits of life, and go back to your own houses. I suspect that the sight of them will pacify the country sooner than anything else."

No. 45.

" Delhi, Aug. 15th, 1857.

"My foot is just the faintest trace in the world less comfortable than it was yesterday, perhaps I have been trying it rather too soon or too much, but I will keep very quiet to-day, and I have no doubt it will come all right again. These bruises are sometimes tedious and troublesome, and they seem so slight, one is tempted to neglect them. . . We go on quietly here, on the whole. There are lots of firing, but no casualties, and people are all very jolly under their difficulties, such as they are. I wish, however, I could see some definite prospect of our beginning the real work for which I am here, as once it is begun it won't take us long. The engineer park is gradually getting into a high state of efficiency, and when the struggle comes, I don't think anybody will have complaints to

make of us. We still want some detailed knowledge of the ground close to the city, but under present circumstances that is rather difficult to get."

No. 46.

" Delhi, Aug. 16th, 1857.

" My foot seems to have benefited so much by my being quiet all yesterday, that it gives scarcely any pain. The Doctor, however, is decisive still in telling me to use it as little as possible, as one of the tendons has been bruised, and they take time to recover themselves again.

"I am very willing to obey orders so long as I am not condemned to absolute lie-on-my-back-ism, which is awfully wearisome to me just now.

" In general health I have mended wondrously. The weather is no doubt very hot, but not unhealthy as yet for anybody. Perhaps the excitement of the work may carry us through everything, as it has done hitherto; it being remarkable how small is the amount of sickness generally in the camp. Brownlow is our most steady invalid, and a cruel loss to me he is; but he is not very long in rallying, and then he is worth anything.

" Indeed all our park arrangements are getting into the highest state of efficiency, and I don't think that when business begins the engineers will have any faults found with them."

No. 47.

Aug. 17 (f), not dated.

" I shan't be able to write much to-day, as I have a good deal of work on hand. However, I have nothing but pleasant tidings of myself to give you, as the foot goes on steadily improving, and in fact getting quite well again, and in other respects I feel very well.

"The enemy was very quiet, one cause may be that

it rains heavily, and that usually has a damping effect upon him. Anyhow, he scarcely fires a shot."

No. 48.

"Delhi, Aug. 18th, 1857.

"There are such breaks taking place now in the weather as to shew that the rains are beginning to move off. It is a questionable future, but we will hope for the best out of it, and meanwhile be thankful that we are all so well. They have finally decided that it would cause too much discontent among the 'old fogies' to give me the grade of Brigadier. I can't say I care a pin about the matter, being perfectly content that matters should remain as they are. I am very junior no doubt,<sup>1</sup> but Lord Dalhousie wouldn't have been hampered by that, or anybody else who was above the trammels of precedent. We are, however, very jog-trotty here, and it is useless endeavouring to get out of it, so I do not mean to try. I only wish with all my heart the work was done, and if it so please God, that I were back again at Roorkee.—The war is a war of so utterly barbarous a caste that nobody who thinks, or feels at all, can fail to wish himself out of it. However, the work being duty, must be done, so we won't grumble about it. My feeling is, that I have spent nearly twenty years of tolerable peace and quietness in India, and if in the course of Providence a time of troubles and dispeace does come, it is to be accepted without murmuring."

No. 49.

"Camp Delhi, 19 Aug., 1857.

"We have got a return of the damp sultry weather, and with it, I have a very slight return of the old enemy. I fancy this will go on for some time to

<sup>1</sup> He was at this time Lt.-Colonel of nearly 21 years<sup>1</sup> service, and nearly 39 years of age; 3 years senior to Nicholson and 4 years older.

come, till we have tided over the next month, or six weeks, and then we will get all right again. We are perfectly quiet here just now; whether the enemy is contemplating some other grand coup, or has simply subsided in hopelessness, I cannot tell, but at present he gives no trouble, and we wait for the siege train peacefully. My foot continues to mend, not quite free from pain yet, especially if I try to walk over stones, which make the joint twist, but otherwise giving very little trouble. So there I hope is an end of the history of my first wound, and thank God, it was no worse; half an inch more would have cost me in all human probability my left leg, and I can't say I have any indifference about being so disabled."

No. 50.

"20th

Aug., 1857.

"I have been so incessantly occupied to-day, that I have missed the dak hour, and you will not have your letter. However, I have nothing but good news to send you, as I have got rid of my small attack of the old enemy.—I think a beginning to the end is really beginning to be visible at last, though I fear if Wilson has his own way, it will still be wait, wait, wait. I went to him to-day to reason him out of some absurdity or other, and found him writing a letter to me, illimitable pages long, which I read over so far as it had gone, and found that the Gov.-Gen. had been making a moan about Delhi, and that this was an elaborate explanation of the proceedings in the matter, addressed to me. As it had no end, the drift was not quite clear, so I said nothing; I suppose it will be all evident when the whole letter comes, but if he expects me to advocate delay, he is mistaken. I believe we are competent to take Delhi when the siege train arrives, and beyond that I do not mean to wait."

No. 51. " Delhi, Aug. 21, 1857.

"I have been so occupied this whole day that not till now, when it is time to go to tea, have I found five minutes to bid you well before I go to sleep. This morning my foot gave a good deal of pain, and the place looked angry-like and inflamed. I kept my stocking off all day, however, and had cold water flannels applied, so I hope anything like suppuration may be prevented. The doctors all say, however, that the place is a bad one to get a contusion on, it is so near the ankle-joint; and they tell me not to be impatient, as it may still be some time before all signs of the evil disappear. There is nothing at all serious in it, it is merely troublesome, and makes me rather inefficient, so far as personal activity goes. In other respects I am very well.

"Just as I was in the act of eating my small modicum of dinner yesterday, about 5, 'the General Sahib' was announced, and in he stalked, finding me with no stocking on one foot, and no shoe on the other. However, I took it very easily, and we sat down on my bed, and had a good hour's talk by the 'Shrewsbury Clock.' I had sat up till one o'clock the previous night to finish my draft of the proposed letter to Lord Canning, and got up at daylight to complete mine to the General himself. He came up primed and loaded with a small speech, which he fired off" in his gaunt way, with apparent sincerity. He said he considered my exposition of the past and present condition of the force as a most able one, and had come up of set purpose to thank me for it; that he meant to send it on just as it was, with a few little additions that he wanted to consult me about. We disposed of them very soon, and then I shewed him my project of attack. He was apparently rather shocked with what he considered its boldness, and had a dozen fears to express. The only serious one

being the fear that in such weather as this, and still more in September, the soldiers would not be able to work, but would be struck down by the sun, if in the open trenches all day. It has often been a grave and serious thought of my own—this, so we were at one upon it; but I could not bring myself to say I thought it an insuperable difficulty. Our sickness is no doubt increasing greatly; the last return I saw was 765, now the number exceeds 1,200. After a long palaver, we parted excellent friends, and I can see that his trust in me is growing steadily."

No. 52.—Letter of August 22, all private and family affairs.

No. 53.

"Delhi, 23 Aug., 1857.

"It is evident that after all my foot is going to suppurate, and the Doctor says that till it throws off a little matter it won't come right. He looks upon it, however, as likely to be a very mild affair; and I'll be very glad when it does come right, as at present it is a nuisance, and keeps me from moving about as I could wish. However, what is must be borne, and I am thankful that otherwise I continue to have very little to complain of. We have had two of the most sultry and oppressive days I have ever felt. It was scarcely possible to think under their numbing influence, but it was necessary to try, whatever might be the result. I am expecting another visit from the General to-day, as he has just written up to say he wants to come and have a talk with me. He is full of troubles, and some of them no doubt serious enough, but I hope we'll get over them all in time, and meanwhile I do the best I can as an adviser and comforter. I will be very thankful when it is all over, or when we fairly get to work, and action, not discussion, becomes the order of the

day. I wish I could have devoted a bumper of port to drinking many happy returns of his birthday to your father.<sup>1</sup> But as I was unconscious of the day or date the will must be accepted for the deed. Please God, we'll drink his health together next time. I saw the notice of his Chinese pamphlet, and was glad to find no abatement of vigour was visible. It is a wonderful intellect! - The General has just been and gone, and the result has been most satisfactory. Our whole plan of work is settled, and just as I wished in every particular. If we don't produce a result, we mean to try, and I do hope and trust it may please God to make the issue good. If it is, and all goes well, it is just possible that our detention here may not be very much prolonged."

No. 54.

24 Aug., 1857.

"All goes very well to-day, and I think my foot continues to mend, though I am still obliged to poultice it and wear no stocking. I am particularly anxious for it to get well soon, as I shall want the full use of my senses and my legs together for a while.—I am sorry to say Baillie<sup>2</sup> has been wounded, not seriously, however, and I hope he will soon get over it. Pretty nearly our whole Roorkee party have had touches of some sort. Earle is, I understand, very unwell."

No. 55.

"Delhi, 25 Aug., 1857.

"The enemy has gone out to our rear inconsiderable force, and a moveable column under Nicholson has gone out after them. They have the advantage in number of guns, we in the material of our troops, so

<sup>1</sup> The great writer De Quincey.

<sup>2</sup> Lieut. G. Baillie, B. Art.

if the two columns meet, I have little doubt hat our people will give a good account of the enemy in spite of his guns.

"Nicholson had in truth to deal with a very different set of people to those we have here, and if rank would strengthen a man's hand, all the fogies in the army would not prevent Sir John Lawrence from giving it. I cannot say, however, that the matter has dwelt in my mind at all, and I am personally quite content that things should remain as they are."

No. 56.

"

Delhi, Aug. 26, 1857.

"I had to inflict on you to-day the usual fate of Chief Engineers' wives, and to let my letter give place for the time being to projects of attack, and such like matter. Don't speak about the case, even to Mrs. Chesney, for though Chesney may tell her what he knows, he doesn't know everything, and what comes from me direct might have a re-actionary influence, and find its way back to Delhi, which would not be desirable or expedient. At this moment I believe the camp generally, to be profoundly ignorant that in 8 or 10 days we will attack Delhi in very serious earnest. There is a general impression that 'something' is impending, but what it is, is not known. People look at me, and say in a pumping way—'Weill what are we going to do next?' I don't recognise the interrogative, and say merely 'Weill What?' I have not the very faintest desire to affect a needless secrecy, but the former practice of making every plan, however delicate, the subject of camp discussion doesn't at all suit my views of things. I fancy that two days after the siege train arrives we shall begin our work, and it will, please God, last only for about 3 days in all from commencement to close. May it be prosperous. The moveable column under Nicholson went out last night, and met

he enemy in force, beat him, as usual, utterly, and captured 13 guns with all his camp and baggage. I shall not be surprised if this affair, with the last, and the impending attack on the town have rather serious results on the enemy. He talks of running away now, and may possibly do so; but it will be a great pity if he does, though I don't know that the moral effect will be inferior to that of an assault; in one case he sneaks away like a lashed cur, in the other he throws a sort of halo over his cause, by standing an assault and dying at least like a soldier. Come, however, what may, it is some comfort to think that the end is visible, and that this siege is not going to be like the Siege of Troy."

No. 57.

"Delhi, Aug. 27, 1857.

"There is nothing new here, except that I think the old General is taken aback by my proposals, and will take some time to accustom himself to them.

He daresay in the long run he will come right again. He shows amazing ignorance of the first and simplest principles of fortification; in the long run things usually come out as I wish them to come. Matters are perfectly quiet here to-day, and 'Pandy', as the world calls the Mutineers, is apparently chewing the cud after his beating of yesterday. I find it very east-windy."

No. 58.

"Delhi, Aug. 28, 1857.

"I never had the faintest thought of resigning under anything but personal insult, or such incompatibility with the General as would have made me feel our association obstructive to the public service, but there has been nothing of either sort. We differ, and I sometimes lose my patience with him, but we are very good friends, and I usually bring him round

to my way of thinking in the long run. It would break my heart, I believe, to leave this work under any cause in which the act of God was not clearly visible; utter failure of health, wounds or the like, are of course irresistible, but with God's blessing, I trust that all will go well to the end. If the General potters, my alternative is to put on record that he potted clean against my will, and Government must judge between us. It won't come to this, I hope, as I think the old man rather likes me, and is a little afraid of me in a quiet way. Anyhow, I would be a very unreasonable monster to make any other than mere growls at him, as I have much to be grateful to him for. I am a little out of sorts to-day... I don't expect to get well entirely till this work and weather are both over; after that I expect to rally sharp."

No. 59.

Delhi, 29 Aug., 1857.

Is entirely taken up with private and family affairs.

No. 60.

"Delhi, 30 Aug., 1857.

"We are quite quiet here, and working on our own preparations, all of which, so far as the Dept. is concerned, are in a forward and complete state. So little is that the case with some other Depts. that we are doing their work for them as the only chance of getting the coach to run, but of this I say nothing, as I find that people are willing enough to profit by your aid, but are not unnaturally riled by being reminded of their inefficiency. One of our officers, poor Warrand,<sup>1</sup> lost his arm yesterday afternoon in one of the batteries; it was from what is called a shrapnel shell, and it burst just in the battery, wounding

1 Lt. W. E. Warrand, B. Engr., now M-General.

him and two or three others. He is doing very well, and is established in my tent, where he will be more comfortable than in his own. He is a capital officer, however, and is a great loss to me just now."

No. 61.

" Delhi, 31 Aug., 1857.

" I can only keep up the formula to-day of saying a word to you, as I have been so very busy that the night has come on, and finds me still with work to do."

No. 62.

"Delhi, 2nd Sept., 1857.

"We continue to be very busy, and will grow gradually more so till we lapse into comparative quiet. Oh, how thankful I will be when all is well over. I think when it is, they will let me go home in peace and quiet, unless there is probability of more service in our own line required of me, when I will gladly resume the old duties."

No. 63.

"Delhi, 3rd Sept., 1857.

" I was a little afraid the General was going off the rails about our work, as he took violent objections at first to some of my plans as involving fearful loss of life, and all that sort of thing; whereas if he had apprehended them clearly, he would have seen they were really the safest of the series. But I just did as usual, placed my reasons as clearly as I could express them before him, and left them to work. So he came up this afternoon to declare himself a convert to my views, and to say that he accepted them "*une et indivisible*." like the French Republic, so now we are at least cordially agreed on all main points, and that is a mercy in his position and mine. I daresay I shall have some bother to keep him fast to the plan, as it is his idiosyncrasy to run away

after any tempting-like thought, and to forget that to be successful in such a work as ours, we must be coherent, and stick to our plans like *wax*"

No. 64.

"Sept. 4th, 1857.

"All goes on quietly and steadily, and just at present it seems to us all that the enemy has gone to sleep.

"5th. I was just able to maintain my rule, and get three words at least written to you yesterday, as the whole day was absorbed by business, and a succession of people came that occupied me one after the other—the General, the Commissary of Ordnance, Nicholson, etc., and by night I felt pretty well Mazed,' especially as I had to pitch into chalk and opium.—The weather is positively execrable, and the sickness very great; our sick-list is nearly 2,000, which in a little force like this, is very sad. But probably active work will have a great effect in mending matters. The General is a terrible bore. He is so peevish and positively so childish that I have sometimes great difficulty in keeping my temper with him. He combines a wondrous amount of ignorance and obstinacy, is so discouraging, has such a total want of 'vis' and energy that he is literally the greatest obstacle extant to the vigorous capture of Delhi. He is now in a towering rage with me, because I keep harping on the necessity of arming all the batteries in one night, which he says is impossible, utterly impossible. I say it isn't, and so we're at loggerheads just at present, but I conclude I will bring him right in time."

No. 65.

"Delhi, Sept. 6, 1857.

"I was very angry again yesterday with the General, he is the most obstructive being ever created for the worry of an unfortunate Chief Engineer's

mind.—I had been urging him to do some of what he calls 'Baird Smith's impossibilities,' and he wrote me one of his impertinent letters. I was half disposed to run rusty, but then the thought of the great interests at stake, and my knowledge of the fact that in reality he leans almost exclusively on me, came to compose me; so I didn't run rusty, but kept my temper, and satisfied myself by proving to him that he was egregiously and absurdly wrong. He came up last night, and we had a long talk about things in general, and he agreed as usual, to all that I proposed. It will be a strange story, the story of the capture of Delhi, I mean its secret history, but it will never, be told, and all memory of the General's absolute obstructiveness will be buried under the glare of success. However, if we only *do* succeed, it will matter but little."

No. 66.

"7th Sept.

"We are fairly in it, and I have just returned very tired from the front. All's well."

No. 67.

No date—probably 10th.

"If I have any serious grievance against the General it is that he 'worritted' so ail yesterday up to very late at night, that he forced me to break my rule of saying, if nothing else, "God bless you" every day. He is quite off his balance, and now he has 'cut' me, and we don't communicate officially at all except through the Staff 11 It is a great relief, and the result is pretty much as poor Walker anticipated, and I find myself somewhat in the position of commanding the army in a quiet way. I command the General anyhow, and as things stand he is conscious of it, and doesn't like it, and takes a congenial revenge by abusing myself and brigade whenever he can. The army, however, has made up its mind

in the case, and settled it on its right basis. Everything goes well as yet; to-morrow morning at daylight, or shortly after, all our batteries will open, and 60 pieces of cannon will be pouring iron into Delhi. I think the assault will be given on the 12th or, at the latest, on the 13th, and the assured conviction is all will go well. God grant it may. The very universality of the conviction of success impending is one of the best guarantees we could have for it."

No. 68.

Not dated, nth?

"All goes well. We don't get on quite so fast as I wished, but the artillery men are slow in getting in guns and powder; and one of our batteries has been silent for 24 hours longer than need have been, simply because they had nothing to put into it. However, 28—or rather 36 big guns have been roaring all day, and even now the walls of Delhi begin to look like those of Jericho, and are very shaky indeed. They will be still more so to-morrow when No. 3 opens under their noses, 160 yards from the walls. I hope all will go well, and if so, Delhi will fall in two or three days."

No. 69.

Not dated—probably 12th or 13th,

"All goes well, except that I am satisfied Wilson has gone off his head. It is of course the responsibility, and he is at present the only obstacle to the vigour of our work."

No. 70.

"19/9/57"

"I have had to break my rule with a vengeance, but I hope you have had Mr. Marten's daily chit since the assault, keeping you informed of my well-doing. All went well with us in the attack, except that our loss was very heavy after we got into the

city. The enemy is still giving a lot of trouble there, and we have not yet quite come to an end of our work, though it won't be long, I hope, before we do so. I came to the camp this morning to get some medical advice, and the quiet up here is very refreshing. Chesney and all the other wounded officers are doing well, I am thankful to say."

No. 71.

"21/9/57.

"So it is all over so far as my work is concerned, and the enemy was yesterday driven from every stronghold he had in the city. All is now ours. The General has just gone to take possession of the King's palace. I go in an hour or two to establish Engineer Head Quarters in that of the Nawab of Juggur, said to be one of the prettiest palaces in Delhi, overhanging the river, cheerful and healthy. The Mutiny in the Bengal Army is now virtually matter for history, for its neck has been broken here, and though it is with no pride, or self-glory, still I am grateful for having had an important part to play in quenching so frightful a conflagration. Nobody will ever know exactly what that part has been, or will only know a very small part of it, but that is a petty matter, and I am quite content with things as they are. I thank God with all my heart that he has preserved me through all—if not intact—yet under your nursing, very easily mended. I only need a month's quiet to be quite as well, perhaps better than usual, and this I hope soon to get. The General consents to my leaving camp as soon as the Meerut Road is open, and Mr. Marten has begun to pack up, and look for carriages already. All going well we march via Meerut, and according to what we hear of the state of the country there, we either go up the Canal Line, or by Muzuffurnuggur."

No. 72. "22.'9.'57" (3) Postmark 23rd.

"We are, I trust, fairly homeward bound, and will probably make our first march to-morrow morning. We return by way of Kurnal, as the Meerut Road is not safe yet. It will take us 4 days to get to Kurnal, and we may expect to be there on the 26th. If I can get a dak laid from Kurnal to Saharunpore I will travel faster over that bit of the ground, but the point is a somewhat doubtful one. Anyhow, D. V., I hope to be at home by or before the 1st October, pretty nearly a 3 months' absence; and though I am sick enough of it, I wouldn't have missed the work, harassing as it has been, and may yet be, for riches untold. I can keep all this now till we meet, though fighting battles over again has never been a very favourite occupation of mine. I travel in a bullock cart of Mr. Parker's, and hope to get over the ground comfortably enough in spite of leg and arm. I wanted Maclagan to be brought down here to take charge of works in Delhi, while Taylor went on with the advance column. But the General preferred Taylor here, so the arrangement didn't hold. I think it is to be regretted it did not. Maclagan might have been quietly useful here, while Taylor would have been quite in his place in advance. Chesney and indeed all the wounded are doing very well indeed. There is even some hope for poor Salkeld, whose heart has been gladdened and pain lightened by the knowledge that he has been decorated with the Victoria Cross for valour. I am writing on my back, as I give my foot all the rest I can. But it is a weakening process. I wish I had one of those easy chairs instead."

No. 73. "Siwah Bungalow, near Paneeput, 25.'9.'57.

"Here we are within one march of Kurnal, which we hope to reach to-morrow morning. It just depends

on my being able to get a dak laid from thence to Saharunpore when we shall arrive at Roorkee; if we get one we might be at home some time during the night of the 28th, if I don't, we shall be a day later. We have had a very pleasant trip so far. I travel in great comfort in Mr. Parker's bullock ghari, but you must expect to see me rather gravely dilapidated, and about as weak as a child. I fancy, however, I have improved within the last day or two, and the amount of sleeping I get through is wonderful. I suppose Nature is making up for past robberies. I think I told you that before I left Delhi, the King and his three sons had become our pri<sup>^</sup>bners, thus winding up the siege with the best immediate result that could be obtained from it, the ultimate results are incalculable."

No. 74.

"Kurnal, 26th Sept..'S7.

"We arrived here this morning just to learn that in consequence of some mismanaged mess at Shannah Bhowm the direct road from here to Saharunpore became unsafe, and a party of horse had been sent out to intercept the people who were reported to be upon it. So as it seemed of no use running the risk of being victimised by some fanatic Mussulman for the sake of a day, we have determined to proceed by dak, round by Madilpoor and Chilkana. The route being rather unfrequented, our bearers could not be laid till to-morrow afternoon, so we are fixed here till then. We shall start about 4 p.m., but can scarcely reach Saharunpore before noon of the 28th, as it is a dak of fully 60 miles long. However, I hope to be able to start the same evening from Saharunpore for Roorkee, and to come in on you at or about weird midnight. I fancy I am mending already in several ways; my foot is less painful, my arm I have almost ceased to think about, but the fact still remains

that this three months of bad water, bad food, bad everything have told seriously, and the last thing the doctor told me the night before I left was that my constitution had imbibed what he called a scorbutic taint, and that I must go under regular constitutional treatment for it. I have been conscious of this for some time past, my gums have broken out into various small swellings and sores, they bleed whenever touched however lightly; my joints feel all rickety; and Hunter attributes my bad foot to something of the same sort. At Sevastopol people suffered in precisely the same way, and I don't think my case is a bad one. Anyhow, the treatment is pleasant enough to think of—"keep quiet and live as generously as you can, and you will soon get all right with the help of but little medicine." So as' he particularly recommended soups like jellies, you'll have to set the babachi<sup>1</sup> to work to devise a succession of them. I think it very likely that Drummond and Jeffreys will have to go at once to Delhi in consequence of the paucity of Engineers there."

No. 75. "Dak Bungalow, .Kurnal, 27 Sept., '57.

"I have not a great deal to say and shall manage to say it even under difficulties.—The delay in our letters from Delhi is equally deplorable and inexplicable, and I will make a great howling about it so soon as I get back, too late to be of any use to us, but it may be to others. There was certainly nothing left to wish for in the completeness of our victory; the short delay in reaping its full harvest neither disappointed nor surprised me. What did both, was the disgracefully doleful tone of those Wilsonian telegraphic messages. I never saw one of them; I kept a lot of the same sort of trash out of despatches and papers which I did see, and was ashamed of in their original form; but

the messages went off without my cognizance. They simply proved that neither Wilson, nor his advisers, at the moment, saw with the slightest clearness of vision the true and sterling strength of our position, or the absolute certainty that in a few days more or less, we *must* force the enemy from every position he held. The tone of all the messages ought to have been buoyant and cheerful; they might justifiably have been so; instead of that, they were the embodiment of dreariness, and killed all hope out of people. However, men must be true to their nature, and it is Wilson's to see difficulties where they don't exist, and to fail to discover facilities that are ©patent as daylight."

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EXTRACTS FROM COLONEL BAIRD SMITH'S LETTER TO  
A FRIEND, CHARLES NORTON, ESQ., PROFESSOR  
HARVARD, DATED 1 NOV., 1857.

"We had a third change of commanders, and got in exchange for him a General Wilson of the Artillery. I never served under a man, and I have now served under or with a considerable number, for whom I had less respect, or on whose judgment and capacity I had less reliance. He was our nominal Commander, and as any failure would have re-acted on him in that position with greater severity than on any other, it is therefore just and right that he should have his fair share of rewards.

"Looking back now to the events of the Siege, I can most truly say that the General was scarcely less an obstacle to be overcome than the walls of the place, or the bayonets of the garrison.

"No considerations less vital than those involved in **our** success or failure at Delhi could possibly have reconciled me to serving under him.

"To me the whole period of the Siege was of course one of deep and unbroken anxiety, aggravated greatly by the total absence of all moral or material support from the General, whose whole soul seemed to be absorbed by providing for protecting himself from blame in case of failure, by showing that his Chief Engineer *zould* have his own way, and *would* pay no attention to his advice.

"He bothered my life out with an incessant flood of petty and peevish letters, which I could not always throw aside, but was obliged to answer to the detriment of more important matters.

"Some pf his proposals were so frantic that I made no attempt to discuss them, but treating them 'imperceptibly,' held on my way.

"I never had much real doubt as to the issue, but I must say it was a moment of inexpressible relief and satisfaction to me, when I saw the living floods flowing free and unchecked over the crests of the breaches and through the demolished Gate, and watched in vain for any ebb.

"My chief responsibility ceased with this success, and I felt that come what might hereafter the plan of attack had accomplished its main objects.

Affectly. yours,

(sd.) "R. BAIRD SMITH."

EXTRACT FROM BAIRD SMITH'S LETTER TO HIS  
FATHER, DATED 28 OCT., 1857.

"You will perhaps be somewhat surprised that I should have said nothing of General Wilson who commanded the force. The simple truth is that I have such contempt for his military capacity, and found him throughout the Siege operations so uniformly obstructive by his dread of responsibility, and his

## EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO HIS FATHER 137

moral timidity that I say as little about him as I can.

"I believe his mind to have been off its usual balance all the time we were at work, and he was literally more difficult to deal with than the enemy. It was only by constantly reminding him that if he interfered with my plans, I would throw the whole responsibility for the consequences on him, that I could get on at all."

. . .

"The satisfactory results of a four months' campaign in which were concentrated as much of human endurance and heroism as the world has ever seen. I say this without hesitation, though it seems like self-laudation; but I am not thinking of myself at all, but of the brave fellows of whose work I was a daily witness; and while I live, I will never find language strong enough to express my admiration of what I saw."

## A P P E N D I X I .

### LIEUTENANT NORMAN'S LETTER TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL BAIRD SMITH, DATED 19 JUNE, 1857.

" M Y dear Sir,

"The appointment of Major Laughton as Chief Engineer possibly surprised you, as it certainly did many others. The nomination was opposed by Colonel Chester, but without effect, owing to other influence being at work.

"The result has been most unfortunate, as possibly you may have heard from your brother officers in camp. At present, the Engineer Department is altogether without a head, and it has become imperatively necessary to make some change. The next officer in point of rank is Lieutenant Greathed, who acts as A.D.C. to Sir H. Barnard, and has advised him a good deal, not always I think with judgment. Anyhow, it seems certain that he would not do for the post of Chief Engineer at a siege like this; for into a siege, the affair is resolving itself.

"You have been named to General Reed as eminently qualified for the direction of the engineer duties, and in consequence, Sir J. Lawrence was yesterday (by telegraph from Kurnal) requested to recall Major Laughton to his proper duties, and he was informed

I Col. Chas. Chester, 23rd N.I., Adjt.-Genl. of the army.

## LETTER FROM LT. NORMAN

that this was desirable on public grounds, and that if done, it was proposed to bring you as Chief Engineer.

"There can be no doubt that he will comply, and it is presumed that you will be ready to come over here.

"Roorkee, I doubt not, will feel your loss much, but you have made it tolerably secure, it is hoped; and *here* the battle of the Empire is to be fought. So certain does it seem that Laughton will be recalled, and so precious is time, that it would seem desirable you should start, if possible, even without waiting to hear from me again, though I hope to be able to inform you to-morrow, or the next day, that L&ughton's recall has been satisfactorily arranged.

"Chesney, the Brigade-Major of Engineers, was going to give m§ a list of our wants in your department, but will not be able to do so before dak hour. He, however, tells me that *all* the engineer stores at Roorkee would be most useful *minus* the pontoon train, and we also want 30,000 sandbags, made or unmade, and six hundred pioneers.

"The engineering details of our operations you will hear from other sources; but of the troops we have, I can speak in the very highest terms. Though few in number, they can be trusted for any enterprise that man can reasonably dare. We have reinforcements coming that will bring up our force to upwards of 5,000 Infantry and 1,100 Cavalry, with 34 Field Guns, 2 24-Prs., 8 18-Prs., 6 8" Howrs., 4 8" Mortars and 12 5" Mortars.

"All our reinforcements should be here early in July, some much sooner.

"If you like to leave without waiting for any further communication, General Reed will arrange that the order appointing you Chief Engineer shall appear in ample time; but if you wait one day, I hope to be able to give you positive information of Laughton's

recall, without which there may be some little difficulty in your position.

"The road from here to Umballa is open, and the bridge of boats at Bhagput (should you come that way) is held by a party of Irregulars with an European officer.

"Believe me,

"Yours very truly,

(Signed) " H . W . NORMAN,

" Lt ., Asst. Adjt.-Gcnl. of the Army.

"Camp before Delhi,

"19 June, 1857."

## APPENDIX II.

GENERAL ARCHDALE WILSON'S LETTERS TO COL.  
BAIRD SMITH DURING THE SIEGE.

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A COLLECTION of over sixty of these letters are still extant. Of these, no less than thirty-two were sent in the ten days from the date of the arrival of the siege train up to the day of the assault, and ten of these were sent on the 13th and 14th September.

Many of these (*i.e.*, those written during the siege operations) are carping and querulous, and greatly calculated to irritate anyone less steadfast and strong-minded than Baird Smith was. A few of these are given below to show the immense difficulties placed in Baird Smith's way owing to the tone adopted by Genl. Wilson.

"My dear Smith,

"7 Sept.

"We shall never get on in this manner, because I told you, you were asking more than the means at my disposal would allow me to sanction. You say all your calculations are valueless, and even waste labour; and seem inclined to throw all the work as well as responsibility on me. I have already more than I can manage, and my head gets into such a state that I feel nearly mad sometimes. For God's sake don't drive me quite so."

9th September, 1857.

"In reply to the Chief Engineer's Memorandum of this date, explaining his reasons for not opening any of the Siege Batteries on the left until No. 3 Battery is armed, I regret to say I cannot coincide with him."

(Baird Smith remarks, "You should have done as the result shewed.")

"By this arrangement I consider that the two days' Battering of No. 1 have been completely thrown away, and that a large number of artillery men and a large quantity of ammunition had been needlessly expended."

(Baird Smith remarks, "Quite the reverse! The loss in the Key Battery was indeed serious, but trifling in comparison with that which must have resulted from General Wilson's plan, with the small help for working parties and manning batteries 11")

"A great and useless delay has, in my opinion, also taken place, which will greatly encourage the enemy and discourage our own troops, more particularly the working parties, who were led to believe they would only be called upon for such extra exertion for a very short period, but will now by the miscalculation and want of arrangement on the part of the Engineer Dept. be continued for four days and nights, perhaps longer."

"I consider that by opening the Batteries No. 2 the guns of the enemy on the Cashmere bastion will be quickly silenced and rendered harmless, and that the route pointed out by Colonel Smith will thereby be rendered safer than it now is."

"I shall not, however, oppose myself to the wishes of the Chief Engineer, but as I cannot coincide with him, it will be better that in future he makes<sup>1</sup> all his requisitions regarding the arming of the batteries, direct

I Baird Smith remarks, "How unjust."

to Major Gaitskill, commanding the Artillery, and for working parties to the Asst. Adjt.-Genl. of the Forces.

(sd.) "A. WILSON.

To this memorandum of nth Sept Baird Smith wrote a protest, desiring that the matter might be submitted for the consideration and orders of the Governor-General in Council.

The draft is incomplete, extends to nearly three pages, but breaks off at the sixth paragraph.

Probably Baird Smith having more important matters to attend to, could not finish it, and let the matter pass in the interests of duty.

MEMO.

"So pieces of ordnance with 300 rounds of ammunition per piece are to be placed in No. 2 and 3 Batteries on the same night, between the time the Batteries are reported ready to receive them and day-break. Is this possible? I say it is perfectly impossible.

"A. W.

"Sept. 10th."

Baird Smith remarks on this—"Whose fault?"

It may be remarked also that the number of guns to be placed in the batteries was not 50, but 38.

"My dear Smith,

"Kaye's battery is terribly enfiladed by the enemy's light guns. I hope you are giving him the protection of an epaulment. If an Engineer officer had to stay in the battery until it was done, it would soon be **run** up.

(sd.) "A. WILSON.

"nth Sept."

"My dear Smith,

"I send you a report from Scott of the state of his battery. I must request you will insist upon your officers having this battery properly repaired to-night. Considering that the Artillery officers perform ten times ' the work yours do, I do not think they ought to make the excuse of being tired, to save the lives of their brothers blue.

" Yours sincerely,

(sd.) " A. WILSON.

"12 Sept."

I Baird Smith wrote on this "both worked nobly, and in one spirit."

## APPENDIX III.

LETTER FROM DR. JOHN SMITH (COL. BAIRD SMITH'S  
BROTHER) TO MRS. BAIRD SMITH, DATED  
16 JULY, 1871. #

"I SEE in the Blue Book of the Mutinies, a letter signed 'Felix', embodied in Norman's narrative, *in* which Taylor is spoken of as having had the entire superintendence of the work at this busy time. I have little doubt that on this statement has rested the report of his having fairly earned the credit of being the Engineer who took Delhi. The letter signed 'Felix' is said to have been written by an Engineer, but his name is not given.

"Anyhow it is plain from what we know that this statement is wrong. Captain Taylor was merely 'Director of Trenches', his work being purely executive, and he never had the chief superintendence for a moment until Delhi was entirely in our hands; and it is clear that the directing hand was never slackened, and that Richard<sup>1</sup> could hardly have done more had he been in the strongest health and in no way disabled."

The exact words of 'Felix' are:

"For the complete success that attended the prosecution of the Siege the chief credit is undoubtedly

I Col. Baird Smith.

due to Colonel R. Baird Smith, the Chief Engineer, and to Captain Taylor, the Director of the attack. On this latter officer in fact, in consequence of the Chief Engineer being wounded, devolved the entire superintendence of the Siege works."

Although I cannot be quite certain who was the writer 'Felix', I believe him to have been Lieutenant G. T. Chesney (afterwards Sir George Chesney), who was Brigade-Major of Engineers at the Siege, and he, it seems to me, could hardly have helped knowing that although Captain Taylor had done splendid work as Chief Executive, he was in no way responsible for the plan of attack, which was entirely the work of Colonel Baird Smith. It was Taylor's place to attend to the execution of the works, but this was in no way 'in consequence of Baird Smith being wounded.' Had he not been wounded Taylor would have had precisely the same duties. It was wrong to couple the two names in the first sentence; the second sentence is unjust to Baird Smith, and misleading.

'Felix' goes on to make some further remarks which would seem also to be intended to apply to Taylor. They should with greater reason have reference to Baird Smith. He says—"The plan of attack was bold and skilful; the nature of the enemy we were contending with was exactly appreciated and our plans shaped accordingly."—"With plenty of skilled workmen the Siege works might have been more speedily constructed; but with the wretched means at our disposal the wonder is so much was done with so little loss."

"If the Siege of Delhi was not a regular siege in the same sense with that of Bhurtpore and Seringapatam, it may yet bear a fairer comparison with a greater than either—that of Sebastopol. In both the strength of the fortifications was as nothing; it was

## LETTER FROM SIR CHARLES REID

the proportion of besieged to besiegers, the magnitude of the arsenal inside, and the impossibility of a thorough investment that constituted the real strength of the place; in fact neither were, properly speaking, sieges, but rather attacks on an army in a strongly entrenched position."

' ' '

General Sir Charles Reid had sent to Mrs. Baird Smith his letters and notes regarding the Siege, which he had printed for private circulation only, and in these the same mistake having been made, Mrs. Baird Smith, in February, 1882, wrote to Sir Charles, pointing out the mistake at some length, and requesting him to correct the misstatement.

On the 20th February, 1882, Sir Charles Reid wrote to Mrs. Baird Smith—"With regard to my having made it appear that 'the entire superintendence of the Siege operations devolved on Taylor,' I was under the impression that Baird Smith had been badly wounded and quite disabled; but when interrogated by Colonel Malieson I told him just what he has recorded in his work.

"Had the Extracts of Letters and Notes been sent for publication, I should have read them over carefully, and have corrected what you in truth say might be misleading; and it pains me now to think that I should have placed the pamphlet in *your* hands for perusal, or have inadvertently detracted from the value of his services at Delhi, but I was misinformed as to the nature of his wound, and as, you know, I never left the Ridge until I was wounded myself, I had no opportunity of ascertaining the facts of the case. Personally, you are aware, I had the warmest regard for, and highest opinion of your lamented husband; and the rewards I have received for my own services I owe in a great measure, I believe, to the opinion

he gave of them in his letter, an extract of which appears in the record of my services. I only wish I had never sent the *original* to Colonel Norman, for I never saw it again. Fortunately I kept a copy of it.

"Yours very sincerely,

(sd.) "CHARLES REID."

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EXTRACTS FROM MR. HARRY MARTEN'S LETTERS  
TO MRS. BAIRD SMITH.

Mr. Marten first met Baird Smith in 1840, and saw a very great deal of him afterwards, being employed by Cols. Cautley and Baker in their offices at Roorkee. For three years before the Mutiny he was the head of Colonel Baird Smith's office, and when that officer was ordered to Delhi, he took Mr. Marten with him as his secretary; and throughout the Siege Mr. Marten was with him. Mr. Marten had therefore every opportunity of seeing Colonel Baird Smith under every emergency.

Mr. Marten afterwards attained a high position, and became Controller of P. W. Account at Allahabad.

In letter dated 19 Feb., 1862, he says:

"Well 60 I know what a trying time Delhi was to him until he had Genl. Nicholson to endorse his views, and the vigour of both was allowed full play.

"I witnessed how enduringly he bore up against pain and sickness until his work was done; and highly as I had thought of him before I had still further proof of his nobility of character."

In letter of the 18th June, 1871, he says:

"Captain Taylor worked like a horse, but he was essentially Executive, and Colonel Baird Smith was

## EXTRACTS FROM MR. MARTEN'S LETTERS

the Director, and more actual bodily labour would fall to the share of the former than the latter.

" It was on the 5th July that I rejoined Colonel Smith at Delhi.

"The first thing noticed was that the enemy daily attacked and drew out our forces to follow them, and caused us severe losses. Colonel Baird Smith soon remedied this, by entrenching our positions, and got orders issued that our men were to wait for attack, with a great saving to life.

" Preparations went on with vigour, and Colonel Smith was everywhere directing. He was wounded on the 12th of August (nearly six weeks after arrival)' The wound was in itself trifling, and he went about as usual among the defences and directed everything, giving himself no rest, and having frequent consultations with General Nicholson.

On the 23rd of August his wound became painful; but on that day there was a grand council of war, and his orders immediately after showed that we should soon be on the offensive. I do not think anyone thought much of his foot after that, and I know that he hid his suffering much, and that great activity went on in the Engineer's Park, etc , but no actual advance could be made till the arrival of the siege train which took place on the 4th of Sept.

" On night of the 7th No. 1 Battery was completed, and opened on the 8th; on the 12th everything was completed, and a continuous fire kept up. On night of the 13th breaches were examined, and an assault ordered on early morning of the 14th. I did not accompany the columns, but before leaving the camp, Colonel Smith told me that the Commander in Chief, himself, and the Staff would direct operations from the top of Ludlow Castle, and that I was to remain where I was, and do what I could for the wounded as they came up. On the 15th Colonel Smith sent for me, and I found him at the

temporary Head Quarters. He went out by himself the 16th night, reconnoitring for a good position from which to shell the Palace and Magazine, had fallen into a trench cut across a lane he was traversing, and owing to the weak foot, had been powerless to protect himself, and he hurt his arm considerably. But he did not give way, and as soon as I had written some telegrams for Brigadier Chamberlain he commenced dictating to me his despatch. This went on daily, the troops getting more and more hold of Delhi, and on the 20th we had it all.

" On the evening of the 21st Colonel Smith told me that he had ordered the Engineers' Brigade to take up its quarters in Durriagunj the next morning, and that he and I would go at once and stop there. I considered this a very risky thing to do—suggested we should be quite alone, and that there might be still many rebels lurking about; but he pooh-poohed this, and we went there accordingly. On the 22nd the Brigade was all in its quarters; there was no more fighting at Delhi to be done, and the state of his health obliged him to ask, and obtain permission to make over the Chief Engineership to Captain Taylor, and return to his civil duties. On the 23rd of Sept. he left Delhi, and reached Roorkee on the 29th. His health was now in a bad state—excitement being over, reaction set in; but in addition to his civil duties, he still held military command of the Districts of Saharunpore and Mozuffernuggur, and organised a force to be sent into Rohilcund.

" He had great fortitude and perseverance. From the day the troubles arising out of the mutinies commenced, it seemed to me that there was on his part an entire abnegation of self.

" In respect to Roorkee, I know that he felt that the welfare and safety of the whole community, including the native population within that part of the Sahar-

unpore district in which he could act, depended on him; and I have already referred to the quiet but firm way in which he managed everything, and the successful results at Delhi. I heard it openly and frequently expressed that Colonel Smith had done most admirable work both for the Siege and for the safety of the force whilst it was on the defensive, which his predecessors had never thought of, and as Director he worked with a power altogether beyond his real strength; and he was wanting in nothing that tended to the proper administration of the Brigade of which he was the Chief, and of its duties, as an element of the Siege. The only thing that ever struck me was that for those that did not know him, there was a want of display in the way he went about everything, which probably made the immense amount of work he went through in the most cool and intrepid but unostentatious manner, less appreciated than it ought to have been. That, however, was the character of his nature."

## LETTER OF 25TH JUNE TO DR. JOHN SMITH.

"It never occurred to me that Colonel Smith, even after the 23rd of August had given up one iota of his command of the Engineer Brigade, or that his power of directing was in any way impaired. He did his duty as Director just as he had before, and my recollection of the time is that after the 23rd of August when the decision was come to for active preparations for the assault, and especially after the 4th of Sept. when the Siege train arrived, and without which the batteries could not of course be armed, we were all so engaged in our different ways that Colonel Smith's wounded foot was little thought of by any of us, which may be taken as presumptive evidence that he did not parade his sufferings even if they were great,

"On the day and night of the 13th he was frequently with me, directing me how to copy and extract from his orders, and to prepare block plans showing the parts of the city to be operated on and the streets to be traversed by each column and party after it had effected its entrance, for the guidance of Commanders.

"I know that Captain Taylor was lauded by everyone for the untiring energy he displayed in the construction of the advanced batteries; but this I take it, was his natural work, and that the Chief Engineer having confidence in his aide, would not necessarily be away from his more special post when he had to receive reports, give orders for the whole Brigade and consult with the other chiefs.

"I know also, that at the time I thought things were ordered and carried out just as they should be. Colonel Smith went out and in just as before, seldom enlarging on what he had done, but he did all that one in chief command would be expected to do, when there was no necessity for his sharing the Executive work, as well as doing all the directing.

"That what Captain Taylor did was a great effort is certain, for I know that shortly after the assault, he returned to Head Quarters, and slept for a great number of hours, the rest being required for the many days and nights it was understood he had not slept.

"Meanwhile the assault had been carried, and Colonel Smith was at his post at the Head Quarters in Delhi. My notes show that as soon as we occupied a part of Delhi on the 4th, mortar batteries, etc., were established. It is certain that Captain Taylor had nothing to do with that, for on the 14th, and I believe the 15th, he was asleep; and Colonel Smith's arm was not hurt till the 16th or third night after we had got into Delhi.

"My impression was that, with the exception of shelling other parts of the city actively, we did but very little in an offensive way during the first few

days after getting In, as for a day or two our men were not in hand sufficiently for more than defending what we had got.

"Colonel Smith was fully capable throughout of directing, and that he did his part in this well, with great coolness, but without the display which he might have exercised had he cared more for what others would say; and as regards the Executive, Captain Taylor as second in command, was most devoted to his work, laboriously and energetically carrying it out regardless of self.

"But the same spirit, with very rare exceptions, pervaded every man of the Engineer Brigade, from highest to lowest, and I was throughout the Siege surprised at the unselfish and devoted way all worked. Captain Taylor's duties were necessarily in the field, and his being chief of the Executive gave prominence to the energy he brought to bear on the work. He is entitled to every praise for what he did in his capacity; but I do not see how this could detract in any way from the Director, except it could be shown that the Director was unable to direct, and which I am quite sure cannot at any stage of the Siege be charged against Colonel Smith."

LETTER DATED 1ST JULY, 1871, TO DR. JOHN SMITH.

"Captain Taylor's return to camp was *after* the position gained on the 14th was made good.

"My impression is that his sleep commenced on the 14th. I may be wrong, but I know that it did take place in our old camp before the Brigade was moved down to the Metcalfe Park.

"But I hardly see how such a matter as this really bears on the question. As I understand it, Taylor and other officers before the assault were bound to do whatever Colonel Smith ordered, in respect to

reconnaissance, trenches, batteries etc., and to accompany the assaulting columns as told off.

"They of course had to bear the brunt of the assault just as the columns as a whole had, it was their place. Colonel Smith's place was with General Wilson, and he also had his Brigade-Major, Chesney, with him. Chesney got his wound by being sent to a column with a message from the General, I think.

"With the General, Colonel Smith no doubt entered Delhi at the time they were expected to do.

"Just as Home and Salkeld were told off to blow up the Cashmere Gate, so was Taylor to accompany the first colunyi; but I do not see that however bravely they performed their parts, Colonel Smith's command is at all detracted from, unless it is argued that he ought to have headed the assaulting columra

"To say under such circumstances that Taylor took Delhi appears to argue that Nicholson and others did nothing. But of course this cannot be meant. The taking of Delhi must refer to the making of practicable breaches admitting of the assault being carried. As I have said, for this Taylor was second in command, specifically styled 'Director of the Trenches,' and there he did his work well and gallantly.

"It is recorded that he suggested the placing of a battery nearer to the walls than was at first decided on, but he had to get permission for this, and the *command* was never relaxed.

"Each assaulting column had similar claims, I fancy, both on General Wilson and Colonel Smith, but it was not expected they should head any one of them except on emergency, which did not occur.

"It might as well be said that Colonel Smith should have headed the Cashmere Gate party, as the post of greatest danger.

"The whole question indeed is in a nut-shell—'Who was in command?'

" Every single individual at the assault might equally claim that he took Delhi; but General Wilson was in command of all, and Colonel Smith was in command of the Engineer Brigade and he held that command and carried on its duties until he voluntarily resigned it.

"It was not his place to be in command, and do the Executive work also.

"Very truly yours,

(sd.) "HARRY MARTEN."

LETTER DATED 11TH SEPT., 1872, TO MRS. BAIRD SMITH.

"I have been much pleased too, with the additional proofs that Dr. Smith has obtained, and published lately, that all I have said about Colonel Smith's sustained command until he resigned it, is confirmed, and I hope there is no longer a doubt about history doing him full justice.

"Yours very sincerely,

(sd.) " HARRY MARTEN."

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LETTERS FROM DR. E. HARE, FORMERLY

SURGEON, 2ND BENGAL EUROPEANS, DATED 6 JULY, 1870,

WHO SERVED THROUGHOUT THE SIEGE.

"That Brind armed his battery, without cover, under a heavy fire, and with these guns cleared the walls, and enabled our men to pass the breach; and that when we were in the town, he pushed forward on his own responsibility, took the Jumma musjid, and thus surrounded, and compelled the King to fly from, the Palace; is notorious to the whole army. We never could have taken Delhi but for his gallantry."

ANOTHER, DATED 3RD JULY, 1870.

"But for Colonel Baird Smith and Brind's help we never could have taken Delhi, and that every one in the besieging army knew full well."

EXTRACT FROM LETTER FROM ROBT. CRAIG, ESQ.,  
TO MRS. BAIRD SMITH, DATED 23RD MARCH, 1867.

"Major Lind's conversation at Thomastown, which I think you would like to hear. He seems to have been at the head of some Irregular Horse<sup>1</sup> and to have got<sup>f</sup> employment in the Queen's service after having been all his life in the Company's service. He knew Richard (Colonel Baird Smith) very well, and spoke in the highest terms of his services at Delhi. He considered Delhi the turning-point in the Mutiny, and that, as Sir John Lawrence telegraphed, if Delhi was not taken India was lost; and he was of opinion that the two people who took Delhi were Baird Smith and Nicholson. He also had a strong feeling of the injustice done to the army at Delhi, as having had no adequate recognition of their great merit."

Major (afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel) J. B. Lind was a distinguished officer, who entered the Indian Army in 1846, and in 1857 was commanding a wing of 5th Punjab Infantry at Hoti Murdan. He raised and commanded a body of Mooltanee Horse, with which he was present at the Siege of Delhi. He was much engaged on service after the Siege, was twice wounded, and had chargers shot and wounded under him five times. He was repeatedly mentioned in despatches, and received the thanks of the Governor-General in Council and the Punjab Government for services dur-

I Mooltanee Horse.

ing the Campaign. He retired 7 Jan., 1874, and only died Feb. 1897.

' ' '

The extract below from the letters of Hervey H. Greathed, Esq., B.C.S., Commissioner and Political Agent at Delhi,<sup>1</sup> serves to show the opinion of a distinguished man on the spot, regarding the character of Baird Smith's work. It will be found on page 250 of his published letters, dated 5th September, after the arrival of the Siege train.

"I have not seen the programme of operations, but every day's work is chalked out and written down in elaborate detail. Baird Smith is not a man to forget the smallest trifle."

"Mr. Greathed and his family had a very narrow escape with their lives at Meerut, on the night of the 10th of May.

"He proceeded with the troops under Wilson to Delhi, and was present at the battles of the Hindun. He remained in camp throughout the Siege, and lived long enough to witness our troops enter the city, but he fell a victim to cholera on Sept. 19th, one day before the work was completed, and thus was lost to the service a very meritorious officer."<sup>2</sup>

He had two brothers with him at Delhi—Edward (afterwards Sir Edward), Colonel of 8th Regiment, and William Wilberforce Harris Greathed (afterwards Major General, C.B.), Bengal Engineers, both of them greatly distinguished.

Hervey Greathed's services at Delhi and his lamented death are noticed at pages 641-642 of Kaye's 3rd Volume.

<sup>1</sup> He was intimately acquainted with all that was going on, and was present at all the Councils of War.

<sup>2</sup> Memorials of Old Haileybury College, pp. 599-600.

## A P P E N D I X    I V .

AN attempt has been made to deny that General Wilson on the 14th September had thought of withdrawing his troops from the city to the 'Ridge', but a perusal of Baird Smith's letter to his wife, and the following letter from General Sir Neville Chamberlain to Colonel S. Dewe White, must effectually remove all doubt upon this point. The latter is dated Lordswood, Southampton, 24 Jan. 1884.

"Dear Sir,

"I have received, and now return to you as requested, the extract which accompanied your letter of 21st.

"I am unable to accept the view you take as to my having been under an 'erroneous impression' and having 'drawn a hasty conclusion' with regard to the meaning of General Wilson's note to me on the afternoon of the 14th of Sept. (1857).

"I understood at the time, and I still hold to the belief that the General's note to me referred to the question as to whether in my opinion he should hold on to what we possessed of the city, or whether he should withdraw from it.

"In one paragraph of that note, General Wilson says 'I want your advice', and at the end of the note he says, 'I have just heard that you have returned to camp, but still ask your opinion and advice.'

"If the opinion and advice asked for did not refer to withdrawal, to what other question could it have referred?—The note was written about 4 p.m. It was at that time beyond dispute that our troops were exhausted, and somewhat dispirited. Three of our columns of attack (exclusive of the Cashmere contingent) having failed to realise what had been expected of them.

"General Wilson uses the words—'Our numbers are frightfully reduced, and we have lost so many senior officers that the men are not under proper control—indeed I doubt if they could be got to do anything dashing.' Again he says—'If the Hindoo Rao picquets cannot be moved, I do not think we shall be strong enough to take the city.'

"I can only repeat that I replied to the General's note entirely in the sense that he had asked my opinion whether under the existing circumstances it was right to hold on to what we possessed of the city, or to withdraw.

"Unless the alternative *gf withdrawal* was passing through General Wilson's mind when he wrote to me, what could have been his object in asking my opinion? There was assuredly no occasion why he should ask me how he could best make secure for the night the very small portion of the town which was in our possession, and I submit that by no reasonable interpretation could his words be construed into that meaning.

"The possibility of further advance had been proved impracticable.

"Again I would ask, whether it is reasonable that had I so entirely misrepresented the meaning of General Wilson's note, as to reply to it as I did, would he not have taken the earliest opportunity of correcting my error, instead of waiting as you seem to conclude might have been the case, until I had questioned him upon the subject?

"The point was certainly not one of trivial importance, and therefore not such as to be passed over by the General.

"Captain Turnbull was the A.D.C. who brought me the note. Major (now Lieutenant-General) Daly was the only other British officer with me at the time. Both of these officers, I am convinced understood this note in the sense I put upon it, and both these officers were aware of the nature of my reply. My right arm was then useless to me, and my answer was dictated, and was given to the A.D.C. to take to the General.

"Whether Captain Turnbull is alive, I know not; but General Daly is living in the Isle of Wight.

"I am unable to say upon what authority Kaye and Malleeson quote Baird Smith.<sup>1</sup> I only know that Baird Smith told me on my first joining Head Quarters inside Delhi, that General Wilson had asked his opinion in the afternoon of the 14th Sept. as to the advisability of withdrawing from the city.

"The facts of the case as having reference to myself, are as I have stated them to be, and I am unable to see how the evidence of others, or their opinions, or their conclusions can in any way be held to invalidate my testimony.

"I have never said that General Wilson intended to withdraw the troops. I merely say that he asked my opinion on that point, and that Baird Smith told me that he had consulted him as to the advisability of withdrawal; beyond this I know nothing. I will only add that General Wilson was in error in supposing that I had returned to camp; I received the note at Hindoo Rao's, which I did not leave till the evening, and then only to go and see my friend John Nicholson. If after the receipt of what I have now written, you still hold to the opinion expressed in your letter to me, I

I Col. Baird Smith's own letter to his wife.

think I may ask that in fairness to myself, and to the memory of Baird Smith, you will also publish my reply as a note to your work.

" Yours faithfully,

(sd.) "NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN."

. . .

The statement about Wilson being nervous and suggesting withdrawal is true—

See Kaye, Vol. 3, pages 617—618 and note;  
Malleon, Vol. 2, pages 55—57 ifnd note.

Additional MS. evidence which proves truth without a shadow of doubt.

On Sept. 14 Chamberlain received a letter from Wilson which he understood as implying that Wilson thought of withdrawing troops from the city. Chamberlain answered it showing that he understood it in this sense, andT Wilson never repudiated his conclusion. The purport of answer was that Wilson had no alternative but to hold on. Baird Smith distinctly told Chamberlain that Wilson had thought about retiring.

Moreover Wilson consulted Brind, who said, " God had favoured us so far, and would not desert us."

Sir Henry Norman wrote an elaborate defence of Wilson in the "Fortnightly", April, 1883, in which he said:—

"In spite of wretched health Wilson did his best, and that considering the circumstances, it is no wonder if he desponded."

"That he did his best has never been denied,

**t**ut does not prove him an able General.

"That he desponded is not wonderful, *but as Baird Smith and others whose health was as bad did not*

*despond*, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that he *zvas less stout of heart than they.*"<sup>1</sup>

Page 120, *Complete History of Indian Mutiny*, by Colonel S. Dewe White.—

"All honour be paid to Colonel Baird Smith, a man of indomitable pluck and perseverance, who warned Brigadier-General Wilson on his assumption of the command (17th July), that to raise the Siege would be fatal to our national interests. 'It is our duty' he said, 'to retain the grip we have upon Delhi and to hold on like grim Death till the place is our own.'"

REGARDING ARTICLE BY SIR HENRY NORMAN, G.C.B.,

IN THE 'FORTNIGHTLY' APRIL 1883.

In the article on Mr. Bosworth Smith's 'Life of Lord Lawrence' there is an elaborate defence of General Wilson, in which General Sir H. Norman attempts to deny that Wilson had contemplated retirement from the city to the Ridge on 14 Sept., 1857.

This includes a long statement showing how greatly we had suffered in the assault, etc.; what a small force there was to protect the camp and hospitals; how Nicholson was reported dead; how Reid's force had been driven back and Reid wounded; how Brigadier Campbell's force had failed to retain its advanced position, and the Brigadier been wounded, etc.

In fact everything is brought forward to make our position seem as bad as possible, and then he says: "If Wilson said anything of a desponding character, it was hardly to be wondered at."

General Norman further says: "He never heard Wilson propose to retire, and that none of his Staff heard of it." He goes on to say, "I was with him

<sup>1</sup> Holmes' History of Mutiny.

throughout the day, except for short periods of absence on various duties."

It will be observed that the evidence adduced by Norman is entirely of a negative character. It would be well to know what General Norman means by "short periods of absence".

In another part of his paper when he is discussing the question of drunkenness of the soldiers on the 14th, he says that "during that day I went all over the positions occupied by our troops," and how this can be reconciled with the statement that he was only absent for short periods is not very clear.

It may well be that during some of these absences the fact which he attempts to deny, actually took place.

In contrast to the negative evidence produced by General Norman we have the positive statement of Baird Smith himself in a letter to his wife—"and even that assault which gave value by its success to all the exertions that were made, would have ended in a deplorable disaster if I had not withstood with effect the desire of General Wilson to withdraw the troops from the city on the failure of Brigadier Campbell's column."

In addition to this we have the letter of General Sir Neville Chamberlain, published in Colonel S. Dewe White's book on the Mutiny, which also completely settles the matter. But if any further proof is required it is forthcoming in the Memorandum written to Kaye by a Field Officer (name not given by Kaye) who heard the conversation near Skinner's House. Kaye calls this "the clearest possible proof". This will be found in a note, page 618, of Kaye's 3rd Volume.

Lord Roberts in his book lately published, says—"During the afternoon of the 14th, Norman, Johnson and I, at the General's desire and for his information, visited every position occupied by our troops within the city walls, and were able to report to Wilson

that our troops were holding the walls from the Water Bastion to Kabul Gate (a good mile in length) in sufficient strength.

"While engaged on this duty we (Norman, Johnson and I) were attacked by a party of the enemy,"—a fight ensued and Roberts' horse was shot.

All this must have taken considerable time. The note to Chamberlain was written at 4 p.m., at a time when probably Norman was absent with Johnson and Roberts.

It is clear also from page 57 of Malleeson's Vol. 2, that Captain Edwin Johnson, the Adj.-Genl. of Artillery, gave the sjime advice to Wilson, and he would not have *advised* unless his opinion had been *asked*. It should be remembered that Johnson had shared Wilson's tent.

General Norman states apropos of the unfavourable opinion Nicholson held of Wilson, that "Nicholson disliked Wilson", meaning thereby that he was prejudiced against him. But why did Nicholson dislike Wilson? Simply because he had no steadfastness and determination; and because he thought Wilson was an obstruction to the work in hand, and would have to be removed if his opposition was not manageable in any other way.

General Norman finds fault with the officer who told Nicholson that Wilson proposed to withdraw; but it is impossible to see any justification for censure. Nicholson although wounded, was quite keen about the capture, and his mind as clear as ever. Keenly anxious to hear how things were going, it was but natural that he should be told of such a dreadful contingency.

His remarks regarding shooting Wilson need not be taken "au pied de la lettre". It was merely a very strong expression of his indignation at the very idea of retiring from Delhi. It is not stated who

told Nicholson, but it is possible it was Chamberlain himself, for that officer paid a visit to Nicholson the same evening.

General Norman says—"Much might be said to show that Wilson, under most trying circumstances and in the worst health, exercised his command with judgment."

On the contrary, very much can be shown to prove that he was wanting in judgment and knowledge, that he was irritable, peevish and weak, changing his opinion when absent from the influence of the indomitable will of Baird Smith, acting often without tact, and being occasionally almost frantic from doubt and despondency.

General Norman in this article repeats a statement he had in his original narrative—"All honour to him (Wilson) etc., etc.", which might have been with far greater justice applied to Baird Smith.

General Norman further has the hardihood to say that "It is doubtful if there was any officer before Delhi in 1857, though there were many there who possessed high qualities, who could have captured the place, except Wilson."

This is an astounding assertion to make, and is quite unjustifiable, when we know that among those present were Baird Smith, Nicholson, Chamberlain, Hope Grant and many other fine soldiers with whom Wilson could bear no comparison.

## A P P E N D I X V .

### NOTES FROM VARIOUS BOOKS REGARDING BAIRD SMITH.

*Mallesons Summary of India's Mutiny:—*

"For the decision to assault the rebellious city Baird Smith then was responsible."

Regarding question of withdrawal after assault:

"The opinions of the two strong men sufficed to decide Wilson." (Baird Smith and Neville Chamberlain.)

Page 312.

"But a careful and impartial examination of correspondence, public and private, has especially brought before me amongst the most deserving the names of—Baird Smith, Nicholson, Barnard, Neville Chamberlain, Charles Reid, James Brind, Johnson, Alexander Taylor, etc."

"With the fall of Delhi the neck of the Mutiny was felt to be broken. Its final suppression was now merely a question of time."

*Holmes' History of the Mutiny;—*

"Another arrival hopefully expected." (Baird Smith.)

Regarding Sir H. Barnard:—"The coming of Baird Smith cheered him."

An Engineer officer writing to 'Times':—

"The great want in this action (June 28) as in all our actions, was want of a head."

Regarding Wilson:—

"The new Chief was a good officer in his own branch, but neither in heart, nor in head, was he strong enough. Great men of action have suffered from sensitive nerves more often than the world suspects; but they have become great by learning to hold their nerve force under control. This, however, was precisely what Wilson had not learnt to do. He allowed himself to be irritated by trifits, not only out of his equanimity, but also out of his urbanity.

"Hardly had he succeeded before he began to think of retiring. Baird Smith prevented this by his firmness, etc."

"Wilson wrote to Baird Smith that he could not hope to succeed till reinforced from below. Baird Smith insisted that the most prudent course was to deliver assault as soon as possible. Wilson yielded, but against his convictions, and he thus threw responsibility of Siege on Baird Smith."

Wilson "Irritable and weak from anxiety and illness, and having no firmness of character to support him, Wilson petulantly spoke of withdrawing troops altogether, but Baird Smith to whom he turned for advice, insisted on his holding on."

In *Holmes' History*, Baird Smith noticed in pages 336, 338, 358, 359. 361, 363 and 369.

Colonel Baird Smith commenced an account of the Siege of Delhi, but this he unfortunately never completed. The fragment extends to 53 pages of Foolscap MS., and only brings the narrative down to the 14 of July;—the closing remark being—"thenceforward but one idea regulated the operations of the Engineer Brigade—namely, to prepare by economy of men and materials on the spot, and by collection of the same from every available point at a distance, for—"

About one half of what Colonel Baird Smith wrote has been incorporated by Colonel Thackeray in his "Two Indian Campaigns", published by the Royal Engineers' Institute, Chatham—which contains likenesses of Lord Napier of Magdala and Colonel Baird Smith.

' . '

Lieutenant (now Sir Henry) Norman's "Narrative of the Campaign in 1857 against the Mutineers at Delhi" was published in "Selections from Letters, Despatches, etc." at Calcutta, in 1893, by the Government of India—and was edited by George W. Forrest, B.A.

Pages 429 to 483. In the whole of this narrative, extending to 55 pages, no mention is made of Colonel Baird Smith, the Commanding Engineer—except once in 'Felix's' letter, when the Commanding Engineer is 'damned with faint praise'.

\* \* \*

For convenience of reference I have given the pages in Kaye and Malleeson's Histories where references will be found to Colonel Baird Smith, General Wilson and Captain Taylor.

## BAIRD SMITH.

|                                                                                                                              | Vol.   | Page. |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------|
| His character. . . . .                                                                                                       | Mtwo   | 4     |
| Exhaustless energy of character. . . . .                                                                                     | Kthree | 547   |
| Provides for defence of Roorkee . . . . .                                                                                    | Ktwo   | 175   |
| Despatches troops Roorkee to Meerut. . . . .                                                                                 | Ktwo   | 175   |
| Saves Roorkee. . . . .                                                                                                       | Ktwo   | 177   |
| Appointed to command Engineers at Delhi<br>and flies there                                                                   | Ktwo   | 563   |
| His opinion of General Barnard . . . . .                                                                                     | Ktwo   | 568   |
| Describes General Anson's plan of Campaign                                                                                   | Ktwo   | 149   |
| Counsels Assault of Delhi. . . . .                                                                                           | Ktwo   | 513   |
| Urges General Wilson to immediate action                                                                                     | Kthree | 553   |
|                                                                                                                              | Mtwo   | s     |
| Works on in despite of wound and sickness                                                                                    | Mtwo   | 5     |
| Despondjng letter of General Wilson to<br>Baird Smith, Aug. 20th                                                             | Mtwo   | 2     |
| His answer to the letter. . . . .                                                                                            | Mtwo   | 5     |
| Brigadier Wilson yields to his opinion as<br>to necessity of assaulting Delhi, but<br>throws responsibility on him . . . . . | Mtwo   | 6     |
| His intimate knowledge of interior of Delhi                                                                                  | Kthree | 588   |
| His plan for attacking Delhi, Sept. 1st. . . . .                                                                             | Mtwo   | 10    |
| Insists on continuing assault of Delhi after!<br>first day, Sept. 14. . . . .                                                | Kthree | 618   |
|                                                                                                                              | JMtwo  | 55    |

## GENERAL WILSON.

Vol. Ktwo, pp. 65, 101, 102, 180, 184—188, 533, 586.  
 „ Kthree, pp. 555, 589, 617, 620, 622, 630, 654.  
 „ Mtwo, pp. 2 (note), 6, 11, 55—57, 60 (note), 63,  
 87, 105.

## CAPTAIN TAYLOR.

Vol. Kthree, pp. 573, 626.  
 „ Mtwo, pp. 7, 65.

1 M. stands for Malleeson, and K. for Kaye.

*The Engineer's Journal of Siege Operations at Delhi, 1857.*—This will be published shortly at the R. E. Institute, Brompton Barracks, Chatham, and will prove of considerable interest to military readers.

## APPENDIX VI.

EXTRACT FROM SPEECH OF LORD PANMURE, SECRETARY  
OF STATE FOR WAR, WHEN MOVING VOTE OF THANKS  
IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS, 8TH FEBRUARY, 1858.

"I HOLD in my hand a list containing the names of several Officers both in Her Majesty's service and in that of the East India Company who have distinguished themselves in India.

"That list, however, embraces too many names to be mentioned on this occasion, but there are some which I think it is but fair I should bring under your Lordship's notice, although they may not form the subject of a special vote of thanks at your hands.

"We cannot altogether pass over the names of Chamberlain, of Greathed, and of Colonel Baird Smith who was the Engineer under whose direction Delhi was taken.

"The list of those officers who have won for themselves distinction during the recent struggle in India is far too long for recital.

"All I can say is that, taken in conjunction, they form a band of which England may well feel proud, and from which great achievements may be fairly anticipated in any future emergency which may arise."

EXTRACT FROM LORD PALMERSTON'S SPEECH IN THE  
HOUSE OF COMMONS ON THE SAME DATE.

"Colonel Baird Smith of the Engineers had the merit of conducting, under General Wilson, all the siege operations of Delhi with the greatest ability, and succeeded in placing a battery within 150 yards of the wall to be breached, a feat worthy the highest admiration."









