

Wilson and his party floated down in the nuggah. The enemy opened fire on the nuggah, but, being dark, with little effect, and after it had passed them took their guns out of the fort, and fired several rounds at the steamer, accompanied by a heavy rifle fire. To this I decided not to reply, remaining perfectly silent. The enemy, evidently thinking we had gone, ceased firing for the night.

At 11 A.M. on the 3rd, when the boiler had got cool, Mr. Benbow, Chief Engineer, commenced to repair it. This took ten hours. Too much credit cannot be given to this officer, as he had to shape the plate, bore the holes in plate and boiler, and run down the screws and nuts, almost entirely with his own hands, the artificers and everyone in the stokehold having been scalded severely by the explosion when the shot entered the boiler. The plate was 16" x 14". Some idea can therefore be formed of the work entailed on him.

The boiler being repaired by 9 P.M., at 5 A.M. the following morning (4th February) I ordered fires to be lit, furnace doors to be kept closed, and every precaution taken to prevent sparks coming out of the funnel, and it was not until 5.50 within 10 minutes of daylight, and the steam being ready for proceeding, that the enemy perceived that we had remained on board, and their chance of destroying us lost. They gave vent to the most fiendish yells, and got their guns to bear on the steamer, but by the time they commenced firing, I had weighed anchor, and proceeded to the southward. After going up for three-quarters of a mile where there was more room, we turned the vessel round, and came past the fort, using the guns, Gardners, and riflemen in the same manner as on the previous day. After passing the fort, I was much disappointed to find the nuggah, containing the sick and wounded of Sir C. Wilson's party, aground on a rock, just within range of it. I anchored the steamer as near as I could to the rocks, and sent Sub-Lieutenant Keppel away to get her afloat. This he succeeded in doing in the most clever and gallant manner in three hours, exposed to a smart fire all the time. He was most ably assisted by Captain Gasgoyne, who was with Sir Charles Wilson's party in the nuggah all the time. On the nuggah getting afloat we weighed and proceeded about two miles down the river, picked up Sir C. Wilson's party who had marched down on the right bank, and proceeded to Goubat, arriving about 5.45 P.M. During this action there were fired 5,400 rounds of Gardners, 126 of howitzer, and 2,150 from Martini-Henry.

I consider that we owe our safety in the steamer, as well as the safety of Sir Charles Wilson and his party, who undoubtedly would have been killed if the steamer had been destroyed, to the untiring energy of Sub-Lieutenant Keppel, and Mr. Webber, Boatswain (who worked the howitzer), to Lieutenant Bower, commanding the picked shots of the Mounted Infantry, and Mr. Ingram of the Yeomanry, who is attached by order to the Naval Brigade, and who attended to the working of the Gardner, after Lieutenant Van Koughnet was wounded at the moment the fort bore on the beam. Surgeon May, R.N., was also very attentive to the wounded. Testimony must be borne to the splendid discipline maintained by the men, one and all, during a tremendous fire which lasted 13 hours.

5th February. Employed plugging bullet and shot holes, repairing vessels, &c.

6th February. Court-martial assembled on

board for trial of captains and reis of steamers "Bordein" and "Tull-howeiya" for wilfully losing their steamers, thereby causing vital danger to a part of Her Majesty's forces. Court acquitted the captains, found the reis guilty, sentenced him to death, but recommended him to mercy on account of his having brought Lieutenant Wortley down safely to report the situation of Sir Charles Wilson.

7th February. Captured a number of cattle and goats, obliged to return, steamer leaking so badly.

9th to 11th February. Steamer leaking from many places. Starboard side of vessel came away from beams distant about 12 feet, starboard side of entry came away from fore foot. This must have been caused by the concussion of the gun in the action of 3rd February, there not being sufficient room for recoil, when fired in the position we had to put it.

11th February. Lieutenants Tyler and Montgomerie arrived to fill vacancies in the Naval Brigade.

At 7 A.M. on 13th February, spiked the guns on board "Safia" and "Twifeca," and threw them overboard, together with all their ammunition. Took the eccentric bands from both the above steamers, engines, bivouacked on shore ready to start at daylight.

14th February. Daylight, left Goubat, with column commanded by General Sir Redvers Buller marching on foot.

15th February. Arrived at Abou Klea about noon.

16th February. Naval Brigade ordered into fort with Gardners. Remainder of column throwing up small earthworks.

5 P.M. About 1,000 of enemy appeared on hill, 200 of them having rifles, who kept up fire all night until 11 A.M., on the 17th, when Major Wardrop went out with a few scouts to reconnoitre, and the enemy retreated and left us unmolested.

17th to 22nd February. Remained at Abou-Klea.

23rd February. Convoy with sick; provisions and all gear left at 2 P.M. At 7 P.M. General Sir R. Buller and all combatants proceeded for Gakdul, marching on foot. Picked up convoy at 11.30 and stopped for the night.

24th to 26th February. Proceeding to Gakdul.

27th February. Employed repairing camels' sides by plugging them with oakum.

28th February. Left Gakdul for Korti with column composed of two divisions of Artillery, Medical Department details, a part of Commissariat and Transport Corps, and Naval Brigade.

1st to 6th March. Marching to Korti.

7th March. Arrived at Korti at 4.30 P.M. The men having marched from Metemeh without one falling out, a most creditable performance considering the state of their shoe leather, and the fact of their having to carry rifle, cutlass, and 70 rounds of ammunition, besides in many cases having to tow an obstinate and slow camel.

8th March. Lord Wolseley inspected the brigade on parade, expressing his extreme satisfaction at the work they had done, and the manner in which it had been performed.

9th March. Naval Brigade broken up, told off to different stations for the summer, and all placed under the orders of Captain Boardman. I myself being ordered to join the staff of General Lord Wolseley.

I should like to bring to the notice of their Lordships the admirable way the officers and