

The morning of the 1st January was foggy, and objects could not be discerned at any distance until nine o'clock, when our batteries opened. The enemy soon returned our fire, and a mutual cannonade took place; our batteries made little impression upon the enemy's parapet. The order for the assault was therefore not carried into effect. The troops remained in this advanced position, and orders were given to retire the guns in the night. The evening changed to wet, and the ground became in consequence so deep, that it required the exertions of the whole army as a working party, aided by the seamen, to retire the guns a short distance before day light. The army then fell back to the position it occupied on the 31st.

(Signed) C. R. FORREST,
Assist.-Q.-M.-Gen.

*His Majesty's Ship Tonnant, off Chandeleur's
Island, January 28, 1815.*

MY LORD,

AFTER maturely deliberating on the situation of this army, after the command had unfortunately devolved upon me, on the 8th instant, and duly considering what probability now remained of carrying on with success, on the same plan, an attack against New Orleans, it appeared to me that it ought not to be persisted in. I immediately communicated to Vice-Admiral Sir A. Cochrane that I did not think it would be prudent to make any further attempt at present, and that I recommended re-embarking the army as soon as possible, with a view to carry into effect the other objects of the force employed upon this coast; from the 9th inst. it was determined that the army should retreat, and I have the satisfaction of informing your Lordship that it was effected on the night of the 18th instant, and ground was taken up on the morning of the 19th, on both sides of the Bayone, or creek, which the troops had entered on their disembarkation, fourteen miles from their position before the enemy's line, covering New Orleans, on the left bank of the Mississippi, and one mile from the entrance into Lac Borgne: the army remained in bivouac until the 27th instant, when the whole were re-embarked.

In stating the circumstances of this retreat to your Lordship, I shall confidently trust that you will see, that good order and discipline ever existed in this army, and that zeal for the service, and attention was ever conspicuous in officers of all ranks. Your Lordship is already acquainted with the position the army occupied, its advanced post close up to the enemy's line, and the greater part of the army were exposed to the fire of his batteries, which was unremitting day and night since the 1st January, when the position in advance was taken up; the retreat was effected without being harassed in any degree by the enemy; all the sick and wounded (with the exception of eighty whom it was considered dangerous to remove), field artillery, ammunition, hospital and other stores of every description, which had been landed on a very large scale, were brought away, and nothing fell into the enemy's hands; excepting six iron eighteen-pounders, mounted on sea carriages, and two carrouades which were in position on the left bank of the Mississippi; to bring them off at

the moment the army was retiring was impossible, and to have done it previously would have exposed the whole force to any fire the enemy might have sent down the river. These batteries were of course destroyed, and the guns rendered perfectly unserviceable; only four men were reported absent next morning, and these, I suppose, must have been left behind and have fallen into the hands of the enemy; but when it is considered the troops were in perfect ignorance of the movement, until a fixed hour during the night, that the battalions were drawn off in succession, and that the picquets did not move off till half past three o'clock in the morning, and that the whole had to retire through the most difficult new made road, cut in marshy ground, impassable for a horse, and where, in many places, the men could only go in single files, and that the absence of men might be accounted for in so many ways, it would be rather a matter of surprise the number was so few.

An exchange of prisoners has been effected with the enemy upon very fair terms, and their attention to the brave prisoners, and wounded, that have fallen into their hands, has been kind and humane, I have every reason to believe.

However unsuccessful the termination of the late service, the army and navy have been employed upon, has turned out, it would be injustice not to point out how much praise is due to their exertions; ever since the 13th December, when the army began to move from the ships, the fatigue of disembarking and bringing up artillery and supplies from such a distance has been incessant, and I must add, that owing to the exertions of the navy, the army has never wanted provisions. The labour and fatigue of the seamen and soldiers were particularly conspicuous on the night of the 7th inst. when fifty boats were dragged through a canal into the Mississippi, in which there were only 18 inches of water, and I am confident that Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, who suggested the possibility of this operation, will be equally ready to admit this, as well as the hearty co-operation of the troops on all occasions.

From what has come under my own observation since I joined this army, and from official reports that have been made to me, I beg to call your Lordship's attention to individuals, who from their station have rendered themselves peculiarly conspicuous: Major Forrest, at the head of the Quarter Master General's department, I cannot say too much of; Lieutenants Evans and Peddie of the same, have been remarkable for their exertions and indefatigability: Sir John Tylden, who has acted in the field as Assistant Adjutant-General with me (Lieutenant-Colonel Stovin having been wounded on the 23d ult. though doing well, not as yet being permitted to take active service) has been very useful; on the night of the 7th, previous to the attack, Rear-Admiral Malcolm reports the great assistance he received from him in forwarding the boats into the Mississippi. Captain Wood of the 4th regiment, Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General, has filled that situation since the first disembarkation of the troops with zeal and attention.

During the action of the 8th instant the command of the 2d brigade devolved upon Lieutenant-Colonel Brooke, 4th regiment; that of the 3d