

No. 94.

GENERAL ORDER BY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA.

Allahabad, September 9, 1858.

No. 396 of 1858.

THE Right Honourable the Governor-General is pleased to direct the publication of the following letter from Major-General Whitlock, Commanding Saugor Field Division, submitting a report from Brigadier Carpenter, Commanding 1st Infantry Brigade, of a successful surprise of a body of rebels in the neighbourhood of Kirwee :—

No. 95.

Major-General G. C. Whitlock, Commanding Saugor Field Division, to the Chief of the Staff.

Bandah, August 19, 1858.

SIR,

No. 287.

I HAVE the honour to forward, for submission to his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, copy of a communication from Brigadier Carpenter, Commanding the 1st Infantry Brigade, detailing the successful result of a surprise of a body of rebels in the neighbourhood of Kirwee.

I have, &c.,

G. C. WHITLOCK, Major-General.
Commanding Saugor Field Division.

No. 96.

Brigadier W. Carpenter, Commanding 1st Infantry Brigade, Saugor Field Division, to the Assistant Adjutant-General, Saugor Field Division.

Kirwee, August 14, 1858.

SIR,

No. 82.

AUTHENTIC intelligence having reached me shortly before noon yesterday, that a large body of mutineers and rebels, variously estimated at 2 to 4,000 men, were actually descending the Ghats about two or three miles in front of the villages or towns of Nayagaon, Seetapore, Chitrakote, and Kampta, any or either of which places were in danger of immediate attack, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Major-General Commanding the Division, that I lost no time in organizing the Detachment noted in the margin.* and marched at 2 P.M., guided by Syed Akbar Ali, Tehseeldar, and Ghulam Ahya Khan, Thanadar of Kirwee, both of whom have been most zealous in obtaining for me correct information. I may here observe, I have ascertained from a prisoner, that the rebels came from Dudree, and were under the command of Goomdun Singh, Runmust Singh, and and others of inferior note, who are known to muster nearly 2,500 men; but I am inclined to think the number of the enemy we engaged did not exceed 1,500, of whom about 200 were said to be mutinous sepoys.

2. In less than three hours, my advance guard, preceded by the mounted men of the Royal Artillery, came in sight of the enemy in force, about

* 2 Brass Guns carried on elephants; Royal Artillery, 1 Captain, 3 Sergeants, 2 Corporals, 3 Bombardiers, 32 Gunners and one Trumpeter, of whom 2 Sergeants, 1 Bombardier, 9 Gunners were mounted; Madras Engineers, 1 Lieutenant; Her Majesty's 43rd Regiment, 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 1 Ensign, 6 Sergeants, 119 Rank and File; 1st Regiment Native Infantry, 1 Major, 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 1 Ensign, 6 Native Officers, 12 Havildars, 132 Rank and File; Sikh Mounted Police, 1 Jemadar, 2 Duffdars, 18 Sowars.

a mile distant, and apparently in confusion, as if taken by surprise, but they immediately formed up, with their right resting on one of the passes through the hills, and their left protected by a body of cavalry and infantry *en potence*, with another pass close at hand; and, on the left of the cavalry, a labyrinth of deep and almost impenetrable ravines intersected each other, wooded to the very summit; the rear of the main position was a precipitous hill covered with large boulders of rock and thick jungle. The temple of Hoona-man, a very strong building on the face of the hill, afforded good cover to the enemy, some of whom appeared to be in possession. I halted within about 3 or 400 yards, to enable Captain Palmer, Royal Artillery, to prepare his guns for action; this seemed to give confidence to the enemy, for he immediately cheered with loud shouts of defiance, inviting us to come on, and commenced a desultory fire along his whole line, so that I hoped he intended to make a vigorous stand.

3. As soon as Captain Palmer was ready to open fire, I advanced Her Majesty's 43rd Light Infantry, and the 1st Regiment Native Infantry, in skirmishing order, with supports, and the mounted artillerymen and Sikh horse in reserve. Captain Palmer's practice with canister and round shot was admirable, and the Enfield rifle told upon the enemy's ranks; but they turned and fled by the time we were within 200 yards of the base of the hill, retiring up its face whilst we plied them with canister, rifle, and musketry, which, in spite of the cover afforded by the rocks in jungle, did considerable execution. The ascent, however, was almost perpendicular, and the men too much exhausted by heat to attempt it, so that it is somewhat difficult to state the enemy's loss, but, from personal observation on the most moderate calculation, it may be fairly estimated at upwards of 100, whilst our own was nearly nil, as the enemy fired too high, and in confusion. Their cavalry retired with even more precipitation, than the infantry, by the difficult pass I have mentioned, and had disappeared before we could reach the gorge.

4. By this time night came on, accompanied by torrents of rain. I therefore left a party of 50 sepoys of the 1st Regiment, under the command of Captain Rishton, at the house of the Thakoorin of Nayagaon, in order to allay the alarm of the people, who were panic-stricken throughout the villages I have named. I myself returned with the remainder of the troops to Kirwee, and arrived about half past one this morning. Captain Rishton, who performed his duty in a very satisfactory manner, came in at 8 A.M. and reported all quiet, and that the enemy had retired to their stronghold in the hills.

The Thakoorin of Nayagaon did good service during the morning, by exhibiting a bold front to the enemy, although she has very few armed men, and only one gun. This lady acted in obedience to my previous instructions, to resist to the uttermost until we came to her support.

5. The conduct of the troops, officers as well as men, deserves my warmest commendations, and the native soldiers emulated their European comrades, whilst all appeared to regret the enemy did not give them a better opportunity to display their valour.

6. I beg to mention for favourable consideration, the names of Captain Palmer, Commanding Royal Artillery; Captain Colville, Commanding Detachment of Her Majesty's 43rd Light Infantry; and Major Gottreux, Commanding 1st Regiment Native Infantry; and I am happy to have another opportunity to bear testimony to the zeal and energy of Major Hodson, my Major of Brigade.