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WAR-OFFICE, PALL-MALL, S.W.,
October 15, 1858.

THE Secretary of State for War has this day received a Despatch, of which the following is a copy, addressed to him by Major-General C. T. Van Straubenzee, C.B., Commanding Her Majesty's Land Forces in China:—

Head-Quarters, Canton,
August 21, 1858.

SIR,

By last mail I had the honour to report that a Naval and Military Expedition* was to proceed the next day to exact retribution for firing upon a Flag of Truce sent to Namtow, at the request of the Governor of Hong Kong.

I have now the honour to report the result of that expedition, which was assembled off Tyshan Island on the afternoon of the 10th instant, when, with Commodore the Honourable Keith Stewart I went as close in shore as was practicable, from the state of the tide, to reconnoitre, and decided that the landing on the following day, which could not take place before 10 A.M., in consequence of the tide, should be to the S.W. of the walled city or fort, under cover of the gun-boats, &c.

On the morning of the 11th, soon after nine o'clock, I found the gun-boats getting under weigh, and hastened with my staff to join the Commodore, and found that in consequence of the rocky nature of the western side of the bay, and greater shoalness of the water, the Commodore had directed the landing to be in the village or suburb south-east of the city. This obliged our moving through the suburbs, and I at once decided to move, as far as practicable, in two parallel lines, one along a canal or wet ditch, which intersected the suburb, the other close to the sea, the boats keeping slightly in rear of the heads of these columns.

I must here remark that as the gun-boats, &c., were moving towards the shore, several shots were fired from a newly-erected battery to the south-west of the walled town of Namtow, and close to the beach, which was soon silenced by the ad-

mirable fire from the gun-boats, the precision of which was most striking.

The landing was effected before eleven o'clock, and the advanced party consisted of the Naval Brigade under Capt. Slight, H.M.S. Sanspareil, who was very soon engaged, a heavy fire of gingalls and matchlocks being opened in front, and from the streets running at right angles with those by which we were advancing, the Chinese retreating as we advanced. During this advance a most gallant and promising officer, Commander Madden, of H.M.S. Sanspareil, was most dangerously wounded, with several men. The inner line was composed of the 59th Regiment, led by Brevet-Major Romer and Capt. Bushe, of that corps; the Royal Marine Light Infantry being in reserve, but constantly under fire from the right flank, as also the 12th Madras Native Infantry.

The heat being fearful, I halted frequently whenever the trees or sheds afforded cover from the sun, and where the men were not exposed to the enemy's fire.

Lieutenant-Colonel Clifford, Assistant Quartermaster-General, having reported to me shortly after one o'clock that the ladders were ready, and having well reconnoitred the wall, I directed Captain Slight, of H.M.S. Sanspareil, and Commander Saumerez, of H.M.S. Cormorant, to lead their men to the assault, covered by the 59th Regiment, and supported by the 12th Madras Native Infantry, under Captain Riach, our right flank being protected by the Royal Marines, under Brevet-Major Foote,—Colonel Hope Graham, C.B., having the general direction.

Before two o'clock the fort was in our possession.

Commander Saumerez's party was accompanied by Captain Lambert, of the Royal Engineers, who was mortally wounded by the accidental discharge of a firelock of one of the men crowding up the ladder after him. He was a most gallant and talented officer, and his loss to the service and to his friends is deeply to be deplored. During the escalade of the walls, the force under Colonel Graham was attacked by several hundred Braves, who were gallantly repulsed by Brevet-Major Foote and the Royal Marines, though not without loss.

The wall gained, the enemy fled, leaving the interior almost wholly deserted; the place was given up to destruction, and the principal gates blown in.

* Royal Artillery, 3 officers, 64 non-commissioned officers and men; Royal Engineers, 3 officers, 22 non-commissioned officers and men; Royal Marines L.I., 5 officers, 140 non-commissioned officers and men; 59th Regiment, 5 officers, 104 non-commissioned officers and men; 12th Madras N.I. 2 officers, 100 non-commissioned officers and men; Naval Brigade, employed on shore and afloat, 40 officers, 489 non-commissioned officers and men.

