

No. 22.

No. 83 of 1858.

The Right Honourable the Governor-General of India is pleased to publish, for general information, the following Despatch from Brigadier Gordon, commanding at Benares, submitting one from Colonel Milman, commanding at Azimgurh, regarding an affair with the rebels near Atrawlia, on the 21st of March, 1858.

R. J. H. BIRCH, Colonel,
Secretary to the Government of India,
Military Department, with the Governor-General.

No. 23.

Brigadier A. Gordon, Commanding at Benares,
to the Quartermaster-General of the Army.

Head-Quarters, Camp, Benares,
March 23, 1858.

No. 337.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to forward two letters as per margin,* as also copy of letter No. 336, of this date, addressed by me to Colonel Milman, commanding at Azimgurh, for submission to his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief.

I have, &c.

A. GORDON, Brigadier,
Commanding at Benares.

No. 24.

Colonel Milman, Commanding Azimgurh Field Force, to Brigadier Gordon, Commanding at Benares.

Camp, Azimgurh, March 22, 1858.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, that in consequence of a communication received from R. Davies, Esquire, magistrate of Azimgurh, I marched from Camp Koelsa at about 3 A.M., on the 21st instant, and proceeded to Atrawlia, so as to arrive at the latter place at daylight, with detail as per margin. †

Information had been received that a considerable body of mutineers were in the neighbourhood of Atrawlia. I found them posted in several topes of mangoe trees, and advanced with skirmishers thrown out in front, the guns being supported by a party of Her Majesty's 37th Regiment, and the Madras Light Cavalry on the flanks under the command of Colonel Cumberlege.

I followed them for some distance as they retired, when shortly afterwards they were driven into the open country. The cavalry were then enabled to act, and cut up a few of the rebels, but the ground was so marshy and unsound for the horses, that the pursuit could not be continued. Lieutenant Welsh, however, opened fire with a 24-pounder howitzer, and sending a shell right in the midst of them, completed the discomfiture of

the rebels, who quickly dispersed amongst the neighbouring trees. After this I continued my march to Lorkha, which place I reached without any further occurrence, and set the village on fire. Having effected the object for which I marched from Koelsa, I quietly marched back to Atrawlia. The men were halted in the neighbourhood of this village in a tope of trees, and breakfast was being prepared by the cooks, when news was brought in suddenly that the rebels were advancing in great force. I proceeded with some skirmishers to ascertain their strength and position, and found them strongly posted behind a mud wall in the midst of topes of trees and sugar-cane. I then sent back orders to the troops to advance; but the number of the rebels increased so fast, and they covered such a large space of ground, that both my flanks were threatened. Accordingly I took up my position on a rising piece of ground slightly in rear. The rebels attempted to turn my left flank, and I withdrew into and through the village of Atrawlia at about 12 p.m., and moved slowly on Koelsa, my flanks and rear being covered by the cavalry. The rebels, though they followed, and fired at a distance the whole way, never once inflicted the slightest damage. Finding on my arrival at Koelsa that the camp was threatened, and that the whole population in the district was disaffected, I despatched a squadron of cavalry, supported by a small infantry picquet, to watch the rebels. They were quickly charged by the cavalry and suffered a heavy loss, twenty-one dead bodies being counted on the field, besides wounded. Information was however received that a large body of rebels, estimated at some 5,000, were advancing on the camp. This created such a panic amongst the camp-followers, that many of the hackery drivers left their carts, and all the company's cooks ran away. Under those circumstances, and taking into consideration the position of my camp, which was very untenable in case of a night attack, and that no supplies or liquor of any kind whatever could be obtained for the men, I judged it expedient to retire upon Azimgurh, which I reached safely early this morning. In making this movement, I regret to say that in consequence of many of the hackery drivers having run away, as I previously stated, I was compelled to leave a few tents and some baggage behind.

The loss of the rebels, I judge, must have been some seventy men killed. The casualties on our side were very trifling; two gunners grazed by bullets, one trooper Madras Cavalry severely wounded, and one Sowar mortally, since dead.

Nothing could exceed the steadiness of the troops under my command, and I must particularly mention the able assistance of Colonel Cumberlege, of the 4th Madras Light Cavalry, Commanding, of Captain Pelly, commanding detachment Her Majesty's 37th Regiment, Lieutenant Welsh, Bengal Artillery, for precision in firing, and moving his guns in bad ground. The men marched nearly forty-eight miles by road, exclusive of the ground that was gone over when in action, and upon very scanty fare during the whole time.

Lieutenant Ricketts, 43d Bengal Native Infantry, acted as staff officer to my force, and he displayed great zeal and activity in his duty.

The rebels consisted chiefly of Sepoys of Koer Singh's force, and on the bodies of the slain were found Sutlej and other medals.

I have, &c.,

EGERTON MILMAN,
Colonel, and Lieutenant-Colonel of
Her Majesty's 37th Regiment, Com-
manding Azimgurh Field Force.

* Letter marked A, dated March 1858, from Colonel Milman, Commanding Field Force.

Letter marked B, dated Ghazeeepore, 22d March 1858, from Colonel Dames, Commanding at Azimgurh.

† Her Majesty's 37th Regiment, 96 rank and file; one 24 pounder howitzer; one 9-pounder Bengal Artillery; 25 European Gunners; 140 Madras Light Cavalry.