

guns most admirably, and completely demoralised the 3rd or reserve column of the enemy, entirely upsetting its formation, and changing it into a disorderly crowd. The Gardner gun was brought to bear on the 1st and 2nd columns with very good effect. We could observe that the enemy charged down on the square, but without the same ferocious determination as at Abou Klea. The square appeared to be as steady as a rock, and, as far as could be seen, none of the enemy got within 50 yards of it. The enemy then retired, and the square marched to the Nile, distant about 2½ miles.

About an hour after, at 1.30 P.M., the enemy ceased their rifle fire on the forts, leaving us unmolested for the night.

20th January. Square returned, having left a small force holding a position on the river. At 4 P.M. the whole column marched on the Nile.

21st January. A reconnaissance was made in the direction of Metemmeh. The Gardner gun, under the command of Mr. Webber, boatswain (every other naval officer having been killed or wounded), accompanied this column. Gordon's four steamers "Bordein," "Safia," "Twifia," and "Tull-howeiya" arrived.

22nd January. After some slight repairs to engines, I reported the steamers ready to proceed to Khartoum at 3 P.M.

Took command of Gordon's four steamers. Proceeded to Shendy, distant about 7 miles, in "Bordein" and "Tull-howeiya," taking Bashi-Bazouks and the crews I found in the vessels. Fired a few shells into Shendy, and cleared a small earthwork. Received no opposition.

24th January. 7 A.M., Sir C. Wilson left for Khartoum in "Bordein" and "Tull-howeiya" with a detachment of the Sussex Regiment and the Soudanese troops, about 280. The Naval Brigade was ordered to remain at Goubat, where they were encamped. Repaired on board "Safia" with detachment of Naval Brigade and Gardner gun. Sent the Egyptian troops from steamer "Bordein" to garrison island opposite the English camp, Goubat, and make earthworks there.

Went down to Shendy, where the enemy opened a hot fire on the steamer. We dispersed them with shell and the Gardner gun.

General Sir H. Stewart was put on board the "Twifia," but she was also used as a ferry-boat between the island and the English camp to bring food across for camels.

25th to 30th January. Weighed daily at 6 A.M., taking on board 20 carefully picked shots from one of the regiments, proceeding up or down the river at distances varying from 10 miles down to 15 miles up, capturing cattle, sheep, goats, vegetables, &c., as food for the camp; raiding villages, driving the men out. Destroyed strong earthwork without guns in it during this period. In our passages up or down the river we were always fired at by parties all along the left bank of from 5 to 20 riflemen, but our bullet-proof shields prevented any casualties.

31st January. 2nd division of Naval Brigade, under the command of Lieutenant Van Koughnet, arrived.

1st February. Lieutenant Stuart Wortley arrived at Goubat with the news of the fall of Khartoum, and the loss of the two steamers "Bordein" and "Tull-howeiya," also reporting that Sir C. Wilson and his party, together with the Bashi-Bazouks, were encamped on an island about 30 miles to the southward of Goubat, and a short distance to the southward of a strong earthwork, where there were some 5,000 men.

I picked the crew of the steamer from both

divisions of the Naval Brigade, with 20 picked shots of the mounted infantry. Mounted the 2 Gardners on a platform amidships in echelon, and proceeded with all despatch (about 2½ knots) for the relief of Sir C. Wilson.

2nd February. Proceeded up the river.

3rd February. At 7 A.M. observed a very strong earthwork on starboard hand; four embrasures in it; Sir C. Wilson's steamer on the rocks, about a quarter of a mile beyond it. Instructed riflemen, Gardner and howitzers guns crews to fire solely into the embrasures as the ship passed the fort, and not at bodies of riflemen I perceived on the banks.

Opened fire with bow gun at 1,200 yards. Enemy opened heavy rifle fire from 600 or 800 rifles, all along the bank, and also with gun from embrasure pointed down stream.

Owing to the depth of water the steamer had to pass at about 80 yards from the fort, but the machine gun and marksmen's fire, directed into the embrasures, was so accurate and terrific, that the enemy were luckily unable to fire their two guns when the fort bore on the beam, distant 80 yards.

When the steamer had passed the fort about 200 yards, the machine guns would no longer bear, and but comparatively few of the riflemen could get their rifles to bear over the stern.

The enemy then sent a shot into the boiler. Observing the paddles still moving, I headed the steamer towards the opposite bank, and, waiting until her weigh was lost, anchored. The enemy, on seeing this catastrophe, redoubled their fire. I got up some planks and mounted one of the Gardner guns aft, cutting a hole in the after side of the battery, where one of the 7-prs. were, and by cutting off about a foot of the trail with a saw, we were enabled to fire this gun, although it capsized after every round, as there was no recoil.

The gun, Gardner, and rifles, were all directed at the embrasure facing up stream, to prevent the enemy either getting their gun to bear on the steamer from the earthwork, or taking the gun out of the earthwork, so that they could bring it to bear on us from another position (as the earthwork was close down to the water at the bottom of a steep incline). Had they attempted to remove the gun they would have been exposed to the fire from the steamer.

From 7.30 to 8.30 P.M. a continuous fire, without a minute's intermission, was kept up with the 7-pr. Gardner and the riflemen, who were told off in reliefs on the earthwork and embrasure.

The enemy were equally diligent, particularly with their rifles, their bullets rattling like hail all over the ship. They managed to fire several rounds from the gun, none of the enemy, however, could train it on the vessel, on account of the hot fire, and the shots travelled more than 100 yards to the right of the steamer.

Having communicated with Sir C. Wilson in the evening, and arranged that his party should land on the opposite bank, while his sick and wounded should float down in a nuggah after dark, I hauled the boats, four in number (brought up to take his party back) alongside the vessels, hoping the enemy might think we were deserting the steamers, as at night, although we could not see them they could see us, and I feared that they would take their guns out of the fort, run them up the bank abreast of the vessel, where their range would be under 100 yards, and where they must most certainly sink us.

The ruse answered perfectly. I ceased firing and maintained a dead silence before Sir C.