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*India Office, July 13, 1895.*

THE following General Order, dated 24th May, 1895, together with a Despatch from Lieutenant-Colonel J. G. Kelly, regarding the advance of the Gilgit Force to the relief of Chitral, have been received from the Government of India:—

Enclosure to paragraph 2 of general letter, No. 109, dated the 11th June, 1895.

Enclosure No. 1.

MILITARY DEPARTMENT.

GENERAL ORDER.

*Simla, the 24th May, 1895.*

FIELD OPERATIONS.—GILGIT.

No. 530.—THE Right Honourable the Viceroy and Governor-General of India has very great satisfaction in ordering the publication of a letter from the Adjutant-General in India transmitting a despatch from Lieutenant-Colonel J. G. Kelly, 32nd Pioneers, Commanding the Gilgit Force, relating to the advance of the force under his command from Gilgit to the relief of Chitral in March and April, 1895.

2. This force, composed of 396 men of the 32nd Bengal Infantry (Pioneers), two guns of No. 1 Kashmir Mountain Battery, some Kashmir Sappers and Miners, and a small body of levies of Cher Kila, Hunza, Nagar, and Sai, marched a distance of 220 miles, over a country presenting very great physical difficulties, crossed the Shandur Pass, 12,230 feet high, in deep snow, relieved the garrison at Mastuj, twice defeated the enemy posted in the strongest natural positions, and finally relieved Chitral on the 20th April, after a most arduous and difficult march.

3. Her Majesty the Queen, Empress of India, has already signified Her gracious approbation of this remarkable exploit, and His Excellency in Council now desires to express his deep sense of the admirable and valuable services performed by Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly and the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men under his command under extraordinary difficulties, which were so successfully overcome by the ability and fortitude of the commander and his officers, and by the discipline, spirit, and courage of the soldiers and levies under them.

No. 768-G, "Field Operations," dated Simla, 22nd May, 1895, from the Adjutant-General in India, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department.

I HAVE the honour, by direction of the

Commander-in-Chief, to submit for the information of the Government of India, a despatch, with enclosures, from Lieutenant-Colonel J. G. Kelly, 32nd Pioneers, Commanding the Gilgit Force, describing his advance from Gilgit to Chitral in March and April, 1895, and to express His Excellency's warm approbation of the manner in which, in the face of extraordinary difficulties, the advance and operations of the force were conducted, and of the indomitable energy displayed by Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly and the officers and troops under his command in overcoming them.

2. In consequence of the situation of affairs in Chitral, Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly was, on the 22nd March, 1895, directed by the Commander-in-Chief to assume military command in the Gilgit Agency, and to make such dispositions and movements of the forces under his command as he might consider necessary.

3. On the 23rd March, Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly, having made suitable arrangements for the protection of Gilgit, Chilas, and the posts along the Indus river at Bunji and Ramghat, left Gilgit on his march of 220 miles to Chitral, with a force consisting of 396 men of the 32nd Pioneers and two guns of No. 1 Kashmir Mountain Battery.

This force was subsequently reinforced during the advance by 40 men of the Kashmir Sappers and Miners and 150 levies.

4. Ghizr was reached on the 31st March, and here Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly had to face not only the physical difficulties of crossing the Shandur Pass, at a period of the year when the pass is almost impracticable, but also difficulties as regards transport, which had been greatly increased by the desertion of many coolies.

5. On the 1st April, 1895, an attempt was made to cross the pass, which, however, was unsuccessful, the artillery mules and transport ponies being unable to make their way through the deep snow. This necessitated the abandoning of mule and pony transport, and obliged Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly to utilize the services of his men to carry the guns over the pass.

The task was a most formidable one. Owing to recent falls, the snow was three or four feet deep; all tracks were obliterated, and the severity of the weather was such that 43 cases of frost-bite and 63 of snow-blindness occurred. The difficulties encountered are further demonstrated by the opinion held by the enemy (as expressed in a letter which was discovered after their flight from Mastuj) that