



SUPPLEMENT

TO

The London Gazette

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War Office, March 7, 1874.

LIEUTENANT the Hon. H. J. L. Wood, 10th Hussars, A.D.C., arrived this morning with Despatches from Major-General Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley, K.C.M.G., C.B., Commanding the Troops on the Gold Coast, addressed to the Secretary of State for War, of which the following are copies :—

Coomassie,

5th February, 1874.

SIR,

ACCORDING to the intention expressed in my despatch which I had the honour of addressing to you on the 1st instant, I on that day attacked Becquah, about a mile to the west of Amoaful. The operation was successfully carried out under the command of Brigadier General Sir Archibald Alison, Bart., C.B. The forces engaged were as per margin,* and the casualties are shown in the enclosed statement.

On the day following I moved forward to Agemmum, the enemy disputing every mile of ground. There I established a fortified post, where I left all my tents and baggage.

On the 3rd instant I moved forward again, the enemy in great force opposing our advance, and hanging round our flanks. Whilst on the march, I received a letter from the King, begging me to halt, and saying he would consent to my terms. I replied that he had so deceived me before that I could not trust him, but to prove to him how anxious I was for peace, I would halt for the night on the Ordah River, and would not advance beyond it with all my force until the following morning, if he would send to me at once his mother and brother as hostages.

During the night I had a bridge constructed over the river, and gave the enemy nearly two hours of daylight the following morning (4th) before I crossed the river.

The advanced guard, under the command of Colonel M'Leod, 42nd Highlanders, was brought to

a stand-still shortly after the advance began ; and a general action soon developed itself, lasting for more than six hours. The enemy did not, however, fight with the same courage as at Amoaful, for although their resistance was most determined, their fire was wild, and they did not generally attack us at such close quarters as in the former action.

The village of Ordahsu having been carried by the Rifle Brigade at nine o'clock, I massed all my force there, having previously passed all the reserve ammunition, field hospitals, and supplies, through the troops, who held the road between the river and the village, a distance of about a mile. The enemy then attacked the village with large numbers from all sides, and for some hours we could make no progress, but steadily held our ground. The 42nd Highlanders being then sent to the front, advanced with pipes playing, and carried the enemy's position to the north of the village in the most gallant style, Captain Rait's Artillery doing most effective service in covering the attack, which was led by Colonel M'Leod.

After some further fighting on the front line, a panic seems to have seized the enemy, who fled along the road to Coomassie in complete rout. Although the columns they had detailed to assault our flanks and rear continued for some time afterwards to make partial attacks upon the village, we followed close upon the enemy's heels into Coomassie. The town was still occupied by large numbers of armed men; who did not attempt to resist. The King had fled no one knew whither. Our troops had undergone a most fatiguing day's work, no water fit for drinking having been obtained during the action or the subsequent advance, and the previous night's rest having been broken by a tornado, which drenched our bivouac. It was nearly six o'clock when the troops formed up in the main street of Coomassie and gave three cheers for the Queen.

Since my arrival here last night, I have sent several messengers to the King, and used every possible effort to induce him to come in and make peace. Should he refuse my offers, I shall destroy

* Royal Naval Brigade ; Head Quarters and Detachment, 23rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers ; 42nd Highlanders ; Russell's Regiment ; Rait's Artillery—one 7-pr. gun and one Rocket Detachment ; Royal Engineer Detachment.