

town as might have remained not completely destroyed, and to render unserviceable any iron guns, and to bring down with him any brass ordnance that might be there.

Two or three chiefs are known to have fallen on the present occasion, and there is every reason to believe that Sheriff Houseman, so formidable to all the neighbouring country, and whose valour was worthy of a better cause, is among the number slain; at least I have certain information that he was carried off badly wounded; but, whether dead or living, I consider his influence to be entirely annihilated, and his confederacy with various piratical chiefs in the Archipelago broken up, for his power as much depended upon his being the encourager of other piratical tribes, and their supplier with goods in exchange for slaves, as in the force naturally at his command. I may add that, among many other articles of European workmanship, a bell belonging to the ship *Guilbelen Ludwig*, of Bremen, was found in the town. This vessel was supposed to have been wrecked on the Garsi Isles, about October or November last, but nothing has been heard of the crew.

I have, &c.

THOS. COCHRANE, Rear Admiral,
Commander in Chief.

To the Secretary of the Admiralty, London.

*Her Majesty's Steam Vessel Vixen, Maloodo-Bay,
20th August 1845.*

SIR,

I HAVE to report the proceedings of the expedition you did me the honour to place under my command.

Your Excellency's flag having been flying on board the *Vixen*, you are aware of its progress to the anchorage at the head of the Maloodoo-bay; I commence, therefore, the details from that period.

The force, consisting of five hundred and thirty saamen and marines (the details of which I annex), conveyed in twenty-four boats, of which nine were gun boats, left the *Vixen* at three P.M. on the 18th instant, and, after some little difficulty in hitting on the channel, was anchored off the mouth of the Sonoy-basar a little after sun set. Here we were joined by a boat from the *Pluto*, carrying Agincourt's field piece.

The tide serving; about eleven P.M., weighed, and, passing the bar, anchored within it; at daylight, on the 19th, we proceeded up the river in two divisions; after proceeding about two miles, I was informed by the Brune pilots we were nearing the town. I therefore went ahead with Captain Lyster to reconnoitre. On coming to an abrupt turn in the river, about three miles higher, we found ourselves suddenly in front of the position, which consisted of two stockaded forts, of eight and three guns each, commanding the reach. About two hundred yards below the forts was a boom across the river, apparently well constructed. The forts appeared to us to stand on a tongue of land, from which we were separated by the river, which at that point divided into two branches, and the pilots declared such to be the case, that turn-

ing to the right we observed was still further defended by a floating battery. There appeared, therefore, to be no means of carrying the position but by forcing the boom.

On rejoining the force, arrangements were made for the gun boats to advance to the boom, to cover the party appointed to cut through it, the remainder of the force to hold themselves to act when ordered. We had approached the boom to within one hundred yards, when a flag of truce was observed to be coming towards us. Conceiving the object of the enemy was merely to gain time, I sent back a message, "that unless Sheriff Osman came to me in half an hour, I should open fire." This being conveyed to the fort, the flag returned with an offer to admit me with two boats, that I might visit the Sheriff. I declined, and the flag retired: the moment it was clear of the line of fire, the three-gun battery opened, and the cannonade became general on both sides.

The boom was composed of two large-sided trees, each supporting a chain cable, equal to ten or twelve inches, firmly bolted and secured round the trunk of a tree on each bank; a cut in the right bank allowed a canoe to pass, but was impassable to any of our boats.

One hour nearly elapsed before we could in any way remove the obstacle, during which time the fire of the enemy was well sustained, all the guns being laid for the boom. I need hardly mention it was briskly returned from our side, both from guns and small arms; and some rockets, well thrown by a party which had been landed on the right bank, appeared to produce considerable effect.

As soon as the passage was open for the smaller boats, they passed through rapidly, and embarked the marines from the large boats across the boom; ultimately the whole force passed through. The enemy immediately quitted their defences, and fled in every direction. The marines and small arm men having cleared the town, the marines were formed as a covering party, and parties of seamen were pushed up both banks of the river, but met with no opposition; at the same time preparations were made for spiking the guns and destroying the stockades and town; in a short time these were completed, and the whole in flames, as well as three large proas, and several smaller ones.

Being anxious to save the tide, and conceiving that the object contemplated by your Excellency was accomplished, I ordered the force to be re-embarked, and proceeded down the river to the *Vixen*.

When your Excellency considers the strength of the enemy's position, and the obvious state of preparation in which we found him, you will be prepared to learn that this service has not been performed without considerable loss. I regret very much to state it at six killed and fifteen wounded; the loss on the part of the enemy was, unquestionably, very great, but the surrounding jungle afforded the enemy the means of carrying away their dead, according to their custom in such cases. Nevertheless, some of those left on the field we recognized as persons of considerable influence.