

tain to be assailed, were to advance on the northerly face of the hill in time to be on the top and commence their attack from that side by 4.30 a.m. The camp on our side was to be struck and the tents to be on the ground on which they stood precisely by 8 a.m., at which time the troops were to form up and move off in three separate bodies, as soon as they could be formed up for the purpose. All the force on this side of the mountain was under the order of Colonel Baker Russell. The left attack was under that of Major Carrington, the right under Commandant Ferreira; the centre under Colonel Collingwood, commanding the 9th. The two flank attacks were to be directed against the main mountain, the one from the extreme left, the other from the extreme right of the mountain, faces on either side of the deep cleft or valley already named. The centre was to remain in reserve whilst the mountain was attacked, and, meantime, to overcome the fire of the "Fighting Coppie," as soon as the main mountain was secured a general attack was to be directed from all sides against this "Fighting Coppie." The attack was to commence at all parts of the line punctually at 4.30 a.m.

At 3 a.m. on the 21st a somewhat alarming message reached Sir Garnet. It was a note from Major Bushman, to say that he did not believe the Swazis would advance, though Capt. McLeod still thought that they would do so. The scene that had in the meantime been taking place on the other side was of the wildest. The Swazi warriors, decked as they always are about the head with waving plumes of cocks' hackles, with otter and panther skins hanging down over their foreheads and swinging about them, with leopard or deer skins, and occasionally lion-skins fastened round their bodies, and now and then leather thongs bound round the breast, and forming a kind of cuirass against an assegai, their long, bare, adivlogs moving with easy tread and elastic bounding steps upon the springy fall of the feet, were marching round and round, company by company, while the priest and their commander-in-chief solemnly sprinkled them with mystic medicine, a diabolical invocation previously prepared. Not a sound escaped their lips, not an assegai rattled, not a shield sounded against another—all was silent, solemn movement in the dim evening twilight. Nothing would induce them to move till this long ceremony was over, and then after advancing upon the hills for a short distance they once more solemnly sat down in a circle, and the "Fredewas," or chiefs, talked over what was to be done. The time was coming. It was no longer possible for Major Bushman to be punctual to the hour fixed, and he resolved to advance with his four companies of English troops only. There is on that side of the mountain a detached hill which corresponds to the Fighting Coppie on the other. Against this the 20th Foot moved, but there being no sign of firing from it they advanced direct up the side of the main hill, and soon became engaged with the Basutos pouring down over it. So sooner were our men fairly engaged and pressing forward, than on with a mob from below, and with a peculiar sound of attack, the impression of which is extremely difficult to convey on paper, but which, as it sounded some thousands moving forward, was like the "Shoo! shoo! shoo!" of a driving wind, came the Swazi tribes. No fears of the enemy had delayed them, but they had been in a former attack on Inkuni, betrayed by the Boers and left to do all the fighting, they knew without any particulars that white troops under Col. Bourdars had failed only last year, and they did not believe, and all along expressed the belief, that our men could or would fight the steady advance of our party of the much despised young soldiers changed their feelings in a moment. They had no notion of being left behind in the fray, and at last on they came, and when they came they meant fighting. Only here and there a chief carried firearms. They depend on closing with their foes, and when they first advanced they were dazed and checked by the hoavy fire which the Basutos poured down on them. But in a short time they had surrounded, closed in on, and cut down a party of their better armed foe. In personal courage and for hard fighting the Basuto was no match for the Athletic Swazi; the men whose had kept up so fiercely at first when they saw the fate that had befallen those on whom the Swazis had closed, turned and went to the hill closely followed by the Swazis, the 20th and the 9th, who now spread over the crest, and moving eastward along it began to make their presence felt in the combat which had in the meantime been taking place on our side of the hill. It was not, however, till 7 a.m., or somewhat later that the first Swazis showed over the hill top, and during the two hours and a half which elapsed since they were due many an anxious moment had been caused by their non-appearance. For the two flank attacks had been left weak in dependence on the arrival of the Swazis, and more than once the small parties of white men with these columns had had difficulty in holding their own, when their native allies failed.

But to follow the story on the camp side—
By 8 a.m. the tents were on the ground, and the columns were assembling. The central column had few difficulties, but the darkness and the heaviness of the road for the artillery, to contend against. With it moved the whole of the regular troops in camp, the 21st and the 9th, the whole of Knox's Artillery, and the headquarters both of Colonel Russell as Commanding the attack and of Sir Garnet. As, however, the latter's staff were not likely to be much employed that day in the fighting, Mr. Herbert, Sir Garnet's private secretary, had obtained leave to join the right attack, and Commandant Ferreira and Captain Madeira, the left attack, being under Major Carrington.

The centre was for several hours engaged in opening a heavy fire, first with artillery and then an ever closer and closer belt of infantry fire against the caves and the defenders of the stone walls the "Fighting Coppie."

The first gun opened fire shortly after 4.30 a.m. Meantime, it had been by no means so easy to collect the miscellaneous forces which formed the two wings. The natives of "Mupoc's" country, the refugees of the Leulu tribes, and formed the larger part of the natives with Ferreira, were very slow in turning out, and lagged awkwardly in the advance. No doubt, in part, this was due to the standing unwillingness of all these tribes to move by the daylight, or at night at all. By daylight, which was, however, glaring on the hills towards Inkuni, but not yet a sufficient number of them had gathered in front of the mountain to surmount the hill. Captain Ferreira in making his attack, and just before the first gun opened fire he gave the word to advance. Fire was at once opened, and for a few moments there seemed hope that the natives would advance with some effect, but it soon proved that they had no notion of going forward at all, and in very short time they succeeded in leaving Captain Ferreira and his fifty or sixty

dismounted horsemen to do the whole of the fighting. Fortunately the men under Ferreira's leadership would do almost anything, and according to Ferreira's own testimony, and everybody's vision, Mr. Herbert, Sir Garnet's secretary, was the best of helps to the brave commander throughout the day. The few white men managed to hold their own until the Swazis appeared. Then he struck straight down for the Kraals and burnt them.

On the left Carrington, in the darkness, advanced with some half-a-dozen officers and as many of Toutspauley men as could be induced to turn out, and moved slowly over the ground towards the point to be attacked. The mounted men were to follow in rear. The slowly moving trail of natives as they lagged along, extended the column so much that in the darkness the whole body of the mounted men missed their way, and a few minutes before the glimmer of daylight began to appear, the small party of officers riding in front found themselves close upon the point to be attacked with a mere sprinkling of natives behind, and no sign of the mounted men. The fact was, that just as the left column had crossed the stream, and the natives had some dribbling on, the central column had, in the darkness and without being aware of it, passed in completely between one portion of the Toutspauley natives and the next, who, perfectly indifferent to time and military movement, quietly equated till the whole body had got well between them and their comrades, and then, finding this column was between them and the direction in which they had previously been ordered to move, marched on the right of the column towards the Fighting Coppie. The horses, therefore, found themselves also on the right of the column before they were aware of it. Happily, Major Carrington, who had been sending officers about in all directions to look for them, at last received news from Lt. Creagh, the General's A.D.C., who, in the darkness had himself raised the General, but had seen the horsemen, of their whereabouts, and just as this news was being acted on, the mounted men, on the one hand, who had waited for the main column to pass, and the natives on the other, who had straggled by twos and threes, or any larger bodies that could break through, despite orders, adjurations and threats, right across the path of the main column, came up.

It was now close upon the time for the attack. Both of the columns had been somewhat delayed by these cross movements—the natural result of the necessary start in the dark with such very irregular troops,—the day began to glimmer, the natives on the hill began to sound their horns, and to shout to us to come on. In a few more minutes Carrington gave the word for the natives to attack, dismounted all the horsemen, except the mounted infantry, and sent the dismounted men with the natives forward. The natives opened fire all along the line, but it was chiefly wild fire, high up into the air, and can have produced no effect except to scare and distract to some extent the defenders. In a few minutes the Kraals at the foot of the hill were, however, taken, and a rush of a few white men, chiefly officers, proceeded up a narrow passage, through the gate of the Kraal, towards a stone screen which barred the way. Whether the defenders reserved their fire too long, or fired over the heads of the assailants, it would be hard in the confusion to say, but when the screen was reached, it was too high for the defenders to fire over, and Captain Macaulay, after dodging for some time with his pistols with one of the men behind, succeeded in their shooting him or making him run. One or two men then cleared the wall together, and on passing a second and a third wall of the same kind in much the same way, found in each wall sharp to their right that they were behind the whole line of defences which extended continuously all along the line of the hills. As the assailants pushed on along these walls from the left towards the centre, these defenders who found their position completely turned, gave their wall defences up, and bolted rapidly. The assailants were rushing along the hill towards the right, the Basutos flying in all directions, when suddenly an ominous shout rose up from behind—"The order has been given to retire!" No such order had ever been given, but what had happened was this: The Toutspauley natives had gone pluckily enough up to the foot of the hill under Mr. Dahl's capital leadership, and had advanced a very short way, it; suddenly for no assignable cause a scare seized them, they bolted down the hill clear of the huts, and right out into the plain, Major Carrington who was still directing the attack, from below saw that the Basutos who had followed them, were threatening the horses, and sent orders to those on the hill to halt and hold the positions then occupied. The order wrongly passed on led to great confusion. The men who were completely in advance saw that it was impossible for them to retire, because, had they done so, all the natives who were flying before them would at once have turned, and the force would have been taken in the most disastrous manner in front and rear; but many of those who were behind, and saw their companions going back, gradually tumbled off, till only two men were left close to the top of the hill. At last one of them was wounded too severely to enable him to get back to the moment properly to assist the other, and both had to get back to the nearest support they could. Fortunately, however, the delay had given time for the Toutspauley contingent to be rallied, and the dependents driven back on the left. Major Carrington had dismounted the 9th Mounted Infantry and sent them up the hill so that the dangerous moment was passed. Major Carrington was, however, able to do little more than hold his position for the next half hour. At the end of that time the Swazi black head dresses began to appear on the crest of the hills, and it was evident that the day was decided as far as the main mountain was concerned. For an hour and a half more, however, the fight fluctuated in detail not a little; for bravely as the Swazis advanced, they nevertheless, when they came to the main caves near the great valley in the hills, had to fall back again before the heavy fire that came from them. Four times they advanced, and four times they retreated. Each time on their retreat, Carrington's men poured in some rounds, and then the Swazis again advanced, till at last with a bold rush they gathered all round and into the position, and, pretty effectually cleared out the main cave. The work on the two flanks was now done, Ferreira and Carrington each cleared out of the mountain and descended into the plain to occupy the sides of the Fighting Coppie nearest the hills. How still the fighting had been on the hill may be judged from the fact that of six officers, either regular or old regulars, present with the left attack, three had been wounded, and one killed; of about 100 white men 30 had been either killed or wounded. The returns on the right were not quite as severe, but the numbers of the Swazis killed and wounded must have been very large indeed, the nearest estimate I have been able to get putting it at about 20 killed and as many wounded.