

On the 20th October in accordance with instructions received from H.M. Government, I declared martial law\* throughout the Sultanate of Vitu, to take effect from the 21st October.

The Sultan of Vitu's replies being unsatisfactory, and the two days' grace allowed to him expiring on the morning of the 24th October, the contingency had arisen which had been foreseen and stated in the telegram of H.M. Consul-General and myself; and from that date I considered myself justified in commencing active operations.

4. The nature and scope of the operations were clearly indicated by the places where murders had been committed, and although the objective point was Vitu, it was important to punish the inhabitants of Mkonumbi and the villages near Baltia.

5. Before leaving Zanzibar I had issued orders, engaged porters, and generally arranged for the expedition to Vitu, but although, as will be seen from orders enclosed,† I thought it probable that the advance would be from Kipini, I reserved my final decision till after my arrival at Lamu when I should be in possession of the latest information both as to the enemy, and the assistance the Sultan of Zanzibar's troops could render.

6. Having satisfied myself that the Sultan of Vitu had concentrated all the force at his disposal at Vitu, where he was stated to have numbers variously estimated at from 3,300 to 8,800 fighting men,‡ while he did not appear to be prepared for an attack on the Coast towns, I determined on the evening of the 23rd October on sending expeditions to the villages of Mkonumbi, and those near Baltia on the following morning.

7. Both these places were situated up tidal creeks some 15 miles from where we were lying, off the entrance to Lamu, and fortunately it was high water at 2 p.m.

The attack on Mkonumbi I entrusted to Captain the Hon. A. G. Curzon-Howe, commanding my flagship, with the boats of H.M.S. "Boadicea;" and that on the villages near Baltia to Commander John Mackenzie McQuhae commanding H.M.S. "Cossack," with the boats of that ship and those of the "Brisk," which ship had arrived off Lamu early on the 24th October. My orders, and the reports of the Officers in command are enclosed.§

Both Captain the Hon. A. G. Curzon-Howe and Commander McQuhae carried out my orders with thorough success, showing skill and judgment in the prevention of any accident: in both cases some opposition was encountered, especially at Mkonumbi, where several of the Sultan's soldiers were seen; but we escaped all loss, and the expeditions returned to their respective ships late on the 24th October.

8. These operations having been brought to a successful conclusion, I felt free to devote myself to the expedition to Vitu itself, to which I will now return.

9. The plan of operations which I formed at Lamu after procuring information and conferring with the Lewali of Lamu, Saood Bin Mahomed, was as follows:—

The main body consisting of about 700 Bluejackets and Marines with 4 7-pr. guns and 4 machine guns, under my command, was to advance on Vitu from Kipini, a distance of about 14 miles. A column of 600 men, composed, as per footnote,|| under Captain William H. Henderson, of H.M.S. "Conquest," to be sent about 15 miles up the Ozy River to Kau, which I believed to be only 7 miles from Vitu, to advance simultaneously with the main column.

At the request of H.M. Consul-General the 200 troops from Zanzibar had been sent up to Lamu by His Highness the Sultan some days previously, and on the morning of the 23rd, these men and 200 Kirabotos were to have embarked in the "Somali" and "Cossack."

\* \* \* \* \*

\* Enclosure No. 11.

† Enclosure No. 12.

‡ Enclosures Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

§ Enclosures Nos. 12A, 13, and 14.

|| 50 Bluejackets, 150 Indian Police, 200 Sultan of Zanzibar's Troops, 200 Kirabotos, or Sultan's Irregulars from Lamu.