

assist in the assault. It was a very interesting sight to see our little columns moving up to the attack of this host of people, so strongly posted, and in a plain where every object was visible. I was so confident we should get in amongst them, that when the smoke cleared away after the impetuosity of the attack, it was like magic, their escaping us. The Seikhs at the tope were like lightning at them, and Lieutenant Lambert, who had thrown his column in the very flank of the long entrenchment close to the tope, would have prevented their firing except on each other, and I believe the rapidity with which the advance closed upon them, threw them off all guard, and they considered flight their only safety.

After the action the troops rested in the shade of the tope for an hour: we then proceeded on to Sephangoon, a distance of 10 miles, which we reached at half past four P.M., marching altogether about 14 miles. This is the largest and finest village I have seen in the country, with a great many excellent farm-houses in it: it stands on both sides of the river, which is here fordable, and is surrounded by fine plains covered with grain.

We were aware that the enemy had retreated on this village, but they left it on our approach, and the force found good quarters for the night.

The village was totally abandoned; not a soul was seen, nor grain to be found in it, which I had trusted to for the followers; so they fell back on the Commissariat, which I could with difficulty spare them, and this, added to the breaking down of one of our carts with beef and biscuit, crippled me much.

The next day, the 18th instant, we marched to Montsanganoo, ten miles, where we arrived about twelve o'clock noon; there the enemy had passed the night. It is an inconsiderable village, and we were in bivouac.

About three o'clock P.M. I was informed that some of the enemy were hovering about, who, I believed, were only observing us, but shortly they came down in large masses, and formed in a line about two miles in our front.

Our men were soon under arms, and I marched towards them in two separate columns of an equal division of the force under my command. Brigadier-General Steel took charge of the left column, Lieutenant-Colonel Tudor of the right. Skirmishers were thrown out on both sides, but as we advanced they retired for about two miles further, when they took up an alignment close to a long range of barracks, which they had evidently occupied on different occasions. The two columns threw out advanced parties for attack, but as we neared them they again retired, leaving the barracks in our possession. It was now nearly dark, and as they appeared to be going away altogether, we burnt their barracks and retired to our bivouac, three miles, where our baggage and followers had remained under a strong guard.

The next day the 19th instant, on inquiry into the state of the Commissariat, I found I had not quite three days' provisions left, and very deficient in some articles, and it became imperative on me to return to Pegu, which I did that day. Had I had the means of carrying with me 12 days' provisions I would have pursued them over the Sitang River, but I am sadly crippled everywhere for want of carriage, except at Rangoon, where I do not require it.

I propose to detach Brigadier-General Steel, with a force to Moulmein, where he will find every description of carriage in abundance for tents, and material of all kinds—to proceed to Beling-Sitang, and Sheogyne, and crossing that river to return by Pegu to Rangoon, as he may deem practicable—

which may force this army north towards Prome—which it must I think, as it cannot go to Pegu, and which will be the best course for us it can take.

I embarked at Pegu on the 20th, and arrived on the morning of the 22nd, leaving a reinforcement with the garrison at Pegu, and strengthening their party of Sappers as a temporary measure, to allow of their putting themselves in a perfect state of defence.

Now, Sir, I have to ask the estimation of the Governor-General in Council for a service that has been most harassing and arduous, and for which no force ever took the field so little prepared, but which was borne with a cheerfulness and alacrity—where the least chance of a contest with the enemy presented itself—that was enthusiastic, and which confers the highest honour on the whole force.

To Brigadier-General Steel I am most obliged for the warmest co-operation throughout this service.

To Brigadier Dickenson, who was ever ready and anxious to render me his able assistance.

To Lieutenant-Colonel Tudor, who was very often called upon with his regiment, the Bengal Fusiliers, to give parties for assaults; and on the day of my relieving the garrison at Pegu I detached the Lieutenant-Colonel to clear the road communicating with the landing-place on the river. The Lieutenant-Colonel performed this duty most effectually, under a heavy fire.

To Captain Latter, my interpreter, who had the guides always under his charge, and who was present everywhere with his usual gallantry.

To Major Armstrong, with his Seikhs, conspicuous wherever they were called upon.

To Majors Gerrard and Seaton, of the Bengal Fusiliers; Captain Renaud, commanding a detachment of the Madras Fusiliers; Captain Munro, commanding a detachment of the 10th Bengal N.I.; Captain Hawkes, Brigade Major; Lieutenant Lambert, of the Bengal Fusiliers; Lieutenant Elliott, of the Madras Fusiliers; and Lieutenant Harris, of the Sappers, who rendered important assistance, I am much indebted.

The General Staff, Major Mayhew, Deputy Adjutant-General, and Captain Hamilton, Assistant Adjutant-General—Captain Burne, Military Secretary, and Captain Chads, Aide-de-Camp, I warmly thank; as also Major Neill, Assistant Adjutant-General, and Major Atkinson, Assistant Quartermaster General, Madras Division, and Captains Dallas and Travers, Aides-de-Camp on the Staff of Brigadier-General Steel, for their uncommon exertions during this service.

To Surgeons McCosh and Balfour, and the medical department, the Service is much indebted.

The short interval between the time I received the intelligence of the investment of Pegu from Captains Tarleton and Shadwell, and the embarkation of the troops the same evening, when by 9 o'clock P.M., 1,400 men, with their materiel, were sent on board, under the eye of that valuable officer, Captain Tarleton, of the Royal Navy, till its disembarkation near Pegu, and its re-embarkation on return here, was marked by wonderful exertion and arrangement, and that, with the aid and assistance I received from him with the men-of-war's boats, calls for every acknowledgment.

To Captain Shadwell I also feel greatly indebted, for his assistance and exertions on this occasion.

I forward to the Governor-General in Council, the detailed account of the investment of Pegu by the Burmese Army, and the noble defence made by Major Hill and his brave garrison, for the Government to select what in its wisdom it may think proper to publish.