

regret to say two of the fine mules belonging to the Mountain Batteries were killed by falling down the precipice.

The ground on the summit of Chittabut Peak is surrounded by thickly-wooded ravines, and fully expecting that the enemy would not allow such a favourable opportunity of annoying us to escape, I made every preparation by throwing up breast-works, &c., to resist an attack. In this work two Companies of Sappers, who had been sent with us in the morning, afforded material assistance. The night, however, passed in quietness.

On the following morning* I received instructions from the Major-General, at about 10 A.M., to continue the advance and to occupy the crest of the Muchaie Mountain, the highest peak of the range. There had been great difficulty in procuring water, and the rations had been delayed in consequence of the badness of the roads, so, until the men could get their breakfast, I sent the 20th Punjab and the 5th Goorkhas to take possession of a hill which intervened between Chittabut and Muchaie, called "Doda," and from which the enemy had fired upon us the preceding evening. At noon I marched off the remainder of the force, and joined these two regiments, and proceeded towards Muchaie.

From Doda the road descends to the Muchaie Gully, flanked on each side by ravines, wooded and broken ground. After descending about a mile it opens out into a small level space divided by a low rocky ridge from the base of the Muchaie Mountain. The ravines and broken ground about the descent and plateau were held in considerable force by the enemy who, upon our appearing, opened a fire upon us. The fire of the mountain guns, however, which came into action by alternate batteries as we advanced, and the determined rush of the 20th, supported by the 5th Goorkhas, drove them off.

On reaching the rocky ridge at the end of the plateau, the 20th were halted with the 5th Goorkhas under cover, while I proceeded to make my arrangements for carrying the peak, in doing which I fully expected to meet strong opposition.

The ascent of the mountain is steep and rugged in the extreme. It could only be ascended with a narrow front, as the ground on the left is precipitous, and on the right thickly wooded. It altogether formed a most favourable position for defence.

Placing the batteries in rear of the rocky ridge, where the two leading regiments were halted, I commenced a fire on the peak and the wood on the right. I placed the 5th Goorkhas in immediate support of the 20th, and ordered the 1st Goorkhas to follow about one hundred yards in rear. The 19th I held in reserve, having left the 2nd Punjab Infantry at Doda for the protection of the baggage.

Such careful preparations I found to have been scarcely necessary, as the enemy continued his former tactics, retiring as we approached. With but few casualties the troops occupied the summit.

In the meantime the enemy, whom we had dislodged from the Gully, crept round the ravines in our rear, and commenced firing into a company of the 5th Goorkhas, whom in the advance I had kept back for the protection of the guns. One man was killed. I reinforced them with four Companies of the 19th, who soon drove them off.

I left a wing of Europeans with the Peshawur Mountain Battery, to hold the plateau, with orders to the former, on the arrival of the 2nd Punjab

Infantry, to follow up the hill. The right wing and the Hazara Mountain Battery I took up to re-form the rest of the force, who by this time had reached the crest.

I made the following disposition of the troops for the night:—The 20th Punjab Infantry and the 1st Goorkhas, with the Hazara Mountain Battery in the centre, on the peak itself; the 5th Goorkhas holding a more advanced and somewhat lower position; the 19th on a shoulder of the hill about 100 yards in rear of the peak.

The whole troops were employed while daylight lasted in improving the defences.

Our loss during the day had been 1 Goorkha killed and 2 wounded; of the 20th Punjab Infantry, 5 wounded.

The night was bitterly cold with snow and rain; for the troops who were without tents it was one of great discomfort. The enemy made no attack during the night beyond firing occasionally at the piquets.

My first object on the following morning was to search for water. On the preceding evening only a scanty supply had been found, and as I knew holding our present position was of great importance, I felt considerable anxiety on the point. The parties sent out were, fortunately, successful; a good spring was found on the eastern slope of the mountain beneath the shoulder occupied by the 19th. The supply was increased by opening fresh springs at the same spot, and by forming tanks, and eventually an ample supply for the whole force was obtained. Water was also found, but in small quantities, near the ground occupied by the 5th Goorkhas.

I reinforced the position held by that regiments in the morning by moving down the 1st Goorkhat to them.

From this date until the 12th the force remained in the positions I have described undisturbed by the enemy, except by small parties of two or three creeping up under cover and firing at the pickets and sentries at night. The position of the 2nd Punjab Infantry on the plateau below the hill, from the nature of the ground, was most exposed to these attacks, and scarcely a night passed on which they had not a man killed or wounded. During the time the brigade occupied the position the troops were engaged in improving the defences and roads from one camp to the other, and in hutting themselves. The experience gained by the 19th in making hill roads during the summer months here came into play, and large parties were employed in making a practicable road for the mules to the watering place, until relieved from that duty by the Sappers. The way in which they huted themselves gave a further proof of the benefit they had derived by being employed on the working parties. In a single day they threw up shelter which would only have required little more labour to have afforded them protection from any kind of weather.

On the 12th, peace having been declared, the brigade moved back to Munna-ka-Dunna, and all active operations ceased.

It is now my pleasing duty to bring to the notice of the Major-General commanding, the extreme good conduct of the troops under my command during this expedition. I had never had an opportunity of seeing Native troops on active service before, and was much surprised at their extreme expertness in hill warfare.

The 20th Punjab Infantry, in all the operations, have exhibited a dash and gallantry most credit-

* 5th October, 1868.