



Wellington
Baird
Edwardes
Napier
Munro
Lockhart
Stewart
Jacob
Roberts



SEPOY GENERALS

WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

**SELECTIONS FROM LETTERS, DESPATCHES,
AND OTHER STATE PAPERS. MILITARY
DEPARTMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
1857-58.**

**SELECTIONS FROM LETTERS, DESPATCHES,
AND OTHER STATE PAPERS. FOREIGN
DEPARTMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
1772-85.**

**ADMINISTRATION OF WARREN HASTINGS,
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**SELECTIONS FROM STATE PAPERS. BOMBAY
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**SELECTIONS FROM STATE PAPERS. BOMBAY
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**OFFICIAL WRITINGS OF MOUNTSTUART
ELPHINSTONE, GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY. With
a Memoir.**

**THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE MARQUIS OF
LANSDOWNE, VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL
OF INDIA, 1888-94.**



THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

SEPOY GENERALS

WELLINGTON TO ROBERTS

BY

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WITH PORTRAITS

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON

M C M I

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED
TO
THE BRITISH SOLDIER
BY THE SON
OF
A BRITISH SOLDIER.

PREFACE.

THIS book contains some of the biographical studies which were written while their author was employed in examining the ancient records in the archives at Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta, and each essay is in a measure the result of his work as Director of Records to the Government of India. They are now, after many years, recast and republished in trust that they will have their use in reminding Englishmen by what thoughts and actions our empire is made and held together. The Peninsular war and Waterloo campaign have cast into the shade the Mahratta campaign and the victory of Assaye; but the knowledge Wellington acquired in the Mahratta campaign of the details of the business of war, and the experience he gained in the fine art of reconciling conflicting interests among his subordinates and allies, carried the "Sepoy General," as he was contemptuously called by his great antagonist, through the toils and difficulties which beset his path in the Peninsula. He did not display a cooler and more indomitable resolution during the crowning

action of his life than he did at Assaye. His hardly won victories entitle him to a foremost rank among the great captains who established the military supremacy of England throughout India, and a study of the authoritative records of his administration shows that he was almost the first of the race of soldier-statesmen who by their wisdom, their sympathy, and their sense of an inviolable justice have bestowed permanence and stability on our great and illustrious dependency.

The story of Wellington's Indian career is told mainly from his despatches and letters published in the first two volumes of Colonel Gurwood's work, and the 'Supplementary Despatches,' edited by his son. These have been collated with the letters and State Papers preserved in the Bombay Record Office. When the Indian despatches were in the course of publication, thirty years after Assaye, the Duke said to Lady Salisbury: "I have just been reading them over, and was surprised to find them so good—they are as good as I could write now. They show the same attention to details—to the pursuit of all the means, however small, that could promote success." The despatches of a general, however, cannot tell the whole tale, and materials for it have also been collected from Jackson and Scott's 'Military Life of Field-Marshal Duke of Wellington.' Lushington's 'Life and Services of General Lord Harris'; 'Notes Relative to the late Transactions in the Mahratta Empire'; 'The Despatches, Minutes, and Corre-

spondence of the Marquess Wellesley, during his Administration in India,' by Montgomery Martin; Wilks's 'Historical Sketches of the South of India'; Beatson's 'View of the Origin and Conduct of the War with Tippoo Suldaun'; 'The Military Reminiscences of Colonel James Welsh'; and Major David Price's 'Memoirs of the Early Life and Services of a Field Officer,' present us with many dramatic incidents of which the writers were eyewitnesses.

Sir Thomas Munro, like Wellington, took as a soldier-statesman an important part in the settlement of Southern India. The sketch of his career is mainly based on his Life by G. R. Gleig, and the selections from his Minutes edited by Sir A. T. Arbuthnot. In his diary, February 15, 1830, the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, no mean judge, writes: "I have begun Sir T. Munro's Life, and am quite enchanted with it. It cannot fail to delight even those who had previously no interest in the subject. It is almost all made up of his own letters, which have fortunately been preserved, and which show that his judgment and sagacity at nineteen were as superior to those of ordinary people as they were to those of his contemporaries when his reputation was more extensive. They also most fortunately disclose the many accomplishments which were concealed by his modesty, and that delicacy of taste and tenderness of feeling which lay hid under his plain and somewhat stern demeanour." It was that delicacy of taste and tenderness of feeling which won the hearts of the natives,

and gained for Munro the proud title of "the father of the people." His administration in Baramahal is a vivid exemplification of the personal rule which created our Indian Empire. Munro, Metcalfe, Elphinstone, Jonathan Duncan, Thomason, knew the people, and by their sympathy and frankness gained their confidence. At this time, when there is a tendency to exaggerate the importance of material progress, it is well to remember the wise words of Mountstuart Elphinstone: "It is not enough to give new laws or even good courts. You must take the people along with you, and give them *a share in your feelings*, which can only be done by *sharing* theirs." Munro's success as an administrator has overshadowed his fame as a soldier. But as a commander in the field he showed in the subjugation of the Southern Mahratta country both spirit and fertility of resource. To Munro Wellington wrote: "As you are a judge of a military operation, and as I am desirous of having your opinion on my side, I am about to give you an account of the battle of Assye" (Assaye).

The sketch of Sir David Baird, one of the most thorough soldiers that ever devoted their lives to the service of their country, was written at the time when a fresh Indian expedition to Egypt led to an examination of the records relating to the last expedition, which had long been forgotten. A cautious use has been made of Theodore Hook's 'Life of Sir David Baird,' a book of considerable literary merit marred by the unfair spirit in which it is written.

How the body of Tippoo Sultan was found hidden beneath a heap of slain is told in a letter which has never before been printed.

The career of Herbert Edwardes is recorded in 'A Year on the Punjab Frontier,' one of the most fascinating books in our English, and in the Memoirs written by his widow. Englishmen, however, cannot too often wander with Edwardes through the fair and fertile valley of Bunnu which he subjugated without firing a shot, or keep pace with him in his brilliant march to Multan. Lady Edwardes kindly sent the author some important letters relating to the originating and negotiating of the two treaties with Afghanistan.

The story of Napier's various campaigns, from Corunna to Meeanee, is told in his own words. History has endorsed Sir William Napier's fine summary of his brother's rule over Sind: "He left a united regenerated people rejoicing in a rising civilisation, the work of his beneficent genius." Sufficient justice, however, has never been done to the hard and splendid work he did as Commander-in-Chief in India. The details of his administration are now given from the old warrior's impetuous speeches, his general orders, and his caustic criticisms on the verdicts of the courts-martial which came before him for final judgment. His disquisitions display the qualities of his administrative talent, and must always prove invaluable to the military reader.

The example set by Charles Napier of carrying

out inspections with thoroughness, of minutely inspecting barracks to see that the soldier was lodged in comfort, of striving to the utmost to increase the welfare of the soldier and the sepoy, has been followed by his illustrious successors—Napier of Magdala, Sir Donald Stewart, Earl Roberts, and Sir William Lockhart.

The memoirs of Donald Stewart and Lockhart were printed in 'Blackwood's Magazine' under the title of "Two Great Soldiers."

The sketch of Lord Roberts' career was written before he left India, and printed on the day of his departure, which was generally supposed to mark the date of the close of his active military life. It has now been entirely recast. The account of his services in the Indian Mutiny is based on official records and contemporary literature. The story of the Afghan campaign is mainly told from his own despatches, which the author has examined more closely than is common, as he was at one time asked to edit the official history of the war. The scheme had to be relinquished, as the editing of the State Papers relating to the Mutiny was considered to be a work of a more pressing nature. The account of Lord Roberts' South African campaign is also mainly based on his own despatches, and what the Duke of Wellington said of his Indian despatches is applicable to them: "They show the same attention to details—to the pursuit of all the means, however small, that could promote success."

The earnest endeavour of the author has been to record not only the heroism of the British soldier but also the gallantry of the Sepoy. To the courage shown in brilliant attack, the patience and coolness in danger, of the British soldier we owe our victories from Plassey to Assaye. Of them it was well said, "They may be private, but they never are common soldiers"—a phrase worthy of the gallant Napiers. But it must be remembered that a handful of Englishmen could never have conquered India if we had not been assisted by the bravery and devotion of the native armies of Bengal, Bombay, and Madras. It was the first battalion of the light regiment of Madras infantry which was the favourite corps of the Duke of Wellington. They were with him on every service, and the men of the regiment used to call themselves "Wellesley ka Pultan" (Wellesley's Regiment); and at Assaye, which made us masters of India, they proved themselves worthy of the proud title. A staff officer after the battle saw some Muhamadans engaged in a funeral and inquired who they were burying. "We are going to put three brothers into one grave," said one of the party. The officer began to express his regret and offer some consolation to the survivors, when he was interrupted by one of the men. "There is no occasion," he said, "for such feelings or expressions; these men" (pointing to the dead bodies) "were sepoys; they have died in the performance of their duties; the Government they have served will protect their children, who will soon

fill the ranks they have occupied." Buried in the old records and memoirs of the day are to be found many examples of the patient endurance of privation and fatigue and the splendid valour of our native troops. The noble fall of such men as Hussain Khan (p. 70) and Subahdar Ally Khan (p. 88) shows the undaunted courage of "those glorious sepoy, who have so often fought side by side with their European officers, striving with them even unto their death."

GEORGE W. FORREST.

THE KNOWLE,
BRENCHLEY, KENT, *October 1901.*

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON	I
SIR CHARLES NAPIER	128
SIR HERBERT B. EDWARDES	178
SIR THOMAS MUNRO	219
SIR DAVID BAIRD AND A FORGOTTEN INDIAN EXPEDITION TO EGYPT	241
GENERAL JOHN JACOB	268
SIR DONALD STEWART AND SIR WILLIAM LOCK- HART	292
FIELD-MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS	319
INDEX	467

PORTRAITS.

	PAGE
THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON	<i>Frontispiece</i>
From a bust at the India Office.	
SIR CHARLES NAPIER	128
From an engraving.	
SIR HERBERT B. EDWARDES	178
From a photo by Mr J. Mayall, by permission of Lady Edwardes.	
SIR THOMAS MUNRO	219
From an engraving.	
SIR DAVID BAIRD	241
From an engraving.	
GENERAL JOHN JACOB	268
From an engraving, by permission of Messrs Seeley & Co., Ltd.	
SIR DONALD STEWART	292
From a photo by Messrs Elliott & Fry.	
SIR WILLIAM LOCKHART	306
From a photo by Messrs Bassano.	
FIELD-MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS	319
From a photo by Robinson.	

INDEX.

- Abdul Rahman, recognition of, as Ameer of Kabul, 304, 305.
- Abyssinian expedition, Brigadier Stewart takes part in the, 298, 299—four future commanders-in-chief employed in, 307—Major Roberts serves as Senior Staff at Zula during, 354.
- Acheen, fight between the Dutch and tribesmen at, 309.
- Addington, Mr, reference to Arthur Wesley in letter to, 1.
- Afghan war, Lockhart takes part in, under Lord Roberts, 309—Roberts commands the Kuram field force in the Second, 357-373.
- Afghanistan campaign, events connected with Sir Donald Stewart in, 301-305, 362.
- Afghanistan, opinions of Edwardes on the frontier question regarding, 209— invasion of, in 1838, 270—Southern, policy of Donald Stewart in, 302.
- Afreedees, punishment of the, 159, 160—battle at the Kohat Pass with, 161-165—enlistment of, in place of the mutinous sepoy, 213—the Tirah Expeditionary Force march against, 316, 317.
- Agra, visit of Sir C. Napier to, 155, 156—surprise of the Delhi column at, 332, 333.
- Ahmed Keyi, battle of, 303, 304.
- Ahmednagar, capture of the fort at, 67-71—famine at, 106, 107—capture of, 126.
- Ally Khan, Subahdar, death of, at the battle of Argaum, 88.
- Alumbagh, the, Roberts makes a successful expedition to, 334, 335.
- Alyghur, mutiny of Donald Stewart's regiment at, 295.
- Ameers, peaceful submission of, 283.
- America, Napier takes part in the war in, 141.
- Andaman Islands, Major-General Stewart is made Chief Commissioner of the, 300—murder of Lord Mayo at Hopetown, in the, 300, 301.
- Argaum, battle of, 84-88.
- Arghandeh, Mahomed Jan advances to, 367.
- Arnee, incompleteness of arrangements at, 21.
- Assaye, battle of, Sindia and Rajah of Berar defeated at, 73-82—victory of, 226—battle of, letter from General Wellesley describing, 227-231.
- Aurangabad, arrival of the forces under Colonel Wellesley at, 71.
- 'A Year on the Punjaub Frontier,' by H. B. Edwardes, 181-185.
- Ayub Khan, investment of Kandahar by, 305, 372—defeat of, by Sir F. Roberts, 373.
- Baillie, Colonel, defeat of by Hyder Ali, 242, 243.
- Baird, Sir D., remonstrances of, respecting Colonel Wellesley, 35—appointed to command the Batavian expedition, 52—enters the 2nd Regiment of Foot at Gibraltar, 241—sails for India as captain of the 73rd Highlanders, 16.—serves under Colonel Baillie against Hyder Ali,

- 242—taken prisoner to Seringapatam, 243—removal to Walajabad, 244—appointed colonel to a Sepoy brigade, *ib.*—appointed Brigadier-General, 245—returns to India as Major-General, *ib.*—takes part in the fight against Tippoo Sul-taan, 245-250—Tippoo's sword presented to, 251—receives the command at Dinapore, 252—arrival at Kosseir, 253—expedition into Egypt, 253-258—captured in the Bay of Biscay by a French privateer, 259—recalled from the Cape, 260—appointed to the staff of the Eastern Division, *ib.*—receives the thanks of Parliament, 267—is appointed Commander of the Forces in Ireland, *ib.*
- Bangalore, Munro takes part in the siege of, 220—speech of Lord Roberts at the Southern Indian Rifle Association held at, 374, 375.
- Baramahal, tour made through, by Colonel Wesley, 7—Memorandum on, written by Colonel Wesley, 8—life and duties of Sir T. Munro at, 221-225.
- Barracks, unhealthy state of, complaints made by Sir C. Napier, 154, 155.
- Bassein treaty, 259—views of the Mahratta chiefs respecting, 226.
- Batavia expedition, rejection of Colonel Wellesley to take part in, 49, 50—General Baird appointed commander, 252.
- Beja Khan, ineffectual attempt to march a force against, 271—second expedition against, 283.
- Beker, announcement by circular letter of victory at, 20.
- Bengal Horse Artillery, description of uniform, 320.
- Bengal, Memorandum on, written by Colonel Wesley, 7.
- Berar, Rajah of, war carried on in the Nizam's Dominions by, 65-81—treaty of peace signed by the envoy of Rajah of, 93.
- Beresford, Colonel, commands the first corps on the march to Cairo, 253-255.
- Bermuda, Napier commands the regiment at, 140, 141.
- Billamore, Major, expedition against Eastern Beluchistan under, 271-276.
- Black Mountains, exploration of, 308—submission of the Pathans of, *ib.*
- Blackington, Charles Napier joins the 95th Rifle Corps at, 130.
- Bloemfontein, the advance on, 414-418—Lord Roberts issues congratulations to the army on arrival at, 419, 420.
- Bombay Sepoys, characteristics of, 271, 272.
- Borgne, De, Sindia's forces placed under command of, 11.
- Bourchier, General Roberts appointed Senior Staff officer under, 355, 356.
- "Brahminee Bull's Letters in India to his cousin John Bull in England," written by Edwardes at Subathoo, 178.
- Bulandshur, successful charge made on the rebels near, 331, 332.
- Buller, General Sir Redvers, appointed to command the British Forces in South Africa, 385—independence of action in Natal granted, 390.
- Bunnu, Edwardes proposes to occupy, 180—invasion and subjugation of, 180-188.
- Bunnu Tak, a force sent to collect the revenue at, 179, 180.
- Burma, services of Lockhart in, 315.
- Burmese War, aid rendered by Munro during, 235, 236.
- Busaco, Napier wounded at, 138, 139.
- Cairo, capitulation of, signed by the French, 257.
- Campbell, Sir Colin, accompanies Sir C. Napier to punish the Afreedees, 159, 160—takes part in the battle at the Kohat Pass, 160-165—marches to the relief of the Residency, 334-341—the march to Cawnpore under, 341-344—marches to Fatehgarh, 345.
- Canara, Munro placed in charge of, 225.
- Cannannore, advance of troops under Lieut.-General Stuart from, 23.
- Canning, Lord, approves the retention of Peshawar, 214, 215—policy of, respecting Denmark, 261, 262.
- Cape of Good Hope, expedition under General Baird to, 260—surrender to the English, *ib.*
- Cavagnari, Major, murder of, 302, 309.
- Cavalry, reflections of Napier on the uses of, 142.
- Cavan, Lord, praise bestowed on the Indian troops by, 258, 259.

- Celbridge, Charles Napier goes to school at, 129.
- Chamberlain, General Sir Neville, Captain Roberts becomes staff officer to, 325, 326—column formed under, to attack Delhi, 327—wounded at the Umbejla Pass, 351.
- Charasia, the Kuram field force win the battle of, 366.
- Charge of the British under Colonel Wellesley at Malavelly, 29, 30.
- Cheerung, services of Lockhart at, rewarded by a medal and clasp, 307.
- Chesney, Sir George, military reforms brought about by, 305.
- Chitral Mission, Lockhart acts as envoy in, 310-314—reception of, 311, 312.
- Chouth, demand by the Mahrattas on the Nizam for revival of, 9, 10.
- Chuttur, pursuit by Jacob's Horse at, 272.
- Clark, Lieutenant, effective charge made at Chuttur by, 272.
- Clive, Lord, opinions of Colonel Wellesley respecting abilities of, 15, 16.
- Close, Lieut.-Colonel Barry, appointed Commissioner of Mysore, 40.
- Cochrane, Admiral, Napier joins the forces of, 141.
- Copenhagen, Baird is wounded at the siege of, 262.
- Cornwallis, Marquess of, letter of introduction from, presented by Colonel Wesley to Sir John Shore, 2—peace with Tippoo Suldaun announced by, 220.
- Corry, Lieutenant, part taken by, in the invasion of Afghanistan, 270, 271.
- Cortlandt, General Van, commands the Lahore column in the invasion of Bunnu, 180, 181.
- Corunna, description by Napier of the 50th at battle of, 133, 134—Baird lands at, 263—battle of, 264-266.
- Courts-martial, measures taken by Sir C. Napier respecting, 149, 150.
- Croker, Mr, letter from the Duke of Wellington to, 35, 36.
- Cronje, General, tactics of, before Paardeberg, 403-407—surrender of, at Paardeberg, 410, 411.
- Curtis, Vice-Admiral Sir Robert, report on the Isle of France from Marquess Wellesley to, 51.
- Dalhousie, Lord, decision respecting the ordering of pay and allowance, 169-171—Minutes of, 171, 172—conduct respecting the Treaty with Dost Mahommed, 205, 206, 323.
- Dargai, storming of, 317.
- Darjeeling-Bhutan Mission, ill reception of, 307.
- Debt, opinions of Sir C. Napier addressed to the officers of the army on the subject of, 152-154.
- Defeat by the "Grand Army" of Tippoo Suldaun at the Pondicherrum Pass, 26-29—of Tippoo Suldaun's troops at Malavelly, 29, 30.
- Delhi, visit of Sir C. Napier to the palace of the Moghul at, 155—mutiny for higher pay by the 41st N.I. at, 156—attack on, 215—Donald Stewart takes part in the siege of, 297—relief of, 327-329.
- Denmark, Baird takes part under Lord Cathcart in capturing the navy of, 261, 262.
- Derah Futteh Khan, news of Mulraj, the traitor, brought to Edwardes at, 193, 194.
- Destruction of the villages in the Afredi Pass, disapproval of in England, 160.
- Dharwar, military and civil command of, placed under Munro, 233.
- Dhuleepgarh, erection in Bunnu of the Fort, 187, 188.
- Dhundia Waugh, defeat and death of, 43-48.
- Diamond Hill, Lord Roberts captures, 446, 447.
- Division of the Mysore empire, scheme proposed by Colonel Wellesley, 39, 40.
- Doombkees, defeat of, 275.
- "Dora," Colonel, appellation bestowed on Munro, 225.
- Dost Mahommed, proposal by Edwardes to make a treaty with, 204, 205—treaty of friendship signed by, 205, 206—Government agree to pay a subsidy to, 207.
- Doveton, Major, Tippoo Suldaun urged to receive, 20, 21, 23-25.
- Duelling, suppression of, by Sir C. Napier, 152.
- Duff, Sir James, Charles Napier appointed as aide-de-camp to, 129.
- Edwardes, H. B., birthplace of, 178—

- education of, *ib.*—arrives at Calcutta, *ib.*—joins his regiment at Kurnaul, *ib.*—appointed aide-de-camp to Sir H. Gough, 179—wounded at the battle of Moodkee, *ib.*—takes part in the battle of Sobraon, *ib.*—becomes secretary to Sir Henry Lawrence, *ib.*—accompanies a force to Bunnu, 179, 180—proceedings taken in the subjugation of Bunnu, 180-188—'A Year on the Punjab Frontier,' by, 181-185—expedition to Tak, 189, 190—encounters Shahzad Khan, 190-193—wins the battle of Kineyree, 195-201—captures Multan, 201, 202—receives the order of C.B., 202—Court of Directors bestows a gold medal on, *ib.*—returns to England, 202, 203—speech at Liverpool on the use of colonies, 203—Oxford bestows the honorary degree of D.C.L. on, *ib.*—marriage of, *ib.*—returns to India, *ib.*—lives at Jullundur, *ib.*—removes from Jullundur to Hazara, 203, 204—appointed Commissioner of Peshawar, 204—measures taken by, for a treaty with Dost Mahomed, 204-208—leaves for England a second time, 215—appointment of Commissioner of Umballa and agent for the Cis-Sutlej states offered, 216—receives the order of K.C.B., and honorary degree from Cambridge University, *ib.*—returns to India a second time, *ib.*—death of, 218—appointed Commissioner of Peshawar, 323.
- Egyptian expedition, difficulties of the march, 253-257.
- Farnham, Napier joins the Military College at, 141.
- Fitzwilliam, ship, description by Colonel Wellesley of voyage in, 14, 15.
- Fort St George, preparations undertaken by Colonel Wellesley at, 17, 18.
- Fox, Charles, meeting of Napier with, 131.
- Fox, General, Napier made aide-de-camp to, 131.
- French, General, holds the Riet river, 397.
- Frere, Sir Bartle, is succeeded by John Jacob as Commissioner of Sind, 288—quotation from letter of, addressed to John Jacob, 289.
- Futteh Khan, gallant behaviour of, in the battle at the Kohat Pass, 164.
- Garvoch, General, takes over the command of the Forces in the Umbeyla expedition, 351.
- Gatacre, General, reverses of, at Stormberg, 387.
- Gawilgurh, siege and capture of the fortress of, 89-93.
- Ghazis, Roberts takes part in the destruction of, 352.
- Ghazni, surrender of, 304.
- Gilgit, halt of the Chitral Mission at, 310, 311, 313, 314.
- Gough, Lord, succeeded by Sir Charles Napier as Commander-in-Chief in India, 147.
- Govindgarh, Fort of, court-martial at, 159—disapproval by Sir Charles Napier of the sentences of the court-martial at, 165.
- "Grand Army" passes the Mysore frontier, 26.
- Grant, Sir Hope, appointed to command the cavalry division at capture of Lucknow, 346—pursues the Nana, *ib.*—takes charge of the pickets round the Dilkusha palace, 348—Wolseley succeeds Roberts on the staff of, 350.
- Gundamuk, treaty of, 302.
- Hardinge, Captain, description of Sir John Moore's death in a letter from, 265, 266.
- Harris, General, reference to, 15—enters Mysore territory, 23—despatch of Lord Mornington's letter to Tippoo Suldaun by, 26—appointed Commissioner of Mysore, 40.
- Hearsey, Brigadier, remonstrance with the sepoy at Wuzzeerabad by, 157, 158—opinions of, on the regulation allowance to sepoy soldiers, 166.
- Heroine, remonstrance to Sir John Shore from Colonel Wesley on board the Company's ship, 6.
- Hobart, Lord, recall of the Manilla Expedition Contingent by, 7—visit of Colonel Wesley to, *ib.*
- Holkar, hostilities threatened by, 105, 106—retreat of the forces under Monson before the advance of, 112, 113.
- Hutchinson, General, commands the forces in Egypt, 256, 257—resigna-

- tion of command to Lord Cavan, 258.
- Hyder Ali in the Carnatic, 219, 241-243.
- Hyderabad, Nizam of, defeat of by the Marhattas and Tippoo Sultaun, 9, 10—French force disbanded in favour of British troops at, 11—battle of, the part taken by John Jacob in, 279-283.
- Ionian Islands, Napier appointed inspecting field officer in, 143.
- Isle of France, proposals to reduce the French power in, 51, 52.
- Jacob, John, character of, 268, 269—birthplace of, 269—trained at the Military College of the East India Company, *ib.*—appointed to the Bombay Artillery, 270—sails with his battery for Kurrachee, *ib.*—holds a post in Gujerat, *ib.*—placed in charge of the European troops at Sukkur, *ib.*—ineffectual march against Beja Khan, 271—forms a regiment of native infantry from the Bombay Sepoys, 272—returns to duty at Hyderabad, 276—placed in command of the Sind Irregular Horse at Kutchee, 277—ordered to join Sir Charles Napier's force, 278—takes part in the battle of Meeanee, 279—takes part in the battle of Hyderabad, 279-283—recommended to honorary distinction by Sir C. Napier, 282—assumes the command of the Sind Frontier, 285-288—succeeds Sir Bartle Frere as Commissioner of Sind, 288—is placed in command of the garrison of Bushire, 290—death of, *ib.*, 291.
- Jacobabad, origin of the name, 286—death of John Jacob at, 290, 291.
- Jacob's Horse, official title of Sind Irregulars changed to, 272.
- Jacobsdal, Lord Roberts enters, 401.
- Janee, encounter of Major Billamore with the warrior, 274.
- Jekranee, defeat of, 275.
- Johannesburg, surrender of, 439, 440.
- Kabul, a Russian mission visits, 301—taken possession of by General Roberts, 302, 367—Kandahar field force, Roberts conducts the famous march of, 305, 372, 373.
- Kafiristan, the Chitral Mission penetrates as far as Lut-Dih in, 312, 313.
- Kahun, successful march of Major Billamore's force to, 275, 276.
- Kandahar, reoccupation by General Stewart of, 301, 302—investment of, by Ayub Khan, 305, 372.
- Kavanagh, services of, during the Mutiny, 334, 335.
- Keane, Sir John, Jacob accompanies the army of the Indus under, 270.
- Kimberley, advance for the relief of, 398-401—the relief of, 401.
- Kineyree, battle of, 195-201.
- "King of the World," title assumed by Dhundia Waugh, 48.
- Kirkee, defeat of the Peshwa at, 233.
- Kirkpatrick, Lieut.-Colonel William, appointed Commissioner of Mysore, 40.
- Kitchener, Lord, meets Lord Roberts at Gibraltar, 389.
- Kohat, Pass of, the successful fight with the Afreedees at, 160-165.
- Koodoosberg drift, General Hector Macdonald seizes, 394.
- Kroonstad, Lord Roberts enters, 431.
- Kruger, Paul, flight of, 462.
- Kuram field force, Roberts is placed in command of, 357—ordered to proceed to Kabul, 362.
- Kuram Pass, Roberts advances into Afghanistan through the, 358.
- Kurrachee, opinions of Napier on the prosperity of, 145, 146—reception of Napier at, 175.
- Kurrak, junction of the two columns at, for invasion of Bunnu, 180.
- La Preneuse, arrival at Mangalore of the French frigate, 8.
- Ladysmith, retreat of the British under Colonel Yule to, 383—siege of, 383, 384—failure of second attempt to relieve, 393—relief of, 412.
- Lake, General, ordered to advance on Malwa, 106—retires to Cawnpore, 112.
- Laloo, successful attack on the heights near, 351.
- Lambada, Lockhart takes part with the Dutch in the assault on, 309.
- Land Revenue in Canara, settlement of, by Munro, 225.
- Lawrence, Sir Henry, Herbert Edwards becomes private secretary to, 179.

- Lawrence, John, opposes the treaty with Dost Mahommed, 204, 205, 323—signs the treaty with Dost Mahommed, 206—letter respecting the mutiny from Edwardes to, 211—meeting of Lord Roberts with, at Rawul Pindi, 324.
- Lennox, Sarah, mother of Charles Napier, 128.
- Lockhart, Sir W., birthplace of, 307—ensign in the Bengal Army, *ib.*—joins the regiment of Murray's Jat Horse, *ib.*—appointed aide-de-camp to Brigadier-General Merewether, *ib.*—takes part in the Black Mountain exploration, 308—joins the Dutch in the assault of Lambada, 309—medal and clasp with insignia of C. B. conferred on, for services in the Afghan war, *ib.*—assumes command of the 24th Punjab Infantry, *ib.*—takes charge of the intelligence branch at Simla, *ib.*—acts as envoy in the Chitral Mission, 310-314—receives degree of K. C. B. for services in Burma, 315—takes command of the Punjab Frontier Force, *ib.*—placed in command of the Tirah Expeditionary Force, 316, 317—is made a G. C. B. and Commander-in-Chief in India, 317, 318.
- Lushais, punitive expedition formed to punish the, 355-357.
- Lut-Dih, visit of the Chitral Mission to, 312, 313.
- Lytton, Lord, frontier policy of, 357—Roberts makes the acquaintance of, *ib.*
- Macartney, Lord, proclamation by Mr Malartie authenticated by, 13.
- MacDonald, General Hector (then Sergeant), gallant behaviour of, at the battle of Charasia, 366—seizes Koodoosberg drift, 394.
- Mackeson, Colonel, murder of, when Commissioner of Peshawar, 322, 323.
- Macleod, Lord, refusal to command the army against Hyder Ali, 241.
- MacMahon, Private, gallant behaviour at the battle of Charasia, 366.
- Mafeking, the march under Colonel Mahon to the relief of, 432-434.
- Magersfontein, repulse at, 387.
- Mahomed Jan, the forces of, advance to Arghandeh, 367.
- Mahon, Colonel B., commands the flying column for the relief of Mafeking, 432.
- Mahrattas make alliance with Tippoo Sultaun against the Nizam, 9, 10—measures to be adopted for operations in territory of, 59, 60—popularity of General Wellesley amongst, 109—outbreak of the Second war with, 226.
- Maiwand, the disaster at, 305, 372.
- Malartie, Mr, Governor-General of the Isle of France, proclamation respecting the alliance of Tippoo Sultaun issued by, 12, 13.
- Malavelly, defeat of Tippoo Sultaun's troops at, 29, 30.
- Malcolm, Captain, commands part of the force under the Nizam, 23.
- Mangalore, treaty of, Baird released from prison by, 243.
- Manilla, expeditionary force from Bengal Presidency sent to attack the settlement of, 4.
- Martial law, opinions of Colonel Wellesley respecting, 59.
- Mauritius. See Isle of France.
- Mayo, Lord, new government of the Andamans determined by, 299, 300—murder of, 300, 301.
- Meanjung, the storming and destruction of, 346, 348.
- Meeanee, Napier visits, for the last time, 174—battle of, the part taken by John Jacob in, 279.
- Meer Allum, commander of the Nizam's force, 23.
- "Memorandum on the Expedition against the Spanish Islands;" State papers submitted by Colonel Wesley to Sir John Shore, 5.
- "Memorandum on the Treaty of Bassein," drawn up by General Wellesley, 112.
- Merewether, John, reports favourably on Lieutenant Lockhart's services in Abyssinia, 307, 308.
- Methuen, General, advances on Kimberley, 386.
- Military Club at Calcutta, speech given by Sir C. Napier at the, 148, 149.
- Military College, East India Company, John Jacob trained at, 269.
- Modder river, departure of troops from, 396.
- Mohamerah, occupation of the fords at, 290.

- Monson, retreat before Holkar of the force under, 113-117.
- Montessor, Colonel, brigade of native infantry placed under command of, 27.
- Moodkee, Edwardes wounded at battle of, 179.
- Moore, Sir John, camp of instruction at Shorncliffe under, 132—victory and death of, at Corunna, 263-266.
- Mornington, Lord, letter to Mr Addington referring to Arthur Wesley, 1—letters from Colonel Wesley to, 4, 5, 16, 17—arrival at Calcutta, 10—unsuccessful endeavours to make a treaty with the Peshwa, *ib.*, 11, 12—resolved to invade Mysore, 13—letter to Colonel Wellesley re negotiations with Tippoo Suldaun from, 24—letter to Tippoo Suldaun from, 25, 26—ejectment of the French from Egypt planned by, 252, 253.
- Mulkah, the Bonairs forced to destroy, 353.
- Multan, mutiny for higher pay by the Sepoys ordered to, 156—capture by Edwardes of, 201, 202.
- Munro, Sir H., letter from Colonel Wellesley to, 43—marches to Conjeveram, 242.
- Munro, Sir Thomas, birthplace of, 219—lands at Madras, *ib.*—takes service under Lieut.-General Munro, *ib.*—is present at the victory of Porto Novo, *ib.*—opinions on making peace with Tippoo, 220—appointed one of the military assistants at Baramahal, 221—becomes secretary to Colonel Read, 225—appointed to charge at Canara, *ib.*—resigns his appointment and returns to England, 231—marriage of, 232—acts as head of a Special Commission in Madras, *ib.*—returns to England a second time, 234—appointed Governor of Madras, *ib.*—receives a baronetcy, 237—death of, 238-240.
- Murray's Jat Horse, Lockhart joins the regiment of, 307.
- Musketry, necessity of efficiency in, enforced by Lord Roberts, 374-379.
- Mutiny in the Punjaub, approval of movable column to suppress, 212—at Delhi, Edwardes receives news of, 325.
- Mysore, invasion of, postponed, 14—entry of General Harris into territory of, 23—the "Grand Army" crosses the frontier of, 26—scheme suggested by Colonel Wellesley for division of and measures taken, 39-41—commissioners appointed for, 40—Partition Treaty of, 41—policy adopted by Colonel Wellesley as Governor of, 57-59—war, service of Baird during the, 244.
- Naggur Parkur, reconnaissance made by Jacob of the route from Hyderabad to, 276, 277.
- Nana Fadnavis, application from the widow of, respecting place of residence, 107, 108.
- Napier, Sir Charles, birth at Whitehall, 128—appointed aide-de-camp to Sir James Duff, 129—obtains a commission in the Duke of Wellington's regiment, *ib.*—made aide-de-camp to General Fox, 131—removes to Hythe under the instruction of Sir John Moore, 132—joins the first battalion of the 50th at Lisbon, 133—taken prisoner at the battle of Corunna, 135-137—appointed commander of the New South Wales Fencibles at Bermuda, 139, 140—takes up residence at Poona, 144—visits Nice and Paris, 146—succeeds Lord Gough as Commander-in-Chief in India, 147—leaves Simla, 154—the last exploit of, 160-165—compensation to the Sepoys granted by, 167-169—reprimanded by Lord Dalhousie, 169-171—letter of resignation to the Home Military Secretary, 172, 173—resignation of, 172-175—visits Meeanee for the last time, 174—reception at Kurrachee, 175—arrives in Bombay, *ib.*, 176—returns to England in 1851, 176—death of, 177—victory of Meeanee won by, 278, 279—wins the battle of Hyderabad, 279-283.
- Napier, Sir Robert, march of, to Magdala, 298.
- Negotiations with Tippoo Suldaun by Lord Mornington, 20-23.
- "New South Wales Fencibles," Napier takes the command of the regiment, 139, 140.
- Nicholson, John, friendship of Edwardes with, 202—advice from

- Edwardes to Lord Canning respecting, 210, 211—death and farewell message to Edwardes, 215—Edwardes begins to write the biography of, 216—meeting of Lord Roberts with, at Cherat, 324—Captain Roberts becomes staff officer to, 326—last meeting of Captain Roberts with, 330—visit of Lord Roberts to the grave of, *ib.*, 331.
- Nicholson's Nek, disaster of, 383.
- Nuffosk, Pass of, road made over, 275, 276.
- Ooch, engagement with the Beluchees at, 273, 274.
- Outram, meeting of John Jacob with, 276—report from, recommending John Jacob to the notice of the Government, 277—reports on the peaceful nature of Upper Sind, 277, 278—views held by, respecting the annexation of Sind, 278.
- Paardeberg, defeat of Cronje at, 410, 411.
- Parliamentary Committee, Munro's evidence regarding Indian affairs laid before, 232.
- Paulo Penang, meeting of the Bengal troops with the Madras contingent at, 7.
- Peel, Sir Robert, opinions of, on the abilities of Napier, 147.
- Peiwar Kotal, capture by the Kuram field force of the, 360-362.
- Penang, paper written by Colonel Wesley in favour of occupation of island of, 7.
- Persian campaign, Jacob appointed to command the cavalry in the, 289.
- Peshawar, massacre of soldiers between Kohat and, 158—Edwardes appointed Commissioner of, 204—Edwardes founds a church in, 210—native troops disarmed at, 212—approval of Lord Canning to retain, 212-215.
- Peshwa, the, refusal of overtures by, 41—restoration to power of, 61, 64, 65—troublesome conduct of, 99, 100—makes a treaty of alliance with the British, 226—defeat at Kirkee of, 233—urges the Rajah of Berar to march on Poona, 259.
- Pindarees, aggression of, 233.
- Policy adopted by Colonel Wellesley in the government of Mysore, 57-59.
- Pondicherrum Pass, engagement of the Grand Army with Tippoo Sultaun at, 26-29.
- Pondicherry, Baird present during the siege of, 244.
- Poolgeer, Major Billamore's force arrives at, 276.
- Poona, rescue of, under Colonel Wellesley, 62, 63—appointment of Napier to command the division in, 144.
- Popham, Admiral, attacks the Spanish colonies in America, 260.
- Porto Novo, Munro takes part in the victory of, 219.
- Pretoria, march from Johannesburg to, 441-445.
- Punishment of the 66th Regiment for mutiny, 165, 166.
- Punjaub, the conduct of Edwardes respecting the lieutenant-governorship of, 217, 218—Lockhart's influence in, 310.
- Purneah, Dewan of Mysore, letter from General Wellesley to, 125.
- Pursuit and capture of Dhundia Waugh, 43-48.
- Quetta, proposals of John Jacob respecting, 289.
- Rahmud, encounter of Major Billamore with the warrior, 274.
- Railways in South Africa and Natal, 385, 386.
- Rainier, Admiral, Batavian expedition placed under command of, 49—refuses to join the expedition against the Isle of France, 52.
- Rajah of Mysore, restoration to the throne of, 40, 41.
- Rawal Pindi, refusal by the 22nd N. I. at, to receive reduced pay, 156.
- Raymond, Mons., Nizam increases his forces under command of, 11.
- Read, Colonel A., road made through Baramahal by, 7, 8—the ryotwar system introduced into Baramahal by, 221—Munro acts as secretary to, 225.
- Red Ridge, storming and capture of by the Kuram field force, 363-365.
- Reduced pay to the sepoy's one of the causes of the mutiny, 157.

- Reforms carried on in Seringapatam, 37, 38.
- Reid, General, appointed to chief military command in the Punjab, 325.
- Residency, the, assault and capture of, 335-341.
- Roberts, Lord, arrangements for embarkation of troops for Abyssinia by, 298—takes possession of Kabul, 302, 367—arrival at Calcutta, 319—joins his father at Peshawar, 320, 321—joins the Horse Artillery at Peshawar, 321, 322—appointed to report on Cherat as a military sanatorium, 324—is present at the Council of War held in Peshawar, 325—becomes staff-officer to Brigadier Neville Chamberlain, 325, 326—becomes staff-officer to Brigadier J. Nicholson, 326—goes to Delhi, *ib.*, 327—appointed Deputy-Assistant Quartermaster-General at Delhi, 327—is wounded at the relief of Delhi, 329—marches with the relief column from Delhi to Cawnpore, 330-333—sent to obtain information from the general stationed before Cawnpore, 333—helps to place the colours on the turret of the mess-house, 338—is awarded the V.C., 345—appointed Deputy-Assistant Quartermaster-General to Major-General Sir H. Grant, 346—the kindly action of, during the destruction of Meanjung, 347, 348—is present at the capture of the Chukur Kothe, 349—returns to Waterford, 350—returns to India in 1859, *ib.*—marriage of, *ib.*—is present at the destruction of Mulkah, 353—appointed to serve as Senior Staff at Zula during the Abyssinian expedition, 354—returns to England by the Renown, *ib.*—bearer of despatches from Sir R. Napier, 355—returns to Simla as First Assistant Quartermaster at Army headquarters, *ib.*—takes part in the punitive expedition against the Lushais, 356—is awarded the C.B., 357—is nominated Quartermaster-General by Lord Napier, *ib.*—address delivered by, to the Kuram field force, 362, 363—defence of Sherpur under, 367-372—appointed Governor of Natal and Commander of the Forces in South Africa, 373—returns to India as Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army, 374—succeeds Sir D. Stewart as Commander-in-Chief in India, *ib.*—improvements in the Army brought about by, 379, 380—appointed Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, 380—appointed Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, 389—lands at Cape Town, *ib.*—plan of campaign against the Boers adopted by, 391—moves for Modder camp, 393—arrives at Ramdam, 397—enters Jacobsdal, 401—the meeting with Cronje after Paardeberg, 411—advances on Bloemfontein, 414-418—enters Kroonstad, 431—enters Johannesburg, 440—takes possession of Pretoria, 441-445—arrives at Bronkhorst Spruit, 445—makes his third and final advance, 457-463—appointed to be Commander-in-Chief, 464—the farewell address of, to the troops in South Africa, 465, 466.
- Roberts, Lieutenant F., killed at the battle of the Tugela, 388.
- Rose, Sir Hugh, the army of Central India placed under command of, 290.
- Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, despatch received from, respecting the French armament for India, 19.
- Sedapore, Bombay army stationed at, 27.
- Seedisair, gallant defence of, 27, 28.
- Senafe, Brigadier Stewart takes command of the post at, 299.
- Sepoys, decision of Napier as to compensation of, 167, 168.
- Seringapatam, treaty of, intrigues of Tipoo Suldaun after, 8-10—assault and capture of, 35—Colonel Wellesley appointed governor of, *ib.*—reforms in, under Colonel Wellesley, 37, 38—Colonel Wellesley returns to, 56, 57—address to General Wellesley from the inhabitants of, 109, 110.
- Shah Niwaz Khan, Tāk placed in charge of, 190—death of, 200.
- Shahpoor, Major Billamore directs operations from, 273.
- Shahzād Khan, defiant behaviour of, 190, 193.

- Shere Ali, war declared against, 30x.
- Sherpur, charge made by John Jacob on, 283, 284.
- Sherpur, investment of, 302, 367-372.
- Sholapore, fort of, captured by Munro, 233.
- Shoill, Captain, death of, 27, 28.
- Shore, Sir John (Governor-General), letter of introduction to, by Colonel Wesley, 2—private letter to Colonel Wesley when on board the *Heroine*, 6—refusal to aid the Nizam, 10, 11.
- Sind, Napier appointed to take command in, 144—government of, by Napier, 145—views of Sir C. Napier and Outram on the annexation of, 278.
- Sindia, war carried on in the Nizam's dominion by, 65-81—envoy of peace sent to General Wellesley by, 82-84—treaty of peace with, ratified, 95—opinions of General Wellesley respecting the treatment of, 103-105.
- Sobraon, Edwardes takes part in the battle of, 179.
- Soult, Marshal, interview of Napier with, 146.
- South Africa, disposition of the troops on the landing of Lord Roberts at Cape Town, 389, 390.
- Spanish expedition, Baird joins forces with Sir John Moore, 263, 264.
- Special Commission in Madras viewed unfavourably by the authorities, 232, 233.
- Special Committee appointed to assemble at Seringatam, proceedings taken by, 40, 41.
- Spingawan Pass, capture by the Kuram field force of, 359, 360.
- Stevenson, Colonel, part taken in the battle of Assaye by, 71-76—pursuit of Sindia by, 82—appointed to command the column directed against Gawilgurb, 84, 85, 89, 90.
- Stewart, Sir Donald, birthplace of, 293—education of, 293, 294—appointed ensign to the 9th Bengal Native Infantry, 294—takes command of a body of volunteers, 295—carries despatches to Delhi from Agra, 295-297—takes part in the sieges of Delhi, *ib.*—takes part in the siege and capture of Lucknow, *ib.*—rewarded for services in the Mutiny with a brevet majority, *ib.*—commands as brigadier-general the Bengal army in Abyssinia, 298, 354—appointed to command the Peshawar brigade, 299—appointed to command the Meean Meer division, 301—commands the Southern field force in the Afghanistan campaign, *ib.*—makes the daring march from Kandahar to Kabul, 303, 304, 373—becomes Commander-in-Chief in India, 305—marches his troops out of Afghanistan, *ib.*—receives the thanks of Parliament, *ib.*—receives the G.C.B. and a baronetcy, *ib.*—becomes one of the official advisers to the Secretary of State in England, 306.
- Stuart, Lieut. - General, advance of, from Cannannore, 23.
- Suddoosám, Edwardes encounters and routs the rebel army at, 201.
- Sukkur, Jacob and Lieutenant Corry left in charge at, 269.
- Sultaun-pettah, successful attack under Colonel Wellesley of the tope, 33, 34.
- Susannah, ship, loss of, in the Red Sea, 55, 256.
- Suttee, measures adopted by Napier for abolishment of, 145.
- Table Mountain, evacuation of, 412-414.
- Ták, expedition of Edwardes to, 189, 190.
- Talana Hill, storming of, 383.
- Tanjore, Baird appointed commandant at, 244—Rajah of, Baird takes part of the, against the Political Agent, *ib.*
- Taylor, Lieutenant G. Reynell, commands the Peshawar column for invasion of Bunnú, 180—appointed civil administrator of Bunnú, 188—superintends the destruction of Mukah, 353.
- Teignmouth, Lord. See Sir John Shore.
- Thomason, Lieut. - Governor, high opinion of Sir C. Napier of, 155.
- Tippoo Sultaun, apprehensions respecting the military movements of, 7—intrigues pursued by, 8, 9—proclamation of defensive alliance with the French, 12, 13—letter from Lord Mornington to, 20, 21—letter received by the Governor-General

- from, 23, 24—death and burial of, 37, 38, 246-250—folly of making peace with, 220.
- Tirah expeditionary force, Lockhart is placed in command of, 316, 317.
- Tombs of Hyder Ali and Tipoo, care of, 39.
- Transport, Lord Roberts organises a corps for, 392.
- Treaties of friendship with Dost Mahomed drawn up and confirmed, 205-207, 209.
- Trident, H.M.S., embarkation for England of Sir Arthur Wellesley on, 126.
- Trincomalee, Colonel Wellesley appointed to command the forces at, 49-51.
- Tugela, disaster on the banks of the, 487, 488.
- Umbeyla expedition, success of, 350-354.
- Vaughan, General T. L., C.B., favourable report on Lockhart by, 308.
- Volunteers and Militia, letter published by Napier on defence of England by, 176.
- Wakhugrins Pass, the crossing of the Chitral Mission over the, 314.
- War in South Africa—
The Boer Commandants—
Cronje, movements of, and surrender, 389, 402-404, 407, 409, 410, 411.
Botha, Louis, surrender of, 443-445, 463.
Joubert, retirement of, near Bloemfontein, 417.
Prinsloo, surrender of, 453.
De Wet, escape of, 456, 457.
The Engagements in—
Talana Hill, 383—Nicholson's Nek, *ib.*—retreat to Ladysmith, *ib.*—Tugela river, reverses at, 387—Spion Kop, 392—Koodoosberg Drift, 394, 395—Riet river, crossing the, 396, 397—Klip Drift, occupation of, 398, 399—relief of Kimberley, 401—Jacobsdal, Lord Roberts enters, *ib.*—Magersfontein, retreat of Cronje from, 403—Paardeberg, 405-407—relief of Ladysmith, 412—Table Mountain, 412-414—entry into Bloemfontein, 418—
Vet river, crossing of Lord Roberts' column, 425—capture of Wynberg, *ib.*—Zand river, Boers dislodged at, 427, 428—Boers driven from Junction Drift, 428—relief of Mafeking, 432—Koodo's Rand, Boers repulsed at, 433—Molopo river, Boers repulsed at, 433, 434—Vaal river, encounter of Boers at, 436—Doornkoop, encounter with the Boers, 439—Johannesburg occupied by the British, 440—Pretoria surrenders, 444, 445—Diamond Hill taken, 447—Bethlehem, retirement of the Boers from, 450, 451—Spitzkop, occupation of, 452—Middelburg, occupation of, 455—Machadodorp, occupation of, 460—Paardeplats, fight at, 461, 462—occupation of Komati Poort, 463.
Movements of—
Buller, General Sir Redvers, 385-388, 390, 392, 393, 412, 457, 459-462.
French, General, 389, 392, 396-401, 403, 413-415, 427, 429, 430, 434, 435, 439, 441-443, 445, 457-460, 462.
Hamilton, Major-General Ian, 424-428, 431, 434, 435, 438, 439, 441-443, 445-447, 449, 454, 455, 457, 461.
Hunter, Lieut.-General Sir A., 449-454.
Kelly-Kenny, Lieut.-General, 397, 399, 402, 404, 413, 414.
Kitchener, Lord, 389, 393, 397, 403, 459, 465.
Knox, General, 405, 406.
MacDonald, General Hector, 393, 406.
Mahon, Colonel B. T., 432-434, 454.
Methuen, Lord, 386, 389, 402, 431, 432, 448, 456, 457.
Pole-Carew, General, 414, 424, 425, 441-445, 463.
Waziristan, subjugation of the chiefs of, 316.
Wellesley, General Arthur, personal appearance of, 1—landing of, at Calcutta, *ib.*—letter on the subject of light artillery, 3—letters to Earl of Mornington respecting the Manilla expedition, 4-6—visit to Madras, 7—tour through Baramahal, 7, 8—assumes the family name, 10—state-

- ments respecting unadvisability of invading Mysore, 13, 14—British forces placed under the general command of, 23—conduct during the attack of the Sultaun-pettah tope, 31-34—reforms made in Seringapatam by, 37, 38—scheme for division of Mysore empire proposed by, 39, 40—appointed Commissioner of Mysore, 40—appointed to command the troops above the Ghauts, 42—appointed to command detachment to rescue Poona, 61, 62—dispersion of freebooters by, 96-98—arrival and reception in Bombay, 100, 101—presentation of golden vase by officers to, 102—presentation of sword by the British inhabitants of Calcutta, 102, 103—resignation of political and military powers in Southern India, 109—receives a parting address from the inhabitants of Seringapatam, 109, 110—reception of, on return to Calcutta, 110, 111—revisits Poona and Seringapatam, 119—arrives at Fort St George, 120—receives the order of K.C.B., 120-122—notifies to the troops his resignation of the command in the Deccan, 126.
- Wellesley, Marquess. See Lord Mornington.
- Wesley, Arthur. See Wellesley.
- White, General Sir G., gallant behaviour at Charasia, 366.
- Wuzerees, proceedings taken by Edwardes to collect the revenue from the, 184-187.
- Wuzzeerabad, mutinous conduct of the sepoys at, 156-158.

THE END.