

Admiralty, July 14, 1862.

A DESPATCH, of which the following is a copy, has been received from Vice-Admiral Sir James Hope, the Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's Ships and Vessels on the East India and China Station :

CAPTURE OF THE CITY OF NINGPO.

No. 196.
MY LORD,

Najaor,
May 17, 1862

YOU will be pleased to lay before the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the accompanying copy of a despatch from Captain Dew, of the *Encounter*, detailing the capture of the city of Ningpo, by the squadron under his orders, assisted by two French gun-boats.

2. Taking into view the very small force at Captain Dew's disposal for storming the walls, this achievement is of a character which reflects the very highest credit on the conduct of all who were engaged in it, and fully justifies the entire reliance I placed on his judgment and ability when I ordered him on a service which I foresaw would require a very large measure of both.

3. The immediate departure of the mail precludes my bringing, in detail, the circumstances which led to this collision with the rebels, under the review of their lordships—this I propose to do by the next opportunity.

4. Two hundred of Colonel Ward's Chinese troops detached for the protection of the foreign settlement arrived the day after the action, and five hundred more have since been despatched, which will constitute a garrison sufficient to ensure the safety of the city.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) J. HOPE,
Vice-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief.

*The Right. Hon. Lord Clarence Paget, C.B.,
Secretary of the Admiralty.*

REPORTING ATTACK AND CAPTURE OF NINGPO.

H.M.S. Encounter, Ningpo,
May 10, 1862.

SIR,

I FOUND it necessary to capture the city of Ningpo and drive the rebels out under the following circumstances.

You are aware, Sir, that the rebel chiefs had been informed that if they again fired, either on our ships or in the direction of the settlement, we should deem it a *casus belli*.

This morning, at 10 A.M., the *Kestrel* and French vessels, *Etoile* and *Confucius*, were fired on by the Point battery. I cleared for action in this ship, when a volley of musketry was fired on us from the bastion abreast.

The under-mentioned vessels, viz., *Encounter*, *Ringdove*, *Kestrel*, and *Hardy*, with the *Etoile* and *Confucius*, French gun-boats, now opened fire, with shell, on the walls and batteries, which was replied to with much spirit from guns and small arms.

At noon, having silenced the guns and knocked down the battlements, exposing the top of the wall, 25 feet thick, at a point where I intended to scale, I ceased firing and went to dinner. At 2 I landed and installed a party of Marines, under Mr. Alexander D. Douglas, Midshipman, in a house commanding the walls, got scaling ladders ready, and when joined by Lieutenant Kenney, the senior

French naval officer, I scaled the walls, meeting with a most determined resistance; 'twas here the gallant Kenney, one of the first on the wall, was dangerously wounded.

I now advanced and took possession of the Salt Gate, keeping up a heavy fire on the enemy, who under cover of the houses, returned it. At 4 p.m. I sent the *Hardy*, *Kestrel*, and *Confucius*, with orders to cut away the bridge of boats, pass up, and shell the south and west gates: this duty was most ably performed under a galling fire, kept under by the *Confucius* and *Hardy*, whilst Lieutenant Henry Huxham landed on the bridge—spiked the guns in battery, there, whilst Mr. Leach, Assistant-Engineer, 2nd Class, cut the chains—then opened the bridge, when the three vessels passed up into position.

In the meantime the enemy made desperate efforts to regain the Salt Gate by front and flank attacks, and in one of these latter, the bayonet and spear nearly met; it was when leading on his men in one of these charges, that Lieutenant Wm. N. Cornewall fell. Words cannot express our sorrow for the loss of this gallant and amiable officer.

At 5 o'clock, owing to the flank movements, all opposition ceased, when we passed on to the North Gate, and joined Commander Robert G. Craigie, who had scaled the walls and taken the gate with some opposition.

From the masthead the rebels were seen to leave the city, so I returned to the Salt Gate, placed the *Tao-tai* and Imperial soldiers, who now landed from their junks, in charge of the city, and re-embarked our own and the French people.

I was most ably assisted throughout the day by Lieutenant Kenney, and Monsieur Caligny, commanding the *Etoile* and *Confucius* respectively, and the men under their orders; the severe wound which deprived me of the services of Lieutenant Kenney is much to be regretted, and the manner the *Confucius* was handed and fought, reflects the highest credit on her commander.

I esteem myself peculiarly fortunate in having had such able gun-boat commanders, as Lieutenants Huxham and Archibald G. Bogle; the manner they worked their vessels in this narrow river, with a spring tide running, and the beautiful practice of their guns when close under the city walls and exposed to round shot and musketry, is beyond all praise; they speak highly of the conduct of their officers and men.

I have much pleasure in bringing to your notice the conduct of the officers and men under my orders; where all behaved so well distinction would be invidious. Lieutenant Hugh Davis, with Mr. H. H. Rawson, Midshipman, commanded the seamen when Lieutenant Cornewall fell. Acting-Lieutenant E. C. Tirling, ably assisted by Mr. William Cantlow, Boatswain of this ship, got the howitzer on the walls and into action. Mr. James B. Scarlett, Assistant-Engineer, 2nd Class, a volunteer, was one of the first on the walls; Dr. A. Irwin, Surgeon, of this ship, was continually under fire when attending the wounded.

When on the wall, the ship was in charge of Mr. Edmund Swain, Master, and he was of great service with Mr. William Ferns, Gunner, in covering our landing with the pivot gun, manned by cooks and stewards.

Mr. Hewletts, Acting Interpreter, did good service, and in the performance of which, when in company with Mr. John Ashton, Assistant Paymaster, he was repeatedly exposed to the fire from the walls.

I regret that our casualties, a list of which I beg to inclose, are so many; but under the circumstances, considering the vermin nature of these