

At seven o'clock the embarkation commenced, but owing to want of transport the whole party was not landed on the western bank, about a mile and a half above the Residency, until 10.30 A.M. We immediately started in the following order of march:—

Twenty Malays, under Mr. Swettenham, as scouts; 4 men 10th, under Corporal Anderson, advance guard; 21 men, under Lieutenant Booth, leading half-company; 4 seamen of "Thistle," with coolies carrying rockets, under me, accompanied by Captain Innes; 47 Sepoys and 27 police under Superintendent Plunkett; 25 men of the 10th, under Lieutenant Elliot, bringing up the rear.

We advanced rapidly, showing as large a front as possible, but often having to break into single file from the nature of the country.

We had marched about 2½ miles, when suddenly a heavy fire was heard in front, and the leading troops formed in skirmishing order across an Indian-corn field—the corn about eight feet high—moving forward steadily. As soon as I saw the stockade I ordered the seamen to commence rocketting, which they did as fast as possible, under a heavy fire. I may here mention that the rockets were of an obsolete pattern (9-pounder tail, shell), and used in wooden troughs, with paper primers stuck in one of the holes in the base, and ignited by a common match, this being the only means I could devise of using them. The Sepoys and police were huddled together behind a large tree, close to the river, and proved utterly useless, and rather dangerous from their wild firing, which wounded some of the troops.

Shortly after the beginning of the action Lieutenant Booth was wounded in the foot, and had to be placed under shelter.

Lieutenant Elliot took command, and we slackened our fire, not being able to see any enemy, though they could evidently see us. The seamen threw in a few rockets, but too high, owing to their inefficient fittings.

Then it was agreed that after two rockets had been fired there should be a general attack.

I told the seamen to advance in the centre.

After the second rocket a rush was made forward in line, and we placed ourselves close under the stockade, taking advantage of every shelter, keeping up a heavy fire at it, as the enemy was invisible. The men were falling fast, the retire and assembly sounded, so we fell back.

Captain Innes was carried in killed. After a hurried consultation it was unanimously agreed to retire, as it was useless losing men without any visible result.

The coolies having all deserted we were obliged to detail some of the troops to carry the dead and wounded. The remainder were formed into a rear guard, Lieutenant Booth commanding. Mr. Swettenham and I remaining, we retired slowly and in good order to the boats, which occupied about an hour and a half, when we embarked and arrived at the Residency about 3.30 P.M.

This evening Captain Innes was buried, with military honours, beside the late Mr. Birch's grave.

The affair cost us altogether—one officer killed, two officers wounded, one private (10th) killed, one Sepoy killed, three lance-corporals and four privates severely wounded, and one corporal and one private slightly wounded; one Sepoy severely wounded.

The Malay scouts, under Mr. Swettenham, proved very useful and showed great courage; one of them was killed.

The inefficiency of the Sepoys may be partly attributable to want of discipline, and to no officer being acquainted with their language.

For the police there is no excuse, particularly as Mr. Plunkett did all that was possible to encourage them and the Sepoys, but without success.

Though unable to discover the loss on the enemy's side we heard from reliable authority that the Malays had abandoned their stockade shortly after we left.

Before concluding, I hope you will not consider I am exceeding my duty in mentioning the gallantry of the European troops and sailors, who were under fire for an hour and three-quarters in very trying circumstances. I believe I saw the last of the missing man (Private Fay, of the 10th), who was lying wounded on the ground, while we were advancing on the stockade. I gave him my pistol, and took his rifle with some ammunition. I did not see him on retiring, and concluded he had been taken to the rear with the others.

On the evening of the 8th, Commander Bruce, of the "Fly," arrived, bringing intelligence of a reinforcement under Captain Whitla, of the 10th, who arrived during the night.

Next day the body of Private Fay floated down the river, and was buried in the evening.

The wounded were sent down the river during the day.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) T. F. ABBOTT,
Sub-Lieutenant in charge of Seamen from
Her Majesty's Ship "Thistle."

Commander Francis Stirling,
Senior Officer, Straits of Malacca.

Enclosure No. 2.

The Residency, Bandar Bahru, Perak River,
SIR, *November 16, 1875.*

IN continuation of my letter of proceedings of the 12th instant I beg to inform you that on the following day, a report having been received that the stockade at Passir Sala was likely to be abandoned, and it being considered extremely advisable that a blow should be struck at them before this took place, an immediate attack on their position was determined on; and, after consultation with Major Dunlop, Special Commissioner in Perak, and Captain Whitla, of the 10th Regiment, in command of the troops, a plan of operations was agreed on.

On Sunday morning, the 14th instant, all the available officers and seaman and marines of Her Majesty's ships "Thistle" and "Fly" were brought up the river and quartered at the Residency, native boats were fitted to receive two 12-pounder howitzer field pieces, one 7-pounder boat's gun, the two 24-pounder naval rocket tubes, and a cohorn mortar, and with much difficulty 15 other native boats were obtained to transport the troops; and on the same evening, after reconnoitring as far as Qualla Truss, a place of disembarkation was determined on, on the right bank of the river, about a mile below the stockade which was attacked on the 7th instant.

On Monday morning at 5 A.M. the embarkation commenced, and at 6.30 the whole force moved up the river, and at 8.20 disembarked at the place determined on without opposition.

The Marines of both ships were placed at the disposal of Captain Whitla, who formed them into the advanced guard, and placed them under the command of the Hon. Mr. Plunkett, Superintendent of the Police at Penang, who volunteered his services.