

The report from Captain Herbert of Her Majesty's ship *Calliope* to His Excellency Sir Gordon Bremer, referred to in the preceding despatch, is annexed :

Copy.

British Factory, Canton, March 18, 1841.

Commodore Sir J. J. Gordon Bremer, Kt. C. B.
K.C.H. Commander in Chief, &c. &c. &c.

SIR,

THIS day the force enumerated below* under my orders, carried and destroyed in succession all the forts in the advance and before Canton, taking, sinking, burning, or dispersing the enemy's flotilla, and hoisting the Union Jack on the walls of the British factory, the guns of the squadron commanding all the approaches to the city from the western and southern branches of the river, thus placing in our power the great provincial capital, containing upwards of one million of inhabitants.

I found myself forced to make this attack without your instructions for the reasons so strongly expressed in Her Majesty's Plenipotentiary's note, herein enclosed (17th March 1841), considering it my duty to resent, with all the promptitude in my power, the insult offered the day before to the flag of truce sent with a chop to the Imperial Commissioner, at the desire of His Excellency.

I forward the accompanying sketch, placing you in more immediate possession of the line of concentration which led to such an immediate result. In detailing the operations of the day, I feel myself inadequate to do justice to the gallant Officers and men employed on this occasion.

The flotilla of boats, formed into four divisions, was under the command of Captain Bouchier of the *Blonde*, Captain Bethune of the *Conway* assisting. Three divisions, under the immediate charge of Commanders Barlow and Clarke, and Lieutenant Coulson of the *Blonde*. Her Majesty's sloop *Hyalinth* (to whom too much praise cannot be given for the exertion displayed by Commander Warren, his officers and crew, in getting her through the intricate and difficult passes of the river, piloted by Commander Belcher, to be in readiness for operation); and a division of boats, under the command of these officers, were placed at the southern entrance of the river, recommunicating with the main stream at Fatee, to meet any retrograde movement of the numerous flotilla that had taken part in the aggression on the 16th instant.

Every arrangement having been completed and understood, the whole force moved in advance about noon, the vessels, marines, and three divisions of boats from the Northward of the Macao fort and within gun-shot of the enemy's advance batteries, engaging them for about two hours and a half, when all opposition ceased, and the factory within the defences were taken possession of.

The *Modeste* was placed within three hundred yards, in front of the principal battery, and shortly gave proofs of her well directed fire, flanked by the powerful guns of the *Madagascar*, Captain Dicey, with artillerymen under the direction of Lieutenant

Foulis, Madras Artillery, and Nemcsis, Mr. W. H. Hall, R. N., commanding, with artillerymen under the direction of Captain Moore, and Lieutenant Gabbett, Madras Artillery, who handsomely volunteered their services upon the occasion. The *Algerine*, (Lieut. Mason,) and *Starling*, (Lieut. Kellett) passing ahead, cutting through the rafts on the right bank and engaging a part of the war junks, the *Hebe* and *Louisa* tenders, taking part, at the same time, under cover of the ships' guns, the flotilla with the marines was brought up in admirable order by Captain Bouchier, and upon the signal given, stormed and completed the capture of this part of the enemy's works, notwithstanding a most determined resistance on the part of the Tartar troops. From this battery the vessels and flotilla moved forward, and carried the other defences in succession, amounting in the whole to one hundred and twenty-three guns.

By the great care of Captain Nias, his officers, and ship's company, the *Herald* was brought over the flats, and entered the reach during the engagement, which must have had considerable effect upon the enemy, by dividing their attention, not knowing what other force might be in reserve.

Of Captain Bouchier, whose high character is so well known to you, Sir, and the service, I cannot speak sufficiently strong for the manner in which he conducted the forces under his immediate command, not only leading them into action in admirable order, but keeping them together in readiness for any outbreak of the immense population of such a crowded city, and I cannot refrain mentioning his conspicuous and energetic exertions in towing off the burning Junks, which were drifting upon the suburbs of Canton, and soon would have evidently set fire to that part of the city, and involved the destruction of the whole, in which he reports he was ably assisted by the officers under his directions. My thanks are also due to that excellent officer, Captain Bethune, and to Commanders Belcher, Warren, Barlow, and Clarke, for their great zeal. The Royal Marines under Lieut. Stransham, of the *Calliope*, assisted by Lieutenants Daniel, Hewitt, Marriot and Polkinghorne, were as usual conspicuous for their gallant, steady, soldierly bearing. I have, however, to regret that Lieutenant Stransham, in exerting himself to destroy the works, has suddenly exposed to a heavy explosion, by which he was been considerably burned, but continues at his post; to Lieutenants Kellett and Collinson and Mr. Brown, Master of the *Calliope*, every favourable consideration is due, for having made themselves particularly useful in sounding, and afterwards conducting several men of war safely to an anchorage off the city of Canton, indeed my sincere gratitude is due to every officer, seaman and marine employed on this service, for their zeal and spirited conduct, from which it is to be hoped the most beneficial results will ensue.

His Excellency, Her Majesty's Plenipotentiary, ever on the alert, has done me the honour to be with me throughout these operations, and to whom my best thanks are due for his support and assistance on all occasions.

By Lieutenant Paul, who you kindly attached to me, I enclose a return of casualties, which, I am happy to say, are inconsiderable, and bring before you the Officers employed in the flotilla on this

* Vide subjoined list.