

near to this town, and a few "chassepot" rifles fired from the surrounding hills at ranges of 300 yards and upwards, dropped some bullets unpleasantly near the path. However, no damage was done, and the town of Fankissi, poorly stockaded and barely held at all, was rushed with no loss beyond one man slightly wounded. Thence the column proceeded via Buyeru (burnt), to the cross roads or Y of which the right branch led to Kenema and the left to Sufedu. Though strongly inclined to proceed at once to Kenema, which was no great distance off, I decided to take the left road as it was getting late in the afternoon, the water supply at Kenema was very uncertain, while that at Sufedu was very good. After the experience of the previous night I therefore went for the water, and this was very fortunate, for Sufedu proved to be a veritable granary stocked with rice, with ample accommodation and a splendid water supply. The whole way there, a deafening discharge of trade guns was maintained, but owing to the excellent scouting of the men, which prevented the enemy creeping up to close quarters in the bush, no damage was done, and the town was taken and occupied without loss, and the force at last found itself in good quarters with unlimited supplies.

I decided to hold Sufedu as an advanced base, and operate from there with two companies, which, thus unhampered with the long line of carriers, would be in reality a stronger force than the 300 men with so much transport to guard.

29th March.—Leaving two companies to guard camp, I marched on Kenema with the other two, via the same cross roads, and again a deafening fire greeted our advance. There could hardly have been less than 200 or 300 men firing in the bush, but hardly a man could be seen, though no doubt our occasional volleys at an unusually enterprising contingent of the enemy, must have accounted for a few of them. Kenema, which was only defended by a sort of stockaded gateway and held with no determination whatever, was rushed without difficulty. It proved to be a small town, beautifully clean, with a very superior type of native house, well built and carefully thatched. It contained little or no rice, and all property had been removed (as indeed proved always to be the case). It was burnt, and the column, proceeding to Farandala, destroyed that also, including the "barracks" in which Kafura housed his "warriors."

A few "chassepots" were heard this day, but the column returned to camp at Sufedu without damage.

Leaving Sufedu on 3rd April, the force marched to Lengedu, and on the 4th reached Lokoma, which was found to have been recently burnt, by accident evidently, and only just in process of being rebuilt. The town lies close to the right bank of Moa River, on the left bank of which are friendly tribes, a mixture of Kissi and Luawa Mendi. I was therefore able to despatch mails from here, via friendly country, for the first time.

On the 31st March, and again on 3rd April, small deputations had come in under a white flag (which is a native custom here), on behalf of Chief Yigbo of Kuwundu, praying that the war might not be pushed into his country, which adjoins Kafura's on the north.

This chief had not been free of the suspicion of implication in Kafura's aggressive policy, though it was likely that he (although partially aware of the risk) had been forced by his more powerful neighbour to adopt a policy with which he did not agree. I had therefore replied to his depu-

tations that if he himself came in and would renounce all connection with Kafura and afford me active assistance in suppressing him and resettling the country, his previous implication in the hostile policy would be overlooked.

I was most anxious to secure the active cooperation of this chief, as he is a man of great influence in the country, one of the oldest chiefs, and a man of sense enough to grasp the advantages of being on our side, could I only get hold of him and put the matter personally to him.

On the 8th April, therefore, definite news of Kafura's whereabouts being lacking, and news having come in of warriors collecting in some strength in the towns of Mina, Beredu, and Komendi, which lay towards the north, I decided to move in that direction with the double object of defeating the enemy and bringing pressure to bear on Yigbo, who would see in our advance in his direction the fulfilment of my promise to treat him as an active enemy if he would not show himself my active friend.

On the 8th April, therefore, I took the road through the above mentioned towns, and having been greeted with the usual salvo of trade guns at the entry of each town, the column was at length attacked by the enemy in some force near the town of Komendi.

The excellent discipline of the Frontier soldiers, however, combined with the absolute steadiness to which our long line of carriers had by this time been drilled, obviated the slightest inclination to panic on the part of the latter, and after almost continuous firing for over two hours the Kassis drew off having suffered considerable loss.

Much of the enemy's loss in this action was due to an ingenious ambush made by the rear guard under Captains F. N. Le Mesurier, Royal Dublin Fusiliers, and L. Murray, East Surrey Regiment.

Komendi having been destroyed, I wheeled to the west, and skirting the south face of the Sandengongo Hills marched under spasmodic fire to Sangbaori, a large and prosperous town belonging to Chief Yigbo, and affording good accommodation. This town was not reached until 4 p.m., the column having left Lokoma at 6 a.m. After the long march with almost continuous fighting along the road, all hands were glad of a good rest in roomy quarters, with excellent water.

The march of the 8th April finally broke the fighting spirit of the Kassis. Subsequently to that date hardly a shot was fired in lower Kissi country, and it was evident, as indeed has been since borne out by the statements of men who participated in that attack on the column, that a deep impression of our irresistibility had been created.

The operations, 9th to 12th April, having been in my opinion sufficient to impress Chief Yigbo with the futility of his attitude, without completely terrorising and alienating the inhabitants and chiefs of his large tract of country, I decided to give time for these events to sink into his mind, and for him to recover from the temporary panic into which he had been thrown by them.

In the meanwhile there remained a considerable portion of Wunde (Kafura's) country still to be explored, and I decided to cover as much of that as possible, while gradually working my way back to Korumba in order to refit for the long march which lay before me in order to reach the scene of the disturbances in northern Kissi country, in the neighbourhood of Kundewakoro.

I therefore marched to Masadu, passing north of the Sandengongo Hills and thence to Tomandu. No sign of the enemy remained, the country appeared wholly deserted.