

No. 3.

To Captain Sir H. La Fleming Senhouse,
K.C.H. &c. &c. &c. Canton River.

Her Majesty's Sloop Modeste, off Canton,
26th May, 1841.

SIR,

I RECEIVED your orders of the 24th instant, a little before noon on that day, and immediately proceeded with the boats and marines of Calliope and Conway to the Alligator off Howqua's fort, making the signal to Herald to close and send her boats.

I ordered Captain Kuper to move the Alligator up the right bank of the river past Napier's fort, where he anchored her in her own draught, and the boats were pushed up as far as possible without exposing them to the enemy's fire. A little before sunset I observed the Algerine moving down past the Dutch fort, and she shortly anchored and engaged a battery on the Canton side which she silenced. Anxious to co-operate with her I went ahead with Captain Bethune to reconnoitre, but was stopped by a shot through my boat from the French fort.

I remained under cover of the point until dark, when I sent Captain Bethune with a division of boats to support her, and a concerted signal having been made, I joined her with the whole force at 2 A. M.

The arsenal being secured, I reconnoitred the line of defence, and perceived that it could not be attacked with advantage, without having heavier guns in position than those of the Algerine. I therefore lost no time in ordering the other sloops down, and at the same time put myself in communication with Major Pratt, commanding H. M.'s 26th in the factory.

Finding that Modeste was the only vessel likely to be got across the bar, and there appearing even some doubt of her accomplishing the passage, I fitted shell guns in three of the captured war-junks.

Capt. Eyres having succeeded, by great exertion, in getting his vessel over the bar, I this morning moved her, Algerine, and the gun-junks on the French Fort: the enemy deserted the upper defences, and about 9 A.M. opened their fire from the fort, which was speedily silenced; I then cleared the beach by a few well directed broadsides, and made the signal to advance. Captain Bethune immediately landed on shore with the storming party, and the fort was carried in the most gallant style; the whole line of defence extending about two miles from the factory, and which, with the exception of the French fort, had been lately constructed in the strongest manner, has been destroyed, and communication is opened with the ships at Napier's Fort. The guns destroyed are sixty four in number, including four ten and a half inch calibre: the Dutch fort was not armed.

To that excellent and able Officer, Captain Bethune, I feel particularly indebted, and my best thanks are also due to Commanders Warren and Gifford, who assisted in the attack. This is the sixth time I have had occasion to mention the gallant conduct of Commander Eyres; Lieutenant Mason, commanding the Algerine, acquitted himself entirely to my satisfaction, and both Captain Eyres and himself speak in the highest terms of the assistance they received from Lieutenant Shute, and Mr. Dolling, Mate, their

seconds in command, and all the other officers and men.

Lieutenants Haskell and Hay, senior of Cruizer and Pylades, directed the guns in the junks with great ability. Captain Bethune speaks in the highest terms of Lieutenants Watson, Beadon, Coryton, Collinson, Morshead, Hayes, Hamilton and Mr. Brown, Master, as also Lieutenant Hayes of the Bombay marine, and of all the other officers and men employed more immediately under his orders, a list of whom is annexed. The party of marines was commanded by Lieutenant Urquhart, assisted by Lieutenant Marriott, Lieutenant Somerville, Agent of transports, aided with some boats of the transports. Lieutenant Gabbett, of the Madras Artillery, threw shells with great effect from one of the junks, and Major Pratt offered in the handsomest manner to co-operate in the attack, if required.

I enclose a list of vessels captured, afloat, and building.

I have the honor &c.

T HERBERT,

Captain of H. M. S. Calliope,
And Senior Officer present.

List of Officers employed on the 26th May 1841,
off Canton.

Calliope—Lieutenants Watson and D'Eyncourt; Mr. Brown, Master; Messrs. Daly, Rivers, Le Vescomt, Egerton, and Taylor, Mates; Dr. Butler, Assistant-Surgeon.

Conway—Lieutenants Beadon and Coryton; Messrs. Read and Kane, Mates; Mr. Forster, Second Master.

Alligator—Lieutenant Stewart; Messrs. Woolcombe and Baker, Mates.

Hvacinth—Lieutenant Morshead; Messrs. Barclay and Osborne, Mates; Dr. Robertson, Assistant-Surgeon.

Cruizer—Lieutenants Haskell and Hayes; Messrs. Drake and Bryant, Mates.

Pylades—Lieutenant Hay; Messrs. Jeffreys and Sauley, Mates; Dr. Tweeddale, Assistant-Surgeon.

Columbine—Lieutenant Hamilton; Mr. Miller, Mate; Dr. Crawford, Assistant-Surgeon.

H. C. S. Atalanta—Lieutenant Grieve; Mr. Eden, Midshipman.

Rattlesnake—Messrs. Cowell and Waddington, Second Masters; Mr. Brodie, Volunteer First Class.

Lieutenant Somerville, with boats of the Minerva, Sulimany, and Marion.

Lieutenants Urquhart and Marriott, of the Royal Marines, Conway and Alligator.

Lieutenant Collinson, attached to the Surveying Department, was exceedingly active in getting the ships into their positions.

T. HERBERT, Captain and Senior
Officer present.