

18th November last, and which action ended in the total defeat and rout of the rebels.

2. I beg leave to express my high satisfaction with the great exertions made by all ranks of this small detachment to come up with, and attack, these mutineers; also with their gallantry and good conduct during the combat, and I would particularly instance Jemadar Gunga Ram Bist, as one who has greatly distinguished himself for zeal, courage, and fidelity to the State.

3. It likewise affords me much pleasure to bring under the favourable notice of Government the bold and spirited behaviour of Mr Dodd, the Executive Engineer, who volunteered his valuable services in the Intelligence Department, and of Lieutenant Sherer, who succeeded to the command of the detachment on the lamented decease of Major the Hon. Robert Palmer Byng, who nobly fell in the gallant discharge of his public duty.

No. 11.

Lieutenant J. T. Sherer, Adjutant and Commanding Head-Quarters Sylhet Light Infantry in the Field, to W. J. Allen, Esq., Officiating Member of the Board of Revenue, on Deputation, Sylhet.

SIR, Latoo, December 19, 1857.

OWING to the lamented decease of Major the Honourable R. Byng, late Commandant of this regiment, the duty has devolved upon me of reporting to you, for the information of Government, the particulars of a very sharp and spirited action that took place here at 7 A.M. yesterday morning, between the detachment under my command and the three mutineer companies of the 34th Native Infantry, ending in the total defeat and rout of the rebels.

Before entering into details, I would take the liberty of giving a slight sketch of the movements of our detachment, from the time it quitted Sylhet on the morning of the 15th instant, up to 7 A.M. of the 18th instant.

Satisfactory information having been received that the mutineers were proceeding in the direction of Pertabgurh, the head-quarters of this regiment marched out for that place on the morning of the 15th instant, numbering 213, of all ranks and grades, under command of the late Major the Honourable R. Byng, and accompanied by G. N. Dodd, Esquire, the Executive Engineer, who volunteered his valuable services in the Intelligence Department.

The distance of about eighty miles from Sylhet to Pertabgurh was accomplished by forced marches within thirty-six hours.

Very early on the morning of the 17th instant, Mr G. N. Dodd rode a-head in the direction of Hinzazeo, to ascertain the exact rout of the rebels. About 3 P.M. he returned, stating that he had received authentic information that the mutineers had changed their direction, were skirting the western side of the hills, and expected to reach Latoo either that night or the following morning.

Upon receipt of this intelligence, orders were issued for the detachment to be ready at 5½ P.M., to make a forced march back upon Latoo.

The distance was about 28 miles through a most rugged tract of country, consisting of hills, dense jungle, and swamps.

The men, already tired from their previous forced marches, hailed the order with delight.

The march was a long, tedious, and most fatiguing one, more particularly as it was made during

the night. Owing to the darkness and the denseness of the jungle, the main body of the column unfortunately missed its road about 2½ A.M., and did not succeed in rejoining the leading portion until 4½ A.M. Mr G. N. Dodd had during the night again ridden a-head to ascertain the exact movements of the rebels.

The morning of the 19th had but just dawned when our advancing column met Mr Dodd about half a mile from the village of Latoo. He reported that the enemy had bivouacked the night before at a village about five miles distant, but were now en route to Latoo, and might be expected there in another hour. We immediately pushed on, and had hardly time to enter and form up in line in the Latoo Bazaar, when a Muni-poree, who had remained behind to watch the rebels by Mr Dodd's order, reported that they were close at hand.

Our men at once loaded and prepared for action. Owing to the Sepoys who had been left behind as rear-guard, we did not at this time muster more than 155 men, of whom one-half were Hindostanees, the remainder being a mixed class of Goorkas, Muni-porees, and Assamese.

The enemy were now observed advancing about 250 yards off, in good marching order, and in column of sections, headed by their native officer on a pony.

Major the Honourable R. Byng directed me to advance with one company, consisting of twenty file of men, a second company was directed to support my movements, while the Major brought up the two reserve companies, with the colours.

I immediately took up a position with my company about fifty yards outside the village, behind a belt of jungle close to the road, and out of view of the rebels.

When the enemy had advanced to within 80 yards, I drew my men to the front, and was received by a volley of musketry, which luckily did no harm. I immediately replied to the fire, and charged the rebels at once at the point of the bayonet, most ably supported by the 2d Company, headed by Mr G. N. Dodd.

The promptness of the charge staggered the rebels; they broke and fled in disorder into some dense jungle on our left; upon this I changed my front, and drove them right through the jungle, from hillock to hillock, again most ably supported by the 2d Company, headed by Mr Dodd; after advancing about 50 yards, as the jungle was getting more dense at each step, I halted, placing my men under cover, as I did not deem it advisable to proceed further, the enemy having succeeded in taking up a very strong position on a hill about 80 yards to my front.

The above did not occupy above five minutes, nor had the rear column, under our respected and lamented Commandant, been idle, but had kept up a very sharp and galling flanking fire on the rebels when they first became disordered.

I had but just taken up my advanced position in the jungle, when the Major came up with the colours and the reserve. He stood in a most conspicuous spot, right in the line of fire of the enemy, cheering our gallant little band, when a shot struck him in the groin, and he died within the next five minutes.

The enemy must have seen him fall from their elevated and commanding position, for they at once set up a shout of triumph, and their fire became much more brisk and galling.

They also now did their best to induce our men to swerve from their allegiance, calling on them by the ties of caste, brotherhood, and religion, to come over and join them as it was a common