

Keegan with a drawn sword, when he jumped on shore. They again denied the presence of any authority, and asserted that they were militia, acting on their own responsibility. Instead of removing the obstacles, they had further closed the passages, and when taxed with this breach of their promise, denied that they had ever offered to remove the barriers.

To give more colour to their assertions of the absence of any authority, they hoisted no flags on the forts, and no soldier was visible during the time the squadron was lying there.

It is not difficult to understand the motives of the Chinese Government in thus holding aloof, contrary to their usual custom, from all communication with the squadron and Foreign Minister. We know from the Pekin Gazettes, that during the last eight months they have been studiously adding to their defences along this coast, and that Sangko-lin-sin, a Mongol Prince, the head of the war party, and distinguished by his successful defence of Tien-tsin against the rebels in 1853, has been appointed Commander-in-Chief of this district. It is evident that the Government were preparing for our arrival, and had instructed the garrison to represent themselves as a militia post, and to deny the presence of any constituted authority, by which arrangement they hoped to preserve an attitude which would enable them to take advantage of his success, if he were able to keep us out of the river, or to disavow his proceedings, if he failed in his efforts to do so.

After a long and anxious consultation M. de Bourboulon and I decided that we ought to adhere strictly to the course laid down in our letters to Kweiliang at Shanghai, and that we should insist, as much for the sake of our future communications with Pekin as for the successful accomplishment of the mission now confided to us, on the right of using the river as the natural highway to the capital. If, in accordance with Kweiliang's memorial, a high officer had been deputed to meet us at this place, bearing a friendly invitation from the Emperor, and satisfactory assurances as to our personal reception by him, we were quite prepared to have proceeded as far as Tien-tsin with only such vessels as were required for the accommodation of ourselves and suite, for I do not think that in any case we ought to have allowed our right to choose the only expeditious and commodious route to the capital to be questioned. But on considering the late proceedings of the Chinese Government, the persistency of Kweiliang and his colleagues in remaining in the south instead of returning to Pekin, the proposal to effect the ratifications at Shanghai, the attempts to delay our progress to the north by raising fresh discussions on the Treaty, and finally, the hostile and discourteous reception we have met with here, we were forced to conclude that the difficult task lay before us of carrying the Treaties into full operation, and of ensuring a reception at Pekin on terms to the last degree mortifying to Chinese arrogance, while the Emperor is in the hands of a party averse to concession and relying on their preparations to resist us.

Every incident corroborated the information we obtained at Shanghai from a Chinese authority, reported to your Lordship in my despatch of the 14th ultimo, that the Emperor would not accede to what we were instructed to demand, except under the pressure of fear.

The question then, for consideration, was, how were we to work sufficiently on the fears of the Emperor to induce him to give way? The experience of last year showed that the presence of a squadron in the gulf was not enough to effect that

object, while it equally showed that the opening of Pekin would follow on the accessibility of Tien-tsin to our ships being established. We could hardly be mistaken in inferring, from the studied manner in which the Chinese officials held aloof from all communication with us, and from the repeated assertion of no authority being present at the forts, that the Government was prepared to disavow these hostile proceedings if we succeeded in clearing a passage up the river.

We were equally justified by our past experience, and by the reluctance of the Chinese Government to allow us to proceed up the river, in assuming that they considered they would gain a great advantage by keeping the vessels outside, and by reducing us to negotiating in the gulf or in the interior, deprived of the moral support we should have acquired from the presence of our flags at Tien-tsin. Our desisting from claiming the right to go up in our own ships would have been attributed to inability to force their defences, and the ascendancy would thus have been secured to the war party in the Emperor's councils. My conviction is, that in that case we must have abandoned all hope of a proper reception at Pekin on this occasion, and that we should have found it impossible to establish unrestricted access to the Central Government in future, or work out in practice the clauses of the Treaty provided for circulation in the interior, and the imposition of regular duties instead of arbitrary exactions; provisions which can always be evaded, and for which we can have no other guarantee than the Emperor's dread of giving us offence.

On the 21st of June I accordingly addressed a letter to Admiral Hope (copy inclosed), requesting him, in the joint names of M. de Bourboulon and myself, to take such steps as he might deem expedient to clear away the obstacles in the river, so as to admit of our proceeding at once to Tien-tsin. Nothing was done until the 24th, the Admiral being meanwhile engaged in notifying that, as a passage up the river had not been opened, he should proceed to open it himself; and Mr Ward, the American Minister, having signified his intention of proceeding on the 24th in his small steamer to the forts, and requiring a free passage up the river, in which application he was, like ourselves, unsuccessful. During that night, however, Admiral Hope caused part of the obstacles to be blown up, without loss, and the attempt to pass the barriers and proceed up the river was fixed for the morning of the following day.

About 9 A.M. on the 25th a junk came alongside Her Majesty's ship *Magicienne*, anchored about nine miles from the forts, and a petty mandarin came on board with a letter addressed to me by the Governor-General of Pecheleo, translation of which I herewith inclose. It announced that the Governor-General had been ordered to proceed to Peh-tang-ho, an inlet or small mouth of the river, about ten miles to the northward of this anchorage, and thence to offer his services to Her Majesty's Minister. That Kweiliang and Hwas-hana had been summoned back to Pekin, as the persons authorized to exchange ratifications, and convey the Minister to the capital. I was requested therefore to await their arrival, and to allow time for the withdrawal of the troops quartered at Peh-tang-ho, after which the Governor-General would come in a vessel to convey me to the landing-place, whence I should proceed to Pekin by land.

This letter was dated the 23d, and only reached me on the 25th,—a delay which is inexplicable, if it had been intended to reach me in time.