

of about 40 junks was observed, moored in good order across the stream; the tide was a strong ebb, which rendered it less easy for the junks to escape, and although it made our progress slow, it enabled us the better to thread the way amongst the shoals.

4. A heavy fire from the junks opened upon the leading steamers as they approached, but at too great a distance to tell with effect. Shortly afterwards, as the Hong Kong got within good range, she opened fire, and was soon supported by the Bustard and Starling, the others being at distant range.

The fire from the junks then slackened, and they got under weigh, some were soon afterwards abandoned, and the rest plying their oars, endeavoured to escape up the creek.

5. The steamers followed, though very slowly, on account of the shoal water, the Sir Charles Forbes and Staunch grounded early, then the Starling, and eventually the Hong Kong ran ashore.

The signal was immediately made for the boats to go ahead, and a general chase took place.

The junk force divided, the main body of about 15 continuing up the main channel, were followed by the boats led by Captain Edgell, who detached four pinnaces up a creek to the left to follow the smaller division. Commander Forsyth accompanied these pinnaces, which succeeded in capturing them all (10 in number). Commander Forsyth speaks highly of the gallant way the Hornet's pinnace, under Mr. R. A. Brown, Acting Mate, dashed in unsupported by the other boats, which she had distanced, against 3 of these heavily armed junks, which struck to her.

6. The main body, followed by Captain Edgell were soon beyond range of all except the Hornet's rocket boat and Sybille's pinnace, which kept within reach of them for a long time; and Captain Edgell brings to my notice the behaviour and most accurate fire kept up by Lieutenant Brock in the former boat, and by Mr. Hudson, Acting Mate, in the latter. The chase was continued by this division, which I accompanied 12 or 14 miles, far above the place where the steamers had grounded, when the work for the men at the oars having been excessive, I decided to turn back, but with the view of getting at the junks, which we still had in sight, at a future time by another passage.

7. Near the point at which we turned at the village T'scen Tsune, we found the lorcha Anonyma, which was captured last December while in tow of the steamer Thistle, and burnt her.

8. On getting back to the gun-boats at night, I found that Commander Corbett, who had very properly remained with the Staunch on her grounding, the other Commanders having gone on, had sent the Inflexible's paddle-box boat after a junk that tried to escape down a creek to the right and captured her. Commander Forsyth had returned with his party, and Lieutenant Dent, assisted by the officers of the other gun-boats, had secured or destroyed all the prizes. The Chinese having returned to one of the junks below, she was captured by Mr. Molloy, Second Master, with the Starling and Hong Kong's boats. Lieutenant Dent brought to my notice the conduct of that officer.

9. In all 27 heavily-armed snake-boats (belonging to the Admiral Sonhay) were captured or destroyed. Their armament consisted of one heavy gun in the bow, generally a long 32 or 24-pounder, with from four to six lighter guns: each vessel pulls about 40 oars. This service was fortunately accomplished with the loss of two men only wounded. The day was excessively hot, and I cannot speak too highly of the spirit with which

the men stuck to their oars, through a harder day's work than I have ever before witnessed under a tropical sun. One or two cases (but not severe) of sun stroke occurred in the gun-boats.

10. At daylight next morning the steamers proceeded down the creek with the boats and ten prizes in tow, and anchored with the Sybille, at the 2nd bar.

11. Further arrangements were now made to follow up the war boats that had got away. I had already the previous day stationed the Tribune off Sawshee Channel, and I now moored the Inflexible abreast of the 2nd bar creek, down which her guns could then range. From the knowledge I now possessed respecting the various creeks from Escape Creek downward, I considered it possible to guard all the outlets to the river, and with a force of boats to scour the inland creeks and compel any junks there, either to meet that force or retire towards the main river. The enclosed memorandum which was issued for the information of the officers engaged, shows the principal arrangements made to attain that object. Commander Forsyth, with his division, took up his station in Escape Creek in the evening.

12. At daylight on the 27th, I proceeded up the Sawshee Channel, as previously arranged, the boats being towed by the steamers for ten or twelve miles. I then sent the Bustard to strengthen Commander Forsyth's division, and desired Lieutenant Dent, in the Hong Kong, to take with him the Inflexible's pinnace, and go a short distance up the 2nd bar creek; he succeeded in passing completely through into Escape Creek, and met Commander Forsyth. Casting off from the steamer, the boats pulled up the Sawshee Channel, and we soon heard from the natives (who showed us every good feeling), that four of Sonhay's retreating squadron had, on the 25th, gone up Toung Kōnan, and that there were other mandarin junks there. I beg here to mention the very great assistance I have received from Rev. Samuel Beal, Chaplain of this ship, who was good enough at my request to accompany me each day as Chinese Interpreter; to his aid the successes of the expedition are in a great degree due, as I had failed to obtain an Interpreter from Hong Kong.

13. About ten miles from where the steamers were left, we opened the city of Toung Kōnan, and observed the mastheads of the war junks. The boats now gave way with a will, and though the junks were in sight, fully two miles off, they succeeded in taking them completely by surprise. The boats, as they dashed in, firing into a small battery which commanded the river and into the war junks, caused them to be immediately abandoned. The junks lay scattered along the whole length of the town, through which the river runs, and preparations were now made to destroy them, with the exception of one, the finest and heaviest armed war junk I have seen in China, and which I hoped to be able to take away.

14. It soon became apparent that the Chinese troops were not going quietly to submit to this proceeding without further resistance, and the creek being narrow, with houses on either side, they had every facility to pick off our men. As we first passed up only a few gingalls and matchlocks opened, these increasing in number presently gave considerable annoyance, and it was necessary to keep up a continued fire with some of the boats' guns, from musketry, and from the Tribune's rocket-boat, which did good service, while other parties were employed destroying the junks, which occupied some time, as it was necessary to burn these at the upper end of the town