

by negotiations which proceeded until the 20th, when the preliminaries of a treaty were agreed upon, under seal of the Chinese Commissioner, one of the conditions of which was the cession of the island of Hong Kong to Her Majesty, and the restoration of Chuenpee and Tycock Tow to the Chinese, together with the evacuation of Chusan at the earliest possible period. His Excellency in consequence requested me to move the force from the immediate neighbourhood of the Bocca Tigris, and, having made the necessary arrangements with the Chinese Admiral Commanding in Chief, the forts were delivered to his officers, under the usual salutes, on the 21st, and the fleet proceeded to the anchorage off the west end of Lantao Island.

Her Majesty's Plenipotentiary and the Imperial Commissioner having arranged to have a formal meeting at the Second Bar, in the River, on the 26th, I detached the *Calliope* and *Larne*, and *Madagascar* and *Nemesis* steamers, to the Bocca Tigris, under the immediate command of Captain Herbert, of the *Calliope*; a guard of honour, composed of one hundred picked men of the royal marines, under Captain Ellis, R.M. of the *Wellesley*, and the band of that ship were embarked. As I am not a joint plenipotentiary, and consequently could have taken no part in the negotiations, I considered that it would not be consistent with my rank as Commander in Chief to appear, and I therefore sent Captain Matland, my Flag Captain, to convey my compliments to the Imperial Commissioner; he was accompanied by Captain the Honourable R. S. Dundas, of Her Majesty's ship *Melville*, and as many Officers of the Fleet as could be spared; the party was received with every possible mark of distinction and respect, the troops were drawn up on the ramparts of the forts, and salutes fired from all; a sumptuous entertainment had been prepared, to which the Officers were invited, after having been presented to the High Commissioner, and the negotiations proceeded in a satisfactory manner, the particulars have been stated by the Plenipotentiary to Her Majesty's Government.

On the same day I proceeded to Hong Kong, and took formal possession of the island, and hoisted the colours on it, with the usual salutes and ceremonies. By the terms of the treaty, the port of Canton was to be opened to the trade of all nations, on the 2d February, and as a proof of the sincere desire on the part of the British functionary, to evince good faith, I had, at his request, sent the *Columbine* to Chusan, and an overland dispatch, by the hands of a Chinese special messenger, directing Brigadier Burrell and Captain Bouchier, of the *Blonde*, to use every effort to embark the stores, troops, &c., and restore the island to the Chinese authorities.

The proclamation for the opening of the port on the 2d did not appear, and on the 11th the two Ministers again met at the Bocca Tigris, and, after a discussion of several hours, on this day and the next, Her Majesty's Plenipotentiary acceded to a further delay (not to exceed ten days), in order that the definitive treaty might be fairly prepared. I must confess that from this moment my faith in the sincerity of the Chinese Commissioner was completely destroyed, my doubts were also strengthened by the reports of the Officers I sent up to the place of meet-

ing, who stated that military works on a great scale were in progress, troops collected on the heights, and camps protected by entrenchments, arising on both sides of the river, and that the island of North Wangtong had become a mass of cannon. These indications being decidedly warlike, I determined to move the light division at once to Macao roads, and proceeded thither myself on the 13th, to confer with his Excellency the Plenipotentiary, and await events. I found that the treaty, as agreed upon by the Commissioner and Her Majesty's Minister, had been sent up to the Bocca Tigris, for transmission to Canton, by the *Nemesis*, with orders to await an answer until the night of the 15th, the period the confidential person employed by the Chinese Commissioner had named for the purpose.

The accounts daily received by Merchants and others at Macao from Canton, were of the most hostile character, and an edict, purporting to be from the Emperor, calling on all his officers and people to exterminate us, was published, together with a proclamation (the authenticity of which I have, however, been unable to establish), offering 50,000 dollars for my head, and a like sum for that of the Plenipotentiary. On the morning of the 19th the *Nemesis* arrived from the Bocca Tigris without any reply, and all doubt was at an end, a shot having been fired at her boat from North Wangtong; I instantly detached the light division, consisting of the ships named in the margin,* under Captain Herbert (who was accompanied by his Excellency the Plenipotentiary), with directions not to run any unnecessary hazard until the body of the force came up, but to prevent as much as possible any further defensive preparations on the part of the enemy. I proceeded at the same time to Hong Kong, and weighed with the ships of the line, the *Queen* and *Madagascar* steamers, leaving the *Druid*, *Jupiter*, and transports to follow.

Captain Herbert took up his former position in the western channel off Wangtong on the 20th, and on the 22d he proceeded in the *Nemesis*, with some boats of the squadron, to the channel, at the back of An-unghoy; his letter, a copy of which I enclose,† will afford their Lordships every information; and it only remains for me to express my hope, that the gallant manner in which this service was performed by a handful of men, will be honoured by their approbation. I am now on my passage up the river, and hope to be off the Bocca Tigris to-morrow, when I shall have the honour of making a further report.

I have the honour to be, &c.

J. J. GORDON BREMER,
Commodore First Class, and
Commander-in-Chief.

R. More O'Ferrall, Esq. M. P.
&c. &c. &c. Admiralty.

Her Majesty's ship Calliope, South Wangtong,
SIR, *Bocca Tigris, February 23 1841.*

HIS Excellency, Her Majesty's Plenipotentiary, having represented to me, that the Chinese Imperial

* *Calliope, Samarang, Herald, Alligator, Modeste, and Sulphur.*

† 23d February 1841.