

ANNEXURE IV.

(From Brigadier-General R. O. Bright, Commanding No. 1 Brigade, to the Assistant Adjutant-General, Hazara Field Force.)

Camp Oogie,
22nd October, 1868.

SIR,

IN compliance with the instructions received, I have the honour to submit the following report of the proceedings of the brigade I have the honour to command during the operations against the hill tribes on the Black Mountain from the 3rd to the 14th instant.

At day-break on the morning of the 3rd, I left this camp with force as per margin,* proceeding towards Koongullee village, situated on the spur of that name leading up to the crest of the Black Mountain.

The 2nd Brigade preceded me, and on its diverging from my route on nearing the village of Deboree, I covered the advance with the 20th Punjab Infantry.

I experienced no opposition until the skirmishers reached the village of Koongullee, when the enemy began to collect on a height higher up, and commanding it, showing flags, yelling, and firing matchlocks.

Although I had received no instructions to proceed further, I did not think it prudent, in the face of these hostile demonstrations, to remain inactive. It would, I considered, have given them confidence, or at all events would have afforded them time to have assembled in large numbers, which, up to that time, they had evidently not done. I therefore continued the advance, the enemy retiring before the line of skirmishers, and firing as we advanced, but fortunately without effect.

I continued driving them thus before me until the position of "Munna-ka-Dunna" was reached, where, finding it easily defensible, I determined to remain for the night.

Munna-ka-Dunna is a shoulder of the Koon-gullee spur, rising to a point in the centre, from which the ground descends to a small plateau, and then dips again at a steep angle until it joins a narrow and nearly level ledge connecting it with the continuation of the ascent. The right of the ridge was very steep and broken, and thickly wooded. The high point in the centre was occupied by the 20th Punjab Native Infantry under Lieutenant-Colonel Brownlow, C.B., and the small plateau beneath was held by strong piquets from that regiment. The Hazara Mountain Battery was on the ridge in rear, facing the village of Shah-toot, on the right rear of the peak the Billankote spur joins the Koongullee spur. This approach was held by the 1st Goorkhas under Major Rawlins, with Her Majesty's 1-19th in support of them and of the guns.

We reached Munna-ka-Dunna about mid-day, and had not halted there long before the enemy began to fire on the advanced piquets from the wooded and broken ground on the right flank. To assist in dislodging them, I sent some marksmen of the 19th under Lieutenant Bennet, Musketry Instructor. The superior range of the Enfields, and the good practice of the men, had a good effect.

As dusk approached the enemy again commenced firing, and a little before night-fall made a really

* 1-19th Regiment.
1st Goorkhas.
20th Punjab Infantry.
Hazara Mountain Battery.

determined attack on the advanced piquets, the steep descent of the ground from that point favouring them. The attack was gallantly repulsed. From the increasing boldness of the enemy I was led to suppose that, now having ascertained our line of approach, they were collecting in numbers, and really intended to dispute our advance in earnest. I therefore informed the Major-General of the state of affairs, and requested that one of the two regiments belonging to No. 1 Brigade, which had hitherto been held in reserve, might be sent to join me. The 5th Goorkhas, under Major Ciose, accordingly reached me about midnight. In the meantime I reinforced Colonel Brownlow by sending two guns of the Mountain Battery to the point held by his regiment, supported by four Companies of the 19th. The guns did good service, as, by shelling the ridge in front of the piquet, the enemy were prevented from forming in force; and although some demonstrations of a renewed attack were made, none of a really determined character took place. They probably had suffered severely in their first attempt, but from their invariable custom of carrying off their dead it is extremely difficult to form any idea of what their loss actually was.

Our loss was two killed and six wounded. On the following morning,* on the arrival of the Major-General, arrangements were made for continuing the advance. The remaining Regiment of the Brigade, the 2nd Punjab Native Infantry, joined, and I was further reinforced by the Peshawur Mountain Battery. Two guns of the D Battery, F Brigade, Royal Horse Artillery, were placed in the post occupied by the advanced piquets. The enemy were at this time collected, apparently in considerable numbers, behind a knoll some little distance from where the ground in front began, as already described, again to ascend. They appeared to have erected a "sungah" there. There was another knoll nearer to us unoccupied, from which they had been driven the previous day by the Enfields' aid, and on which, during my advance, I purposed placing my mountain guns.

The Major-General having directed a heavy fire on the enemy's position, I commenced my advance under cover of it.

The 1st Goorkhas were on this occasion in front, followed by the two Batteries of Mountain Guns, the 20th and the 19th, in the order named, the remaining two regiments in reserve. Had the position held by the enemy been really a strong one, my intention was, in the first instance, to have opened a fire from the nearer knoll, leaving the 20th in support, and to have attacked with the 19th. No such necessity, however, arose. After one or two rounds the Goorkhas advanced, and the enemy precipitately retired from their position, which was merely a breastwork of fallen trees, by no means of a formidable description. They continued firing as they retired, but were eventually driven off in the direction of the Muchaie Peak. The roads to Chittabut and the Muchaie Peak diverged, and the regiment in advance with the batteries, in pursuit of the enemy, had overshot the junction. I therefore caused the Goorkhas to make a flank movement to their left, and moved the guns across by a small path to reach the road. The 20th covered this movement of the guns, and in the advance up the hill had two men wounded. The 1st Goorkhas had three, and the 5th one man wounded during the day. We reached the top of Chittabut about 3-30 P.M. The last part of the road was nearly impracticable, and I

* 4th October.