

up to cover the north gate, astern of the Columbine.

Soon after eight A.M., the firing had all ceased, the enemy having been beaten at all points with a most severe loss.

Lieutenant Birch, with the boats of the *Modeste* and *Sesostris*, under his command, proceeded up the south west branch of the river towards Foong-wa, and no traces either of fire-rafts or an enemy being seen, returned on board.

In the forenoon I despatched Commander Mershead with the boats of the *Columbine*, in company with the Honourable Company's steamer *Queen*, to reconnoitre the branch of the river towards Tze-Kee, the complete success of which (a copy of his letter I have the honour to enclose), will I hope fully explain.

I cannot close my letter without expressing my thanks to Commander Morshead, of Her Majesty's ship *Columbine*, Commander Ormsby, of the Honourable East India Company's ship *Sesostris*, Lieutenant M'Cleverty, of the Honourable Company's ship *Phlegethon*, Mr. Warden, of the Honourable Company's ship *Queen*, and to all the officers and ships' companies employed, for their valuable assistance on this occasion.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. B. WATSON,
Commander of Her Majesty's ship *Modeste*.

Captain Thomas Bouchier, C. B.
Her Majesty's ship Blonde, Senior Officer.

H. M. Sloop Columbine,
Ningpo, March 10, 1842.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to inform you, that in compliance with your orders, I proceeded immediately with the boats of H. M. S. *Columbine* in the *Queen* steamer, to reconnoitre the Tze-Kee branch of the river, and on clearing the first reach, I had the satisfaction of destroying thirty-seven fire junks; I found several more secreted in a village a few miles higher up, which I also destroyed.

At the landing place, leading to Tze-Kee, the river was literally covered with junks of all sizes, laden with combustible and brushwood, all of which were destroyed. I here recognised three Chinese encampments on the hills, abreast of Tze-Kee on the opposite bank of the river. The river here becoming narrow, at the request of Mr. Warden, the *Queen* was anchored, when I proceeded with the boats above the encampments, one of which they fired and burnt on our approach. Several fire junks were moored here on each side of the river, the whole of which were scuttled and burnt without an accident.

The junks consisted of jars of powder stowed in brushwood and bamboos, filled with combustibles running through them, which exploded and shot out fire balls in all directions as they burnt.

No. 20136.

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A small punt was attached to each junk, and fire proof jackets and caps of leather found in them all.
I am, &c.

(Signed) W. H. MORSHEAD,
Commander

Commander Watson, H. M. Sloop
Modeste.

Modeste, at Ningpo,
March 19, 1842.

SIR,

MY letter of the 11th instant will apprise their Lordships of the complete discomfiture of the Chinese, on shore and afloat, in their attacks on our positions at Chinghae and Ningpo on the 10th instant.

Retrograde movements in various directions were the immediate result, and feeling it of importance not to lose a moment in following up the advantage of these severe repulses, Sir Hugh Gough and myself determined to make a rapid movement on their encampment at Tze-Kee, in the hope of bringing them to action before they retired on "Pickwan," about forty miles higher up the river, at which point we had reason to believe they were concentrating their army.

In anticipation of this advance, Captain Richards, with three boats, and the whole of the marines attached to the "Cornwallis" accompanied me in the "Nemesis" and "Phlegethon" to Ningpo, where we arrived (after our examination of the island of Taisan) on the afternoon of the 13th, and being joined by the small arm men and marines of the squadron within the river, the whole amounting to 410 men, were placed under the command of Captain Bouchier of the *Blonde*, assisted by Captain Richards of my flag ship, and the several officers specified in the subjoined list.

At 8 A. M. on the 15th, his Excellency Sir Hugh Gough and about 850 troops, in addition to the naval brigade, were embarked from Ningpo in the *Nemesis*, *Phlegethon* and *Queen* steam vessels, making altogether a force of about 1260 men, with which we proceeded up the river, and before we reached the point of debarkation at a village four miles from "Tze-Kee," we had the satisfaction of seeing a large force of the Chinese still in their encampments on the hills in the north of the city.

The combined forces were all landed and in full march for Tze-Kee by two o'clock, the *Phlegethon* having been previously despatched up the river, with the armed barges of the *Cornwallis* and *Blonde*, to intercept and harass the retreat of the Chinese by water as much as possible.

As our reconnoissance of Tze-Kee in December had made us familiar with the route, and no obstacles were offered to our advance, we reached the suburbs on the south side of it at half-past three, and, on the troops ascending a small hill, two guns and a few straggling shots from gingalls and matchlocks were opened on us from the ramparts, and also from a body of matchlock-men on a height opposite to us; but, on the advance of a detachment of the 18th regiment, and the discharge of a few rounds from two small field pieces,