

Infantry and Hong Kong Regiment, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel O'Sullivan, Assistant Adjutant-General, arrived to reinforce the Temple of Heaven. Fire was then opened on this gate, a company of the 24th Punjab Infantry being detached to cut off the retreat of the enemy along the wall to the east, with the result that the gate fell into our hands, the enemy losing heavily as they retired.

3. At the time that I, with a portion of the 7th Rajputs and 1st Sikhs, was moving towards the Water Gate, as already described in my previous Despatch, another party (vide margin\*) under the command of Brigadier-General Sir Norman Stewart, pushed along the main street until they reached the great thoroughfare running north into the Tartar city through the Chien-men (gate), where they turned to the right. At this point some 40 or 50 of the enemy emerged from a side lane, but were easily dispersed. The advance of the party was then continued towards the Chien-men, where the force was met with a sharp fire from the enemy on the wall of the Tartar city. The bridge leading to the gate was at once seized and held. Lieutenant Bainbridge was the first to occupy this bridge with a small party of the 1st Sikhs, and he there remained in an exposed position holding a Union Jack to attract the notice of the Legation defenders occupying a portion of the wall to the east, who, for a short time, failed to recognize our men, and were firing on them. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers meanwhile covered the left flank, occupying the roofs of the houses and firing on the enemy holding the wall to the west of the gate.

While arrangements were being made for forcing the Chien-men a sortie along the top of the wall from the Legation barricades, by Russian and American troops of the Legation garrison, carried the large building over the inner gateway. At the same time a gun of the 12th Battery was brought into action by hand against the enemy on the wall to the west of the gate, and a few well placed rounds crushed all opposition from that direction. By this time it had been ascertained that the east gateway of the hornwork of the Chien-men was not closed; the troops accordingly entered by it and a passage was then found through a small hole in the inner gate, by which a party of the 1st Sikhs, with one Maxim gun of the Hong Kong and Singapore Artillery, and about 20 dismounted men of the 1st Bengal Lancers penetrated the Tartar city.

As the second Maxim gun was being taken through the hole of the gateway about 50 of the enemy occupying some ruined houses in the vicinity made a determined effort to capture it, actually closing with our men at the gate, but were beaten off and nearly all killed. The Chinese thereupon retired hurriedly westward from the direction of the Legations across the main road leading to the Imperial city, under a heavy fire from our Maxims and the troops holding the Chien-men. The 1st Sikhs then moved down Legation-street, clearing away the enemy still remaining and entered the British Legation. At the same time the rest of the force, consisting of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, two guns 12th Field Battery, and detachments of various regiments, moved along the foot of the wall outside the Tartar city, and entered the Legation by the Sluice Gate about 5 P.M. At about 7 P.M. some 500 of the enemy advanced

along the wall from the westward against the Chien-men, but were easily driven back by a few rounds from the Maxims at the gate, abandoning two guns in their retreat. The fact that British troops had already forced an entrance into the Legations through the Sluice Gate fully accounts for the feeble resistance made at the Chien-men.

4. I would take this opportunity of observing, with reference to paragraph 10 of my last Despatch, that I have since learnt that the absence of all opposition at the Chinese city wall was due to the premature attack made by the Russians and Japanese, which had the effect of drawing all the defenders of the Chinese city wall northwards. When we appeared it was too late to recall the troops thus withdrawn, and so mortified was the responsible Chinese General at his mistake that he committed suicide on the spot.

5. The next operation in which our troops took part was the relief of the Peh-lang, the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Missions in Peking.\* This duty was entrusted by the Allied Commanders to General Frey of the French Army, but in accordance with agreement we co-operated with a detachment of 350 men (details in margin†) under the command of Major E. V. Luke, Royal Marine Light Infantry.

The force concentrated at the Chien-men on the morning of the 17th August, and was first directed on the Shun-chih-men (gate). The Hong Kong and Singapore Artillery opened fire on this gate from the wall near the Chien-men with a 12-pr. Q.F. naval gun, and under this fire the enemy evacuated the gate, which was immediately occupied by the Allies. The main body then advanced along the Shun-chih-men-street and entered the Imperial City. The British troops assisted the French in clearing the streets of the Imperial City of Chinese troops, and at nightfall bivouacked on the southern slopes of Coal Hill.

On the 21st October this detachment again co-operated with the French troops under General Frey in clearing the Imperial City north of the Peh-tang Cathedral. Our men were never seriously engaged, but Major Luke appears to have acted throughout with tact and discretion and Major General Frey expressed himself as much gratified at the assistance thus rendered.

6. On the 17th August I sent a detachment to occupy the ruins of the railway terminus at Machiapu, with a view to asserting our interest in the railway to Tientsin. Owing, however, to a Russian report that the enemy were advancing in force from the Hunting Park, this detachment was withdrawn on the 18th August, and a day or two afterwards the post was occupied by the Russians without reference to us. In consequence of this action, at the request of the British Minister, I sent detachment to occupy the railway junction at Fengtai and the walled town of Liukachao commanding the road and railway bridges across the Hunho. These posts have been maintained ever since, and have proved of the utmost value in facilitating the collection of supplies and of railway material as well as in restoring confidence.

On the withdrawal of the Russians in October from Machiapu, that post was handed over to the Germans, and subsequently, by Field-Marshal Count Von Walderssee's orders, transferred to the British, to whom the construction of the railway line from Peking to Huang-Hsun was entrusted:

\* Detachments.—12th Battery, Royal Field Artillery; 2nd Battalion Royal Welsh Fusiliers; 1st Bengal Lancers; Hong Kong and Singapore Artillery, Maxim Section; Hong Kong Regiment; 7th Rajputs; 1st Sikhs.

\* Vide Sketch No. 1 (dotted lines).  
† 150 Royal Marine Light Infantry; 100 7th Bengal Infantry; 100 1st Sikh Infantry.