

before our preparations could be completed; it effected its purpose, but did not ever come into touch with our force.

I would avail myself of this opportunity to acknowledge the valuable assistance rendered to the Protectorate in the suppression of the Mullah's movement by Lieutenant-Colonel Harrington, His Britannic Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Addis Abbaba, whose conduct of our relations with the Emperor Menelek alone rendered possible the undertaking of concerted action with Abyssinia against the Mullah.

Active operations commenced on the 22nd May last, when an advance was made from our advanced base at Burao. The Mullah was located in the central Dolbahanta with a force of some 5,000 men, mounted and foot, with about 500 rifles. He could also count on support from large numbers of tribal spearmen, whose attitude it was known would depend on the result of the first conflict with the enemy. Our force consisted of 1,500 men of the levy, 50 Punjabi Mahomedan Sepoys from India, and a number of spearmen employed on transport work. Operations ceased with the return of the expedition to Burao on the 29th and 30th July.

The operations conducted during this period under the able command of Lieutenant-Colonel Swayne were completely successful. The enemy were defeated on three occasions with heavy loss, and the Mullah and the remnants of his force were twice driven out of the Protectorate in hot pursuit, finally to seek a refuge in the Mijjertein country beyond our border, thoroughly disorganized and dispirited; and tribes who had actively supported the Mullah from the first were pursued and punished.

As a result of these operations undertaken over a large area in a difficult and for the most part waterless country, with no means of support in case of a reverse, the tribes both in the Dolbahanta and the Ogaden country south of our border sent in emissaries to renounce the Mullah and sue for pardon. This was granted to them subject to good behaviour, and on the understanding that they held aloof from any further dealings with the Mullah, who being still at large was capable of causing further trouble hereafter. Our authority was thus restored over a large portion of the Protectorate, where for the last two and a-half years the Mullah's movement had remained unchecked for want of means to cope with it, and at the same time friendly relations were renewed with the tribes who trade with our Protectorate and inhabit the country to the south of our border.

It will be within your Lordship's recollection that in the instructions issued to Lieutenant-Colonel Swayne I desired that one portion of any live-stock captured should be applied to compensate our tribes for the losses they had suffered at the Mullah's hands, one portion be given the Somalis of the levy as prize-money, and one portion be set-off against the cost of the expedition. The distribution was mainly made on these lines, but I have not yet received the final report of distribution. One hundred animals were made over for the benefit of the Berbera Poor-house, which for months had supported women and children rendered destitute by the Mullah's raids; none were given to the hospital.

I would wish to bring prominently to your Lordship's favourable consideration the eminent services rendered by Major (local Lieutenant-Colonel) E. J. E. Swayne, Indian Staff Corps, in raising and organizing the levy, and in planning and conducting his operations to a successful issue.

He has shown powers of organization and generalship to a marked degree, and it would be difficult to speak too highly of the able manner in which the work intrusted to him was planned and carried out. I fully indorse the favourable mention Lieutenant-Colonel Swayne has made of the services of the officers acting under his orders.

Brevet Major W. G. L. Beynon, D.S.O., Indian Staff Corps, ably commanded the mounted branch, and was assisted by Captains J. W. B. Merewether and C. M. D. Bruce, Royal Artillery, in command of the mounted infantry and cavalry respectively. The mounted branch did good service in covering the advance of the infantry, in surprising by forced marches and capturing the enemy's live-stock, and in completing the rout of the Mullah and his followers by sharp pursuit beyond the border.

Captain G. E. Phillips, Royal Engineers, is commended as a thoroughly reliable and capable officer. I had ample demonstration at Burao of the efficiency to which he had quickly brought his corps by his powers of organization. I trust that the ability he has shown during this expedition may be considered in connection with the services he has already rendered in other parts of Africa.

The defence of his position at Somala by Captain M. McNeill, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, was a brilliant affair. Three successive attacks in force were repulsed, and finally the enemy, who outnumbered him by more than twelve to one, were beaten off with heavy loss.

The name of Lieutenant J. C. Lamprey, Royal Dublin Fusiliers, is brought forward by Captain McNeill for good service performed in the defence of the camel zariba, which formed portion of the position held at Somala.

Brevet Major the Honourable A. H. C. Harington, Royal Horse Guards, assisted by Captain R. P. Cobbold, Reserve of Officers, held a position with the Abyssinian force which called for the exercise of much tact and diplomacy, and in which he was able to render valuable assistance to the Abyssinian Commander, thus winning the warm appreciation of the Emperor Menelek. His reports testify to the difficulties he had to encounter, and I would recommend to your Lordship's favourable notice the services he has rendered whilst attached to the Abyssinian expedition.

It was with deep regret that I had to report the loss of two valuable and experienced officers, who devoted themselves to their work with the levy, and who would have risen to distinction had they lived—Lieutenant L. W. de Sausmarez, King's Royal Rifles, accidentally shot at Burao, and Captain D. A. Friederichs, Royal Engineers, killed in action at Furdiddin.

Mr. Gerolimato, British Vice-Consul at Harrar, rendered useful assistance in keeping me informed of the progress of affairs at Harrar, and of the movements, so far as they could be ascertained, of the Abyssinian force operating in the Ogaden. I would place on record the fact that, in deference to what he knew would be my wish, Mr. Gerolimato postponed an application he had intended to make for leave of absence in order to remain at his post till the conclusion of the expedition.

I gladly indorse Lieutenant-Colonel Swayne's mention of the aid given him by Lieutenant Cordeaux in his capacity of His Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul at Berbera. The troubles caused by the Mullah's movement threw a large amount of extra work on Lieutenant Cordeaux which was readily and cheerfully performed;