

to pursue, till assisted by the labour of the pioneers. The forward movement was, however, continued till the three columns united at the Jeejah river; here it was intended to have halted till the artillery, under the protection of the reserve, could be brought up, but a few companies of the 49th regiment native infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, having been pushed across to ascertain what was in front, the report was made that the enemy were approaching in column, supported by cavalry. So desired an opportunity was immediately embraced, the low state of the tide and the sandy bottom of the river enabling the troops to pass without impediment. The heads of the columns had, however, no sooner debouched from the jungle than the enemy fled, and reached, with but little loss, their works that covered the fords of the Mahattee.

The troops had now been under arms nine hours, and were still anxious to proceed, but a consideration for their physical strength, with an unwillingness to remove still further from the supplies, whose arrival must necessarily be retarded by the nature of the country passed over, caused me to direct that positions where shelter from the sun might be obtained, should be occupied. The fire of the enemy, while they opposed us, was noisy, but ill-directed. A further consequence of this day's action, beyond the advantage immediately gained, was, that the enemy abandoned their stockades at Kheong Peela (alias Chamballa).

The troops, with the exception of the reserve, which did not arrive till near midnight, having given their exertions to enable the artillery to join, bivouacked by brigades.

On the 27th, when the fog dispersed, the order of advance was resumed, and Major Carter, of His Majesty's 44th regiment, with three companies of that corps, covered by the light infantry company of His Majesty's 54th regiment, was directed to carry a small hill in front of the enemy's works, while the remainder of the force moved forward in column, at quarter distance, with the artillery on the reverse flank.

The enemy's position was well chosen, being situated on a peninsula, protected by a broad river, whose fords are only passable at nearly low water, and whose banks are not only steep, but were covered with sharp stakes. Their defences consisted of deep intrenchments along the margin, with epaulments left to protect them from an enfilading fire; in the rear, high conical hills, surmounted by pagodas, and surrounded by entrenchments, served as numerous citadels, and appeared to be occupied as such.

On the advance of the party under Major Carter, the enemy that occupied the hill, retired across the river, when a fire from those parts of their works that commanded it, was immediately opened—four twelve-pounders, two five and a half-inch howitzers, and two six-pounders, were placed in position, while the first brigade was moved to the right to attack a column that appeared in that direction, and which I now judge to have been an intended reinforcement; it did not, however, long remain in sight, or reach Mahattee. The fire of the artillery soon silenced the enemies, and checked the effective fire of their musketry; and as the fords were then

passable, the 2d brigade took ground to the left, in order to cross to the right of the enemy's defences. The 1st brigade, and two *ressalas* of horse, were moved at the same time forward, the reserve (formed as on the preceding day, with the addition of three companies 2d light infantry battalion, and a rifle company Mug levy) following.

On the 2d brigade descending into the river, the enemy abandoned their post, while the troops on the right (the situation of the ford having been ascertained) crossed, but from the steepness of the bank on the opposite side, had great difficulty in entering the works. A *ressala* of horse, with the rifle company Mug levy, were pushed over still further to our right to gain the road by which the enemy were retreating, and arrived in time to do some execution among their rear, and to prevent the destruction of bridges on the road to Arracan.

I have omitted to mention, that, during the commencement of the action (which lasted about two hours) I received the pleasing intelligence of the near approach of Brigadier-General M'Bean, with the 5th brigade.

On the 28th, it was necessary to halt to obtain information, and allow of a junction being formed by the troops still in the rear, and by the flotilla under Commodore Hayes, who was in progress for that purpose; in the evening this was effected, and the enemy's position partly reconnoitred.

On the 29th, the advance under Brigadier-General M'Bean consisted of one *ressala* of horse, two six-pounders, two howitzers, 5th brigade, six companies His Majesty's 54th regiment, 2d light infantry battalion, rifle company Mug levy, one company regular pioneers, one ditto Mug ditto, sixteen scaling ladders. Considerable delay was occasioned by fog, and which at first prevented the great strength of the enemy's position from being discovered. It occupied a range of connected hills (since ascertained to be from three hundred and fifty to four hundred and fifty feet in height) strong by nature, and rendered still more so by art, escarpment, abatis, and masonry having been resorted to, where those means could be most efficaciously employed. One pass alone leads through them to the capital, and that was defended by a fire of several pieces of artillery, and about three thousand muskets: the whole number of the enemy ranged along the heights may be estimated at from eight to nine thousand men; the ground in front is an extensive valley, entirely clear of jungle, but in depth not altogether out of the range of the enemy's artillery.

Where the advance halted, it was partly covered by a tank, and Brigadier-General M'Bean made a disposition for acquiring the principal hills in the first range at the commencement of the pass. Four pieces of artillery were ordered forward to cover the attack, and the troops for the assault, consisting of the light infantry company, His Majesty's 54th regiment, four companies 2d light infantry battalion, and the light infantry companies of the 10th and 16th regiments Madras native infantry, with the rifle company Mug levy, were placed under Major Kemm; a support of six companies 16th regiment, Madras native infantry under Captain French, of that corps, followed. The assault commenced, and in spite of a well-directed fire, and of the steep