

dark, and found nothing. Found traces of a considerable camp. Enemy must have been all asleep and surprised. Marched on at 1 A.M.

30th March, 1891.—Passed deserted Naga village Aimool down to Manipur plain, arriving in sight Palel 6 A.M. Extended fighting party of 40 as company, and advanced over open plain, with high grass here and there. But the Manipuri sepoy retreated after emptying their guns, and we did them little damage; though we pursued for three miles, we couldn't catch them up; only found one sepoy in long grass and a man who stated he was cook to the "Apprai Minga" or "Maja," the member of the Durbar who ranks next to the princes, and who has charge of the country from Manipur to Tamu. He states:—Maja got letter from capital stating five British officers and 30 sepoy killed, and two sahibs and ten sepoy prisoners of Maharaja; that Mrs. Grimwood had escaped for the present, and that all the British army had fled to Assam; could not say whether or not they had made a stand anywhere; that his Maja had been sent with six officers, 35 havildars, and 150 men to stop us coming from Tamu, and these men were in the trenches above Tunglebun (or Tignoban). Marched from Palel at 11 P.M., and made fair pace in moonlight for four or five miles at foot of hills, and then on to an embankment road across swampy field till 12.30 A.M. on the—

31st March, 1891,—when we came to a bridge over a bit of jhil,\* where an elephant trying to cross got bogged, and we had to go into the water up to our breasts to unload him. Hearing of a track two miles back along the foot of hills to east, I sent the elephant back and round by it with 30 men, while we waited till they rejoined us again on the road half a mile beyond the bridge. A 5.30 A.M. came to some villages of the usual Manipur sort, i.e., a good wattle-and-daub thatched house about 30' X 20', with four or five straw huts near surrounded by a wall, ditch, and hedge, about 200 yards by 100 yards or smaller. Sometimes compounds like this stretch for miles two or three deep along a stream. We met with slight resistance from behind these walls, but soon flanked and passed through. Beyond these compounds an open plain on each side of road 1,000 yards wide. Beyond we saw a bridge burning and a line of hedges stretching away from the bridge to the south-west, the road now running north-west, and country to right of road quite open. We advanced across the plain with two sections, ten men each, firing line; two sections, ten rifles each, on flanks in support; remainder (40 rifles) 600 yards behind with baggage. We advanced rapidly to save the bridge, and were met by a heavy fire from the opposite bank of the stream when within 300 yards. Halting and lying down, we opened section volleys, and advanced by alternate rushes to within 100 yards losing one man. Then the supports reinforced to the flanks, and we all rushed to the bank of the river and poured in a heavy fire on the enemy, who were perfectly concealed on their right behind loopholes and on their left in deep trenches. Then the old firing line dashed into the water, covered by the fire of the support, and to my utter astonishment the enemy began to give way. Some of us went in over our heads in the water and weeds, but others found places with water only up to their chests, and were across and into the enemy's trenches with a splendid dash twenty minutes after their first shot. Our left hunted them from wall to wall, covered by flanking fire

from our right, till we crossed five lines of walls and hedges, the enemy making very little stand. On arrival at the further line of walls we rallied, and saw a line of the Manipur sepoy in white jackets and black turbans and dhotis\* mostly—some in red jackets and white turbans—in full retreat to the hills and villages 1,000 and 800 yards away. The enemy's line was 1½ miles long, and I estimated them at from 800 to 1,000 in number. I did not follow up my advantage, as all my baggage and half my men were on the other side of the river, and 200 or so of the enemy in the villages 800 yards to my right rear; but from what I now know of the enemy I might have put aside all caution, and taken the hills 1,000 yards in front with little further expenditure of ammunition. Leaving the 40 men at the line of walls, I went back and put the rear party into the compound at the east corner of the village, carrying the baggage over on the men's heads.

The enemy's loss was eight shot through the head in the trenches during our advance, six bayoneted in the trenches on their left, and six shot during their retreat. Our loss—No. 399 Muhammad Hayát shot through the head with a snider bullet; none wounded; I only grazed by bullet, which gave me no trouble. Expenditure of ammunition 1,200 rounds up to date. Spent evening preparing "12th Burma Fort" for defence and clearing field of fire, making abattis, and collected over a ton of dhan† and five or six chattis‡ of gúr§, and put men on half ata|| and dal¶; told off stations, &c., &c. Night passed quietly; pickets did not fire a shot.

The men's conduct was simply splendid; they required no leading at any time, and paid the closest attention to orders under the hottest fire.

1st April, 1891, 6 A.M.—Enemy advancing in force. Sent out 30 men to meet them in front at the line of walls to the picket there. We only fired three shots at a group on the road and dropped two. They bolted behind hill and walls. Measured ranges up to 600 yards in front of fort; found blood all about from yesterday's action. Some countrymen from south came, and we called to them, but they only shouted not to burn their houses, and we could get no information. Yesterday I had written a letter to Tamu for reinforcements, but put nothing in it which could help the enemy in event of their capturing it. I sent it by the Apprai Maja's cook, swearing him on a sword, promising him Rs. 20, and telling him that if he did not deliver it I would kill the other prisoners. They gave him minute directions as to roads. They were released on my return to Palel. I sent him off at dark, and he delivered the letter faithfully, but was captured on return and taken to the Maharaj (Regent), who sent him on to me with the orders to retire on Presgrave, which I got on 9th.

At 3 P.M. on 1st, patrols reporting enemy advancing, we occupied the line of walls 400 yards in front of fort. The enemy opened a hot fire from Martinis, Sniders, and Enfield rifles from a line over a mile long. We reserved our fire till they came to 600 yards, and drove them back with a few volleys at their densest parts. Then from the low hill, 1,000 yards from the line of walls, two guns opened fire, at first with five common shell, time and percussion fuze, and then with 20 or 25 shrapnel. At first their

\* Dhoti,—a loin cloth.

† Dhan,—rice in the husk.

‡ Chatti,—an earthenware vessel.

§ Gur,—molasses.

|| Ata,—flour,

¶ Dal,—split pulse or vetch.

\* Jhil,—a lake or pond.