

under the command of Captain Alexander Gordon Laing, of the Royal African Corps.

His Excellency having issued orders to Captain Laing to advance and menace the Assin country, with a view of bringing them over to our cause; he had accordingly proceeded about thirty miles, when reports reached him from the Officer in temporary command at Cape Coast, of the result of the engagement of the 21st January, and also of the unfavourable disposition of the Elminas; in consequence of which he made the best of his way to Cape Coast Castle, where I found him on my arrival, with a considerable portion of his force.

A fourth division, under the command of Captain Blenkarne, of the Royal African Colonial Corps, was on its way to Akine, a country bordering on Ashantee, for the purpose of inducing the enemy to withdraw a part of their force from Western Wassaw; but an unfavourable disposition being shewn by the Chief of the Aquapim country, the native Chiefs, under Captain Blenkarne's command, expressed their wishes for his return. Under these circumstances he did not consider it prudent to endeavour to prosecute His Excellency's wishes, and fell back upon Accra.

Being fully sensible that this communication falls very short of what might be expected from the importance of the subjects it embraces, I must, in excuse of its defects, beg leave to say, that it has been dictated from a sick bed, and in consequence entertain an earnest hope that its imperfections may be overlooked.

As intimated in my letter of the 23d ultimo, I entrust Captain Laing with the conveyance of it, and I entertain the most confident hopes that the extensive information he will be able to afford of the present state of His Majesty's possessions here, will be considered a sufficient justification for my sending an Officer of his zeal, experience, and abilities from this station at so critical a period.

When dispositions on the part of the Ashantees were made in August last year for attacking our settlements at various points, I deemed it necessary to dispatch Captain Laing into the Fantee country, and requiring at the time (there being no military Officer capable), another Officer to take charge of the camp at Djuquah, I was induced to accept the proffered services of Lieutenant King, of His Majesty's sloop Driver, who, I understood, had frequently served ashore, and I have the satisfaction to state that from the active and determined movements of these two Officers, the enemy were deterred from prosecuting their original intentions and retired to Ashantee, since which period Captain Laing has been frequently in the command of large bodies of our allies, and discharged his duties always to the satisfaction of His Excellency the late Commander of the Forces and myself, and to the advantage of His Majesty's service.

I have great satisfaction in acquainting you that our relations with Elmina, and the other Dutch settlements, have of late undergone a most favourable change, which is solely to be attributed to the arrival from the Netherlands of a new Governor, His Excellency Major Last.

I owe it to this gentleman to say, that he has evinced a most anxious desire totally to eradicate a hostile feeling which was generated amongst the

Dutch subjects on the coast towards all the inhabitants of our settlements, by the influence of the Ashantees, and the imbecile conduct of his predecessors.

To remove all doubts from the minds of the natives, respecting the part he is determined to act, he paid me a formal complimentary visit on the 14th instant, and has also zealously entered into a negotiation with the enemy for the liberation of Mr. Williams\* and other prisoners in their hands.

His Excellency Major de Richelieu, Governor-in-Chief of His Danish Majesty's Settlements on the Coast, has shewn his respect and friendship for our Government by actively taking a part in the war. He has sent all the force he could collect to our aid, and is now engaged collecting a strong force to proceed through Akim towards Ashantee, with a view of diverting the enemy.

The command of this body he will take in person.

I cannot say too much in favour of the disinterested zeal and active exertions of Captain Bowen, commanding His Majesty's sloop Driver. In the month of May last year this Officer, while under cruising orders in the Bight of Benin, with considerable prospects of making prizes, received intimation that His Majesty's ship Bann, ordered here by the late Sir Robert Mends to co-operate with the land service, had suffered so much from sickness that she was unable to render any effectual assistance. He instantly repaired to Cape Coast and stated it to be his intention to remain until things wore a more pleasing aspect.

While at anchor here, observing the sickly state of the Officers of the Garrison, he voluntarily landed a party of his men, put the whole of the guns in the best possible order, and personally superintended the exercise of the soldiers at the use of some ship guns worked with tackles.

I also beg leave to bring under the notice of His Lordship the conduct of acting Captain Woolcombe, late of the Owen Glendower, and now of the Bann, whose activity and cordial co-operation I am induced to think prevented the inhabitants of Elmina taking a part in the war against us.

His zeal, and that of his Officers and men, cannot be too highly praised, from the cheerfulness with which they underwent the attendant fatigues of intercepting supplies by day and night forwarded by water to the enemy, in which labours Lieutenant Scott, of His Majesty's brig Swinger, shared.

SIR, Cape Coast, February 26, 1824.

IN compliance with your direction, that I should detail, as nearly as I possibly can, all the particulars that may have occurred in the division of the army which marched from Djuquah, under the immediate command of His Excellency Sir C. M'Carthy, as well as such circumstances as may have fallen under my observation, relative to the action which took place on the 21st ultimo, in the Wassaw country, between the said division and an army of Ashantees, I have the honour to state, that I marched from

\* MEMORANDUM.—Colonial Office, 17th June.—It has been ascertained, that the liberation of Mr. Williams has been effected.