



was generally irresistible. And the Burmese fear of a terrible rush of cold steel reached its climax when, twenty-eight years after, we attacked Rangoon, or rather the great Shwé-dagon pagoda, and achieved, as our readers will soon observe, "a brilliant feat of arms."*

The decisive action at Kokeen in the first war was highly creditable to the British arms, and shows what effects can be gained against a formidable stockade by a well-organised and well-managed plan of attack. It will have been observed that on this occasion a well-directed fire of artillery speedily made a breach in the work, which was then so gallantly carried by the infantry; but as a general rule we think that what the great Duke said with reference to attacks on Indian forts, notwithstanding the uncertainty in their issue, is applicable to warfare in Chin-India,—that it is more expedient and more creditable to our arms if we can attack *without wasting time in making an actual breach*. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to breach some stockades—the very nature of their construction affording such vast powers of resistance—so the artillery must just be content with throwing shells, fire-balls, rockets, or such-like projectiles, into the Burmese fort, while the infantry are looking out for some weak point in the flanks or rear to enter, and the irregular cavalry are all on the alert to cut off the enemy while attempting to escape from the stronghold. Of course, covering advance and assault by a heavy fire of musketry on the defences; enfilading the part attacked, if possible; and, if the ground were favourable, taking the place by escalade, would all be considered by a judicious commander.

It is impossible to read De Jomini's famous chapter on "Offensive and Defensive Operations" without giving preference in the system to the former. Applied to a more transient operation, the offensive is considered always advan-

* "The Times," 1852.



tageous, especially in strategy. "In fact," writes the Baron, "if the art of war consist in directing one's forces upon the decisive point, it is comprehended that the first means of applying this principle will be to take the initiative of movements." Again: "The offensive, considered morally and politically, is almost always advantageous, because it carries the war upon foreign soil, spares your own country, diminishes the resources of the enemy, and augments yours." In tactics, the offensive has also its immense advantages; but they are "less positive, because the operations not being upon so large a sphere, he who has the initiative cannot conceal them from the enemy, who, discovering this instantly, can, by the aid of good reserves, remedy it on the spot."* Defensive war, nevertheless, has its advantages when "the inert or passive" and the "active defence with offensive returns" are wisely combined. It is a great talent to know how to retake the initiative in the midst even of a defensive struggle. To the non-military reader it may be well to say a word on *strategy* and *tactics*. The former includes "the ensemble of the theatre of war," including in such the different combinations which it might offer, and "the choice and the establishment of the fixed base and of the zone of operations." Tactics have merely to do with the manœuvres of an army on the field of battle, and the different formations for leading the troops to attack. Perhaps our admirable young volunteers of the present day will keep these definitions strictly in mind.

Of course, the most important point in a plan of operations is a good base; and if an army operating against Germany would be right in selecting for its base the Rhine, so would a British army operating against Upper Burma, and other parts of Chin-India, select for its base the Irawady, and other noble rivers. With reference to the Irawady it may be said, "A base

* See "The Art of War," Art. xvi., "Statistical combinations," pp. 83, 84.



supported upon a large and impetuous river, the banks of which should be held by good fortresses, situated in command of this river, would be, without contradiction, the most favourable that could be desired." Throughout Chin-India many rivers would be found for bases, on which we could fall back, or from which we could move forward at pleasure; while British Burma surely has capacity sufficient for establishing thereon any amount of magazines or depots. Touching on Burmese rivers brings forth the difference between Burmese and British strategy, as has already been observed in the case of Bandoola, who is blamed for having given up the narrow Panlang and Lain rivers, where he could have presented a most effectual opposition, to fight on the banks of the broad Irawady at Donabew. If, then, during the first Burmese war, the noble Irawady formed a splendid base of operations for the invader, what would it be now with the whole of Pegu at our command, and, what we must obtain at all hazards, entire control over the eastern and western Karennee country! With such bases of operations, strategy with the British in Chin-India will be supreme, or, at least, better than any invading army in that quarter ever had before for conquest. Even with a second-rate general, provided the ordinary rules of the art of war were attended to—no over confidence, but even more caution than against an European foe—it would be simply a case of *veni, vidi, vici!* With such bases of operations, we should be far more than a match for any power that could be arrayed against us.

In the event of any extensive operations in and around Upper Burma, we would probably have, say, three sorts of allies—Karens, Shans, and some other powerful tribe which would be sure to arise if the Shans joined us. In Upper Burma, and to the north and east of the capital, should the King be so insane as to hold out against us, there would be no chance—as there might be in South Africa—of a predatory or guerilla warfare; such is quite foreign to the country. The



enemy would rely, as of yore, chiefly on their stockades. But if, in imitation of other nations, they thought that a predatory war—which would certainly have no foundation in strength—might be more successful in the end,—if the allies, the first to be attacked, only stood close by us, as the great Duke said when fighting the Mahrattas, there would be no chance of the enemy's success, but they would meet with utter discomfiture.

The "Diana."

We must now make a few remarks on the important part the little steamer "Diana" played during the operations. It will have been seen that on the same day as the brilliant action at Kokeen, the navy was not behind the army in gaining distinction, Captain Chads having made a successful attack on the enemy's war-boats. In their capture the "Diana" was chiefly instrumental. Her exploits were so numerous, and she proved so very serviceable, that while the campaigns lasted she never was allowed to leave the Irawady. She reconnoitred the stockaded positions, chased and captured war-boats, greatly advanced the movements of the army to Prome, and carried Mr. John Crawford (the Envoy) as far as Amarapura, some five hundred miles up the stream from Rangoon. With the "Diana" steamer, as Lord Bacon has it, to "choose time" was to "save time." No waiting for wind or tide, the little vessel, like Havelock's saints at Rangoon, when called upon to attack, was always ready.* She seemed, as it were, determined to be successful, for she was in earnest everywhere. Could the immortal James Watt, and the ingenious Patrick Miller of Dalswinton (inventor of practical steam navigation), only have looked on "Diana"

* "Call out Havelock's saints," said Sir Archibald Campbell on one occasion, at Rangoon, when Bandoola had taken him by surprise; "they are never drunk, but always ready!"

during the first Burmese war, they would have been happy men ever after; and, doubtless, while on the Irawady, she elicited admiration and drew forth many a witty remark from our most popular naval writer, who served in the operations—Captain Marryat, the “Sea Fielding.” The novelty of the structure produced a powerful effect on the minds of the natives, who of course could not know the limits of its power; and if, it is thought by some, we had been able to avail ourselves of a flotilla of such steamers the war would have proved much shorter and more decisive, as well as less expensive and bloody. History repeating itself is not uncommon now-a-days: it seems to have been repeated in a fashion at the end of this war; for Alompra, the hunter, began the old Burmese Empire; and “Diana,” the huntress, in the form of a little steamer, seventy-three years after, seemed busy in helping British power to the dawn of a new one!

With regard to the effect produced on the Burmese mind by a steamer—which will also be found touched on hereafter—it will be interesting to the reader, should he, like the present writer, recollect April 1852, to carry his memory back to the magnificent appearance in the Rangoon river of the Queen’s and Company’s war-steamers, aided by other subtle political sailing persuasive instruments, such as the “Fox” frigate and the brig “Serpent,” as they lay opposite Rangoon—all ready to bestow on Great Britain what is now the Liverpool or Glasgow of Chin-India!

It may here be well to remark that rockets were very effective during the first Burmese war; and the writer had more than one opportunity of observing their utility in the second. These “devil-sticks”—as the Burmese style them—can be brought rapidly into action, when there may be a considerable delay in bringing on the guns; the tubes are light, and all can be carried on elephants with great rapidity. In the event of



further operations, a corps of Pegu mounted rifles would be very useful ; but in any case of war, no operations should take place without a tight little force of irregular cavalry like the Nizam's, or those which were employed in Central India. Such troops are always invaluable in jungle warfare, as they can act under all circumstances.

The novelty of introducing a few gatling guns into the equipment of any field force *in esse*, of course, would be highly desirable. We presume that officers who have seen them used at the Cape and elsewhere are well aware of their destructive as well as portable capabilities. The Americans, we understand, have just invented a new gun, with only two barrels, of a most destructive and portable nature, which would suit Chin-Indian warfare admirably. For, after all, to get man or gun quickly into position is a leading principle in the great art of war. Light mountain guns would be useful, especially if we were forced into operations in the Shan country, which is mountainous and woody. They would not be so much required in Upper Burma proper, now that we possess Pegu. When, through the possession of Arakan, we freed our territories on that side from Burmese interference, and our troublesome neighbours were confined within their ancient boundaries by the lofty Anoupectoumiew, it was then remarked :—"The King is not ignorant that, should he again offend, we can march a force across these mountains and appear on the Irawady, from our post at Aeng, in eight or ten days, and probably reach his capital within a month." Now, we can appear at once on the Irawady, which we virtually command ; and with the railway to Prome, and the telegraph, we have everything ready—except, perhaps, a sufficient fleet of small steamers, none of them drawing more than three feet of water—for a grand advance, in the event of a third war !

The topography of the country over which, to the north of Prome, the operations were conducted in the first campaigns, and which might again become the theatre of conflict, is now

pretty well known. Want of good roads*—frequently none at all—plenty of jungle, occasional thick forests, and wooded hills, towns filled with large and small temples, plenty of good (though sometimes hard) water, and occasionally beautiful scenery, enriched by the unrivalled *flora* of Burma, would chiefly attract the attention of the soldier or the traveller.

Pegu, the capital of the ancient Talaing kingdom, in lat. 18° N. and long. $96^{\circ} 30'$ E., about ninety miles from Rangoon, would have to be strengthened in case of an advance. Tonghoo, or Toungoo, is in the same latitude as Prome, $18^{\circ} 45'$ N., long. $96^{\circ} 45'$ E.,† and is a hundred miles to the eastward of that town, from which the advance upon Ava was made in the first war. It is separated from Prome by the Galadzet mountains. The next most important town to Prome was Meaday (now on our frontier), once of considerable magnitude. Then comes Melloon (or Melown), in lat. $19^{\circ} 46'$ N., long. $94^{\circ} 54'$ E.; next Pagam, in lat. 21° N., long. $94^{\circ} 40'$ E., a town famous for its numerous temples; and then Yandaboo, forty-five miles from Ava.

Umrappoor (or Amarapura, "City of the Immortals") is in lat. $21^{\circ} 55'$ N., long. $96^{\circ} 7'$ E., and Ava in lat. $21^{\circ} 45'$ N., long. 96° E. Both of these cities had been the capital of the Burmese Empire at different times, "according to the caprice of the King." The country from Pagam (or Pagahm-mew) to Ava is described as most beautiful:—"Extensive plains of the finest land watered by the Irawady, interspersed with ever-green woods, only sufficiently large to give beauty and variety to the scenery; and the banks of the river so thickly studded with villages, temples, monasteries (*kyoungs*), and other handsome buildings, as to give under one *coup-d'œil* all the charms of a richly varied landscape, with the more sterling beauties of a populous and fertile country." This rapturous description is

* Still, Major Snodgrass considered the roads and country upwards generally more advantageous for military operations than those in the lower provinces.

† Longitude of Prome, $95^{\circ} 5'$ E.



a little exaggerated; but every campaigner *in esse* may be prepared for an interesting and novel tract of country.

The dispositions for the advance were ably conceived. The first division, with head-quarters and commissariat, was encamped eight miles in front of Prome. The second division, under Brigadier-General Cotton, was on the left—ordered to move in communication with Sir James Brisbane, in command of the river flotilla; the first division preceding the march of the second by three days. The route of the first was by Watty-goon and Seindoup. On the Pegu side, Colonel Pepper advanced upon Toungoo, and threatened the capital from that quarter. Mandalay could also be easily threatened from Assam. We learn from high authority:—It has been recently ascertained that the route by which the Burmese effected their last invasion of Assam, crossed the Patkoi mountains by a depression of the range, where its height is only about 2,500 feet above the sea.

CHAPTER V.

THE FINANCES OF INDIA FIFTY YEARS AGO, OR, AFTER THE FIRST BURMESE WAR.

THE following short statement, taken from the old East India Company's accounts, as laid upon the table of the House of Commons in 1829, will show how pecuniary matters stood in India for 1827-8; and it is altogether exclusive of the debts and establishments at home.

INDIAN ESTIMATES FOR 1827-28.

BENGAL.

<i>Charge.</i>		<i>Revenue.</i>	
Expenditure	- £11,894,282	Revenue	- £14,695,998
Interest	- 1,667,034	Commerce	- 79,905
Commerce	- 179,591		
<hr/>		<hr/>	
Total charge	- 13,740,917	Total	- 14,775,903
<hr/>		<hr/>	
Surplus revenue in Bengal	-	£1,034,986.	



MADRAS.

<i>Charge.</i>		<i>Revenue.</i>	
Expenditure	- £5,488,208	Revenue	- £5,373,756
Interest	- 177,078	Commerce	- - 28,459
Commerce	- 21,474		
<hr/>		<hr/>	
Total charge	- 5,686,760	Total	- 5,402,215
<hr/>		<hr/>	
Deficiency at Madras		-	£284,545.

BOMBAY.

<i>Charge.</i>		<i>Revenue.</i>	
Expenditure	- £3,820,013	Revenue	- - £2,635,023
Interest	- 41,013	Commerce	- - 39,375
Commerce	- 54,551		
<hr/>		<hr/>	
Total charge	- 3,915,577	Total	- 2,674,398
<hr/>		<hr/>	
Deficiency at Bombay		-	£1,241,179.

OUT-PORTS.

<i>Charge.</i>		<i>Revenue.</i>
Prince of Wales' Island	£195,418	000
St. Helena	- - 119,511	000
Canton	- - 320,761	000
<hr/>		
Total charge	- £635,690	
<hr/>		

Deficiency at Out-ports - £635,690.



Collecting these, we have—

<i>Revenue.</i>	<i>Expenditure.</i>
Bengal - £14,775,903	£13,740,917
Madras - 5,402,215	5,686,760
Bombay - 2,674,398	3,915,577
Out-ports <i>nil</i>	635,690
<hr/>	
Total abroad 22,852,516	23,978,944
Deduct revenue - -	22,852,516
<hr/>	
Net annual deficiency abroad	1,126,428
<hr/>	

This is the annual deficiency in the revenue of the company abroad, after three years of profound peace, the Burmese war having terminated on the 24th February 1826; and with a debt of very nearly *thirty-five millions sterling*, bearing an annual interest of more than five per cent. upon the average.*

When Lord Hastings left India in January 1823, the Treasury was full, and the income exceeded the expenditure by nearly two crores of rupees a year (two millions sterling). It may here also be of interest to remark that, after 1818, Scindiah's government was so well administered and his finances had so improved, that, in 1827 (a year after the Burmese war, and after the capture of Bhurtpore), he was able to lend half a million sterling to the Company!

This was a noble and liberal action on the part of a native prince; and we may question if any of our feudatories of the present day would do likewise, even if we were so impolitic as to ask their assistance in either money or men.

Such an act of Scindiah becomes the more remarkable when it is considered that he and Holkar were once the most deadly

* See Mudie's "Picture of India (1832)," vol. ii. p. 207.



foes to the British name; and Sir John Malcolm said he would never forget the loss of empire sustained through Britain. Unlike the Rajah of Burdwan, Scindiah knew we were good and sure paymasters—though, perhaps, rather slow at getting out of debt!—and, like many other native princes, he seemed to have studied Lord Bacon, who, writing on usury, declares that “no man will lend his monies far off, nor put them into unknown hands.”

So long as there must be borrowing or lending among men, there must be, with a less severe form of usury, the same financial processes among states—the difference being, in the latter case, that the money is always supposed to be lent for some good or useful purpose. On this grand hypothesis neither England nor India will ever be out of *debt*.* In the foregoing statement we read of an Indian debt of nearly *thirty-five millions sterling*, which, if there had been no Burmese war, or other important military operations, we may suppose would not have exceeded twenty millions, or, deducting the Burmese war only (twelve), twenty-three millions.

What wars did formerly in India, public works and their supervision have done in more recent times. In reading about the vast machinery of the latter, however, the mind of the state financier is solaced by coming on such a remark as “*Productive Public Works*.” Why should we not likewise be satisfied with the fact that some wars are *productive* also? Paley, one of the shrewdest writers that ever lived, declares the *justifying* causes of war to be “deliberate invasions of right, and the necessity of maintaining such a balance of power amongst neighbouring nations as that no single state, or confederacy of states, be strong enough to overwhelm the rest.” In the case of the first Burmese war the just objects were precaution,

* The amount of debt of the Government of India, in India and in England, at the close of 1878, was nearly one hundred and thirty-five millions sterling.

OUR BURMESE WARS.

defence, and reparation. The twelve millions were spent in saving Bengal from invasion and constant annoyance, and in preventing the Governor-General from being taken in "golden fetters" to Ava. The seeds of future productiveness for our benefit were sown in Chin-India—which we trust hereafter to make apparent—and the way was paved for the second Burmese war, which, at a cost of less than a fourth of the first, has long been *un grand fait accompli*, and the cause and principal operations of which we shall now—when likely soon to be forced into a *third*—have the honour of presenting, for the second time, to our courteous and indulgent readers.

In the following chapters it has been thought advisable to preserve many of the details recorded in the original narratives, as not a few officers and others who were engaged in the operations are yet alive, and may feel pleased to look back upon them, even if not among the few "green spots in memory's waste." As acute British critics have long been well inclined to consider details the very life and soul of a social narrative—the lights and shades which give animation to the picture—so they may consider them of some importance in a military record, as furnishing materials, and, if not thus rendering a service to society, at least forming a ready accessory or guide for the future historian.



PART II.

THE SECOND BURMESE WAR.

CHAPTER I.

THE BURMESE PROVOKE A SECOND WAR.

THE treaty of Yandaboo guaranteed the security of our merchants and of our commerce. There was to be no oppression of British subjects. The merchants trading at Rangoon were to be liable to no inordinate exactions. On the whole, it seemed as if civilisation had taken a stride, and from intercourse with our countrymen, that the empire founded by Alompra was in a fair way to gain reason and wisdom. But a dark cloud soon gathered on the political horizon which, twenty-six years after the treaty was signed, was to destroy every hope of friendship between us, and force the Indian Government, after unexampled long-suffering and patience, to put down "barbarian insolence" by force of arms. At first, the King agreed to receive a representative at Ava; two of our Residents were, however, successively treated with every indignity, and the last was planted



on an island in the Irawady without provisions, till the river rose and threatened to swamp him and his suite. We therefore withdrew the representative altogether, rather than irritate the barbarous court.

Latterly, our merchants at Rangoon, contrary to the stipulations of the treaty, were subjected to a series of oppressions and exactions, which, if unredressed, must have obliged us to quit the port. The merchants now applied for the interposition of the Government of India, by whom the treaty was made.

It is unnecessary to enter into a detail of all the insults heaped upon us by the Burmese. Suffice it to mention one case of injustice and oppression, that of a British captain of a vessel, who, on the false representation of a Burmese pilot, was imprisoned, placed by the Governor of Rangoon in the stocks, and fined nine hundred rupees. This outrage brought forth the sympathy of the good people at Maulmain, who raised a subscription equal to the fine to release the merchant from his unpleasant situation.

To satisfy our oppressed merchants, the Most Noble the Governor-General, remote at the time from Calcutta, demanded the removal of the tyrannical Governor, and the payment of the sum of nine hundred pounds sterling, "the price," as was humorously remarked, "of four or five of the golden spittoons in the palace of Ava." The admission of a Resident or agent at Rangoon, or Ava, was also required. The small sum of money was considered necessary as compensation for losses sustained by Messrs. Lewis and Shepperd, the former of whom had also been imprisoned and fined, though not placed in the Burmese stocks. The pacific disposition manifested by the Court of Ava, on the receipt of the Governor-General's despatch, induced Commodore Lambert, of the Royal Navy, with his squadron, who had been some time previously deputed to Rangoon, to demand reparation for the extortions practised upon British subjects, contrary to the treaty of Yandaboo. On the 1st of January 1852, the King's reply to the Governor-General



was delivered; and, with consummate assurance, the Golden Foot professed an anxious desire "to comply with the demands which had been made, and to maintain the relations of peace."

On the morning of the 4th, the new Governor arrived at Rangoon from Ava, "empowered by the King to settle the claims of the Indian Government." He came in regal pomp, attended by a large retinue, consisting of an armament of barges and war-boats. The latter, decorated with elaborate carving and gilding, are said to have contained about three thousand followers. Altogether, during his stately march, the Governor was accompanied by nearly four thousand men. He had levied the severest exactions on all the towns as he passed, and had in his train ten boats laden with powder.

The ex-Governor of Rangoon, who had for some days been occupying a small dwelling near Government House, paid his respects to the Viceroy on his arrival, and was repeatedly closeted with him. It was at first supposed that he would be subjected to a trial—at least an investigation—in the presence of the Viceroy, and a great number of the foreigners had drawn up statements of their grievances. But on the 5th, it was ascertained that he was in high favour with his Excellency, and, on the 6th of January, he departed in triumph to Ava, with all his family and a large retinue, and all the plunder he had accumulated, in fifty boats. A clever trick, truly, in a Governor, whose will for so long a time had been law five hundred miles from the capital!

The day after arrival, the Governor sent an order to Mr. Birrell, a merchant, to take down a flag-staff he had erected, and to remove a gun he had placed in position on his landing-place. Mr. Birrell very properly replied, that the flag-staff having been placed there by the consent of the Commodore, either to signal him in case of their being attacked, or to establish a communication between the Europeans on shore and the ships of war, he could not alter the arrangement without the Commodore's permission. The Governor became



enraged at this reply, and immediately ordered all communication with the shipping to be stopped. Commodore Lambert, unwilling to give the Burmese any cause of offence, directed the flag-staff to be removed. But the prohibition of all intercourse with our ships, had already caused the flight of unfortunate carpenters, coolies, and workmen of every description.

Mr. Birrell, on the removal of the flag-staff and gun, had been directed to inform the Governor that the Commodore had done so on the assurance that their property and persons were safe under his government. Trade was then resumed.

On the evening of this day, Mr. Edwards, the interpreter, visited the Governor of Dalla—a picturesque town, situated opposite Rangoon—and inquired if the promised Governor had *really* arrived. Doubt appears to have arisen on this point among our functionaries, from the fact of so many hours having elapsed without any Viceroy taking notice of the Commodore, either by letter of friendship or simply by the announcement of arrival. The old Governor answered in the affirmative, and wondered at the question “when he must have seen, by the great state and display on the river, that the Governor had arrived.”

On the morning of the 6th, Mr. Edwards was sent to inquire the cause of the Viceroy's silence, and also to ascertain if it would be convenient for the Governor to receive a deputation, or any public communication. At the door of the mansion, dignified with the appellation of a palace, Mr. Edwards was stopped by a Burmese menial, who, according to one statement, “drawing his sword, desired him to crouch to the ground, on nearing the presence of his Governor.” Mr. Edwards sent word by another servant, that he was waiting with a message from the Commodore. He was then admitted. On the Interpreter's complaining of the ill-treatment received at the door, the culprit was ordered into the presence: he was then, we were



told, "punished, and dragged out of the room by the hair of his head."

Orders were also issued, that no one was to be stopped who had business with the Governor from the Commodore.

The Viceroy's bearing was courteous. He informed Mr. Edwards that he would at all times be happy to hear from the Commodore, or to see him. In this there was good behaviour on the part of the Viceroy; but, according to another statement, the Governor "spoke in a tone of derision which created no small merriment among the officers around him." Not long after this curious interview, a deputation started to wait on the Viceroy.

It consisted of Captain Fishbourne, of H.M.S. "Hermes," Captain Latter, the chief Interpreter, and some other officers.* And now commenced Burmese incivility to the fullest extent, notwithstanding the fact that the Commodore had received every deputation from shore with the greatest courtesy. On their arrival at Government House, the members were not admitted to the Viceroy's presence. Some of the Burmese officers had thought them mad in attempting what was considered such audacity towards their new Governor. Our officers, therefore, had been obliged to force their way, through a crowd of insolent barbarians, to the neighbourhood of the hall of audience. They were prevented from going upstairs, till the Viceroy's permission had been obtained. After some minutes, Captain Latter was informed that his Excellency was asleep, and could not be disturbed. At this very time of glorious repose, the wily Governor had telegraphed for Mr. Edwards to come into the presence, which the deputation, of course, would not allow him to do. Captain Latter urged the necessity of seeing the Viceroy, before their departure; but

* The deputation likewise included Mr. Sonthey, the Commodore's secretary.

“every remonstrance on his part, with the most distinguished of the officers present, proved unavailing.” The members of the deputation returned to the Commodore, reporting what had taken place and the great insult to which they had been subjected.

According to the established law of nations, on a demand for justice being refused, reprisals follow of right. The property of any Burmese subjects “might have been lawfully seized, but it was deemed much better to take what was notoriously the King’s than to distress individuals who might never have been compensated by their own Government, and who would probably have been punished for complaining.” Certainly, the whole affair was left to the Commodore’s discretion, and it is difficult to see how any act of his could have been more natural or proper than that of seizing the King’s ship, then lying in the harbour; this was done. In the afternoon of the day on which the deputation was insulted, a message was sent from the flag-ship, requesting all British merchants and residents at Rangoon to repair on board the frigate. Those who claimed British protection, were but too glad to find it in this instance. The Commodore stated to them what he had done, how he had failed to maintain pacific relations, and how the British Government and Flag had been grossly insulted, “and that the insult was manifestly intentional, and not accidental.” All were ordered to embark that evening, as the town was to be placed under blockade. The “Proserpine” steamer would be sent to cover their embarkation. The grand flight is thus graphically described, and is evidently from the pen of an eyewitness:—“The ‘Proserpine’ steamer ran close into the main wharf, and eight or ten of the boats from the frigate and steamers came to the shore to protect and receive the fugitives. Meanwhile the streets were filled with armed Burmese, and Burmese officers were moving to and fro on horseback, threatening all who gave assistance to the foreigners; in consequence of which, not a coolie could be procured. All classes of foreigners—Moguls, Mussulmans, Armenians, Portuguese,



and English—were seen crowding down to the river with boxes and bundles, and whatever they could carry, but they were obliged, generally, to abandon all the property they possessed. Mr. Kincaid, the American missionary, left his library, consisting of more than a thousand volumes, the collection of twenty years, behind him to be destroyed, too happy, however, to find his wife and children safe under the British flag.” “By eight o’clock,” says one authority, “all the British subjects had embarked, and by midnight the whole of the ships were removed by the steamers from off the town; the men-of-war all moved, and the King of Burma’s ship taken with the fleet some five miles down the river.” On the 7th, all ships were ordered to prepare for their departure out of the Rangoon waters, to be conveyed by the men-of-war out of the river.

On the 8th, the H. C.’s steamer “Proserpine” left for Maulmain with upwards of two hundred refugees—nearly four hundred, with their families—on board. During these important transactions, we are informed that Burmese officers came repeatedly to the flag-ship “to offer excuses for the rudeness of the Viceroy, but none of them were accredited. The Commodore insisted that the Viceroy should himself apologise for the insult offered to the British flag, and engaged in that case to return and forget the past.” At length it seemed that there was one exception to the intolerable arrogance and insolence of the Burmese officials, in the person of the old Governor of Dalla, who came on board the “Fox,” and entreated the Commodore “to give him time to see the Viceroy, and persuade him to apologise.” Out of regard to the venerable age of the Governor, he was allowed till the evening to try his best at this work of peace. But his Highness of Rangoon had come from Ava and Prome with no such views. The Lord of the White Elephant would again try conclusions with us in the field. He had forgotten the campaigns of 1824-26, and did not deem favourably of our prowess from comparatively recent victories over the Chinese only—a nation over which



the kingdom of Ava had been triumphant many centuries ago.

While the old Governor of Dalla was supposed to be absent on his mission, a written document arrived from the Viceroy, stating that, "if the Commodore attempted to pass the two stockades which had been erected down the river, he would be fired upon." The Commodore replied that if even a pistol were fired, he would level the stockades with the ground. And with this mutual determination may be said to have commenced the second Burmese war !

In the fulfilment of his plans, the Commodore now issued the following

"NOTIFICATION.

"In virtue of authority from the Most Noble the Governor-General of British India, I do hereby declare the rivers of Rangoon, the Bassein and the Salween above Moulmein, to be in a state of blockade; and with the view to the strict enforcement thereof, a competent force will be stationed in or near the entrance of the said rivers immediately.

"Neutral vessels lying in either of the blockaded rivers will be permitted to retire within twenty days from the commencement of the blockade.

"Given under my hand, on board Her Britannic Majesty's frigate 'Fox,' off the town of Rangoon, the 6th of January 1852.

(Signed) "GEORGE ROBERT LAMBERT,
"Commodore in Her Britannic
"Majesty's Navy.

"By Command of the Commodore.

(Signed) "JAMES LEWTHER SOUTHEY,
"Secretary."



Before the departure of the "Fox," large war-boats were observed proceeding from Rangoon to rendezvous at the stockades, at which, it was said, five thousand men were congregated.*

It was soon reported in Maulmain and Calcutta, that, even at this early period, twelve thousand men were ready at Rangoon to do battle with us: in a few weeks there would be at least thirty thousand.

On the 9th of January, the day after the "Proserpine" left, and the threatening letter had been written to the Commodore, the "Hermes" steamer towed the "Fox" down to off the upper stockade. The "Hermes" then returned to bring on the King's ship to keep the frigate company. The merchantmen, at the same time, prepared to pass down the river. It was early in the morning when these decisive movements commenced. The sun seemed not to shine with its usual splendour. It was evident that some great change had taken place in our relations with Burma, and that the British lion had been roused from his forbearance.

At length, the "Hermes" came in sight, rounding the point with the Burmese prize-vessel in tow. As she passed the stockade, guns in rapid succession were opened on the vessels of war; at the same time, volleys of musketry were discharged upon them. The "Fox" immediately returned the enemy's fire by a terrific broadside; she likewise thundered forth against the war-boats which had ventured into the river.

The "Hermes" then came up, and poured forth her shot and shell into the line of stockade. The "Phlegethon" steamer, likewise, did vast destruction to the works. For nearly two hours were our vessels employed in spreading ruin and dismay around. During the conflict, a large gun-boat, having on board a gun of considerable calibre, and upwards of

* The Burmese were jealous of these river defences; for it was a popular belief among them, that if they were destroyed, the temple of Gautama, who was supposed to keep a watchful eye over them, would be lost.

OUR BURMESE WARS.

sixty armed men, was sunk by a broadside, when nearly all on board perished. Altogether, about three hundred of the enemy were killed, and about the same number wounded, in this first encounter with the Burmese. As the vessels proceeded down to the next stockade, they were again fired on, but only by musketry.

It was remarked, at the conclusion of these operations, that the enemy "probably had no intention of serious resistance, but felt themselves obliged to make some show of defence, when they saw the King's property taken off, as the heads of the leading men were at stake." And, again, wrote a reliable authority :—

"The Governor did not state that the Commodore would not be permitted to pass the stockades with the King's ship; but that he would be fired on if he attempted to remove any British property. There is, therefore, every reason to believe, that if the royal vessel had not been touched, the stockades would equally have opened a fire on our vessels as they passed down the river."

After the Commodore's engagement with the stockades, he departed for Calcutta in the "Hermes," to report progress, and receive additional instructions. The "Proserpine," from Maulmain, with despatches for Government, and intelligence of the insult to the deputation, the "flight," and the blockade, had previously reached Calcutta.

Commodore Lambert did not, as was expected, find the Governor-General at Calcutta; but, on the 18th of January, an Extraordinary Council was held, after which a despatch was sent off to Lord Dalhousie; and the 18th Royal Irish were ordered to hold themselves in readiness for embarkation. It was afterwards decided to send down at once to Maulmain a wing of the regiment, and a company of artillery, in all about five hundred men, for the protection of that important post in the Tenasserim Provinces. The Commodore, in the "Hermes," reached the Rangoon river about the 27th, without, on account



of the absence of the Governor-General, any positive instructions.

The Governor-General arrived at Calcutta on the night of the 29th of January; and, on the following day, as was to be expected, Burmese affairs formed the absorbing business of the Council. It was stated that his Lordship gave his entire approbation to the proceedings of Commodore Lambert. A report reached Calcutta, on the 30th ult., of the Burmese having threatened an attack on the province of Arakan. And now despatch really became the order of the day. The "Precursor," a magnificent steam-vessel, belonging to the P. O. S. Navigation Company, with the 67th N. I., and half a company of Native Artillery on board, departed immediately from Calcutta for Arakan. The vessel was coaled, victualled, and made ready for sea, in eight-and-forty hours after obtaining the contract for transporting the troops! "When the huge 'Precursor' made her appearance at Kyook Phyoo," writes an officer, "all the native boats fled, frightened at her size." The 80th—Queen's regiment—reached Fort William from Dinapore on the 30th of January; and it was expected the remaining wing of the 18th Royal Irish would be immediately despatched to Maulmain or Arakan. This last movement, fortunately, never took place. The threatened province remained in a state of profound tranquillity. An officer had been deputed to the Aeng Pass, in the heart of the Zama mountains, which separate Arakan from the basin of the Irawady; and he saw trade going on as briskly as ever. Many Burmese and Shan* (Siamese) merchants were passing and re-passing with their

* *Shyan* is a Burman name, and *Low*, or *Lao*, the Chinese, which is adopted by the Portuguese. They call themselves *Tay* (pronounced *Tie*). They seem to be the parent-stock of both Assamese and Siamese.—*Assam*, *Siam*, and *Shyan* or *Shan* are but different forms of the same word. The *Southern Shyans*, we read, bordering on Siam and Camboja, were conquered in 1829 by the Siamese, and their king carried in chains to Bankok.

cattle, laden with merchandise, as though nothing had happened, or was likely to happen. But, notwithstanding the undisturbed state of the upper part of the valley of the Irawady, the despatch of some troops to Arakan was "a wise measure at such a crisis."

We return to the gallant Commodore. A steamer was detained at Calcutta, immediately on his departure for Rangoon, to bring an answer to the despatch sent off by express to the Governor-General. The "Fire Queen" arrived off Rangoon river at the end of January. Soon after arrival, she anchored ahead of the "Fox," and "towed her up off the Hastings Sand, which is about four or five miles below Rangoon." On proceeding up the river, or passing the first stockade—some twelve or fifteen miles from the entrance—the steamer and frigate were both fired upon, by which the "Fox" lost a man. The frigate returned the fire with shot and shell. The "Tenasserim," while passing up the river the following day, was also fired upon, and the "Fire Queen" in passing down.* The "Fire Queen" had brought a despatch to the Commodore, also a letter to "His High Mightiness" on shore, from the Governor-General. The "Fox," on arriving off Rangoon, sent a boat in charge of a lieutenant, accompanied by Captain Latter, with a flag of truce, to convey letters from the Governor-General and the Commodore to the Viceroy.

A written apology, we believe, was required by Lord Dalhousie from the Rangoon governor to himself, for the insult offered to the deputation. And with this exception no fresh demands were made. The next day a reply was returned to the Commodore, and one forwarded for the Governor-General by the hands of a dirty non-official, who might have passed for a coolie or a cow-herd, in a canoe befitting his appearance. This

* The "Fire Queen" took the intelligence to Calcutta, arriving on the 9th of February.



was probably intended as a mark of disrespect by the authorities to the straightforward negotiator on board the "Fox." To avoid the Commodore as much as possible, letters were now sent from the Viceroy to the Governor-General *via* Martaban to Maulmain, to be forwarded by the Commissioner of the Tenasserim Provinces. One of these despatches is said to have been forwarded with due civility, the messenger asking permission of the blockading vessel to pass over.

Then came a letter, about the 7th of February, from the King of Ava, which arrived at Maulmain in due state. The Martaban officials wished the Commissioner, and not the Commodore, to settle the whole affair.* Colonel Bogle and Commodore Lambert were, in their opinion, personages as different in relative importance and character as Gautama and Siva. One was all thunder and lightning, the other a beautiful example of calm and dignified repose. But this Burmese interpretation of the character of the gallant sailor, or that of his frigate, did not lessen the power of a saying, which every sharp school-boy can translate—*Ingenium in numerato habe.*

H. M.'s brig "Serpent," some days before the arrival of the King of Ava's letter at Maulmain, destroyed three small stockades at the entrance of Negrais river, off which she was stationed. The Burmese fired upon her, in fulfilment of repeated threats. Captain Luard very humanely abstained from returning the fire, on account of the number of harmless villagers about; he simply landed his men, and burned the

* Towards the middle of February, the H. C.'s steamer "Phlogethon" arrived in Calcutta. The news ran thus:—His Majesty was said to write peacefully. He professed to have been deceived by the authorities at Rangoon; of course, the usual plea—it was his servants, not himself, who were insolent; and desired, hereafter, to be communicated with through Major Bogle, the Commissioner, and not through the Commodore. The time for the intervention of the civil power was past. It was not said that his Majesty professed "any desire to come into the terms proposed as indispensable before amicable relations could be resumed."



works of the enemy. The Burmese seemed determined to provoke a war.

At length, on the 10th or 12th of February, it was decided by the Indian Government to send an expedition to Burma. It was conjectured that, if actual hostilities should not ultimately become necessary, the appearance of an armament might probably excite the apprehensions of the Burmese, and induce them to yield to the just demands of the British.*

* See "Rangoon," Appendix No. I. Minute by the Governor-General of India (Extract).



CHAPTER II.

FROM MADEAS TO RANGOON.

By the middle of February 1852, orders were received at St. Thomas's Mount* for three European companies of Artillery to hold themselves in readiness for field-service in Burma. Instructions were also received by the Madras Government, to hold in readiness "for immediate embarkation for Rangoon, if necessary," H. M.'s 51st Regiment, K. O. L. I., two regiments of Native Infantry, and one Engineer officer. Bengal was to furnish a similar force, and an officer of rank was to command the whole. A company of Artillery from that Presidency, with Major Reid and Lieutenant Voyle, also a wing of H. M.'s 18th Royal Irish, had left Fort William about a month before, in the Hon. Company's steamers "Tenasserim" and "Proserpine," to reinforce Maulmain. In the papers it was stated that a spirit of life and activity reigned among the military establishments in Calcutta. Of course in Madras, too, it was to be all double work—work for the prospect of "glorious war" being a

* Head-quarters of the Madras Artillery, about eight miles from Madras.

capital sauce to exertion. About the 21st of February, orders were received in Bombay, from the Governor-General, for all the war-steamers that could be spared to be sent to Rangoon without a moment's delay, ready for immediate action. The "Feroze" was to be at once converted into a frigate, and placed under the command of Captain Lynch, as Commodore of the Indian Navy Squadron. The "Moozuffer," "Zenobia," "Sesostris," and "Medusa," were the other vessels appointed; the "Berenice" to act as troop and store ship. A month hence there would, in all likelihood, be a fleet of at least eight large and five second-class war-steamers assembled in the Burmese waters; one of the largest collections of this fearfully formidable class of ships that had ever been brought together for purposes of actual hostility. The "Feroze" and "Moozuffer" were each vessels of 500 horse-power and 1,500 tons, the "Sesostris" of 300 horse-power and 1,200 tons, all armed with guns of eight-inch calibre, throwing hollow shot and shells to the distance of a couple of miles. Expedition in marine matters was never practised with greater success than in the preparation of these Bombay war-steamers for service. In a few days everything was ready, reflecting the highest credit on Commodore Lushington, and the officers of the Indian Navy. The squadron was ordered round to Madras for the conveyance of the troops to Rangoon. The steamers were expected to arrive early in March.

The bustle at the Mount was exciting. "They won't go after all!" said some. "There will be tough work!" said others. But even those who had a fancy that the troops would "never cross the surf," were very busy withal. News at length arrived that the Burmese had one hundred guns at and about Rangoon. It was reported that the old town of Rangoon, founded by Alompra, had been burned by order of the Governor, and that the new one was strongly fortified. The new town was founded by Tharawadi not many years before, and a fort built about one mile and a half inland from the old



site. From Calcutta information was received that all the houses in Rangoon were razed to the ground, and the inhabitants removed to the new town; and that this position was being doubly stockaded with the wooden materials from the houses destroyed at the old.

Early in March the Madras Artillery officers of the expedition to Rangoon dined with Colonel St. Maur, and the officers of H. M.'s 51st K. O. L. I., meeting those of the 35th and 9th Madras Native Infantry. It was a grand and social entertainment. The Artillery returned the compliment paid us by H. M.'s 51st next evening.

These social gatherings, before proceeding on service, are unquestionably conducive to the establishment of mutual good feeling in the army. They tend to keep that friendship, which should ever exist amongst soldiers, in good repair at a critical time.

Regarding the curiosity excited among the Burmese by firing off a 68-pounder shot into one of their stockades, the following absurd but characteristic "story" was brought to Madras from Rangoon. The shot was taken before the Governor by an official. The latter functionary, who had weighed it, declared its weight to be equal to sixty-eight pounds. The Governor was sceptical; but at length, having fully satisfied himself as to the weight, and having commended rather than punished the official for his information, to crown his surprise, and probably show his master, from the demon just projected by a ship's gun, what a dreadful enemy he had to deal with in the British, he ordered the huge shot to be immediately forwarded to the King of Ava!

On the 7th of March the squadron of war-steamers of the Indian Navy, with the exception of the "Zenobia" and "Medusa," arrived in the Madras roads.

From Calcutta we learned that, in the Governor-General's reply to the King of Ava's letter, there was a demand for the expenses of the war to the extent of ten lakhs of rupees

(£100,000) "to be paid within a limited period, and to be doubled if not immediately made good." Preparations for war were uninterrupted.

The "Calcutta Gazette," of the 25th of February, had the following notification regarding Burma, "which showed that the Governor-General was determined to enforce his demand for satisfaction from the Golden Foot"—

"The following additional notification of blockade issued by Commodore G. R. Lambert, under authority from the Government of India, is published for general information.

"The Barragu river, and other outlets of the Irawady, are included in the blockade declared by me on the 6th instant.

"Given under my hand, on board her Britannic Majesty's steam-sloop "Hermes," in the Bassein river, on the 25th of January 1852.

(Signed)

"G. R. LAMBERT,
"Commander in her Britannic
"Majesty's Navy.

"By order of the M. N. the Governor-
"General of India in Council."

"They insist on war; war they shall have with a vengeance." The papers quoted this well-known remark, made by the Governor-General, in his speech at Barrackpore, before the triumphs of the second Sikh or Punjab war, asserting that war with Burma, on the most extensive scale, had been resolved on. They were likewise informed, in the north-west, that a requisition for ten thousand men, including two Queen's regiments, had reached Madras. It is recorded in history that Madras sepoys were the first, if not the last, among our native troops, to cross bayonets with French infantry; they surely never could forget that. What would Bernadotte, the late King of Sweden, have thought had he read these words? "Native troops cross bayonets with French infantry?" he might have muttered, while one of the scenes of a long eventful life rushed



to his memory. He was once a plain *sergeant*, serving in the Deccan, and first distinguished himself at Cuddalore! Had the Government of France possessed the sagacity of the English East India Company, Bernadotte might have shared in the foundation of an Eastern empire.*

"Look there, sir! Do you know who that is at the end of the room?" said a late Governor of Pondicherry to the writer of this Narrative. A marble bust of Dupleix adorned the audience-chamber at Government House. "There, sir, is the man who gave Clive the idea of conquering and keeping this country by its own inhabitants! The East India Company assisted Clive, and cherished the idea. But Dupleix, for this, and many other of his mighty schemes, was thought a madman by the French; and thus the empire *we* should have founded and preserved was lost!" [And, strange revolution in history, nearly lost again (for a time, at least), by *our* placing too much reliance in the majority of those very "inhabitants" in 1857!]

Towards the end of March the news was various and interesting. Some Burmese had arrived in Calcutta, and reported that twenty thousand men were ready to stand against us. From Rangoon to Ava, the enemy were said to be determined to dispute every inch of the way. April is the hottest month in the year in Burma, the thermometer ranging from 90° to 95°; and in that month we were to be employed! But that was better than delay until after the rains, in October. When war is to be, with such resources as ours, "*'Twere well it were done quickly.*"

Major Oakes, Director of the Madras Artillery Depôt of

* Little thought the writer, at the time of making the above remark, that, in 1861, he would be in the presence of King Charles XV. of Sweden, grandson of Bernadotte, in the Palace of Stockholm, answering a question or two about Burma.

Instruction, and Major Montgomery, of the Mysore Commission, were to command two of the three artillery companies going on service. The former had long been desirous of distinguishing himself in the field; while report spoke highly of the intelligence and activity of the latter. Practical hints on the coming war were freely given to the men.

At Dum Dum,* a small stockade had been erected, which was to be immediately blown up, for practice. The men of H. M.'s 80th Regiment, just arrived from Dinapore, had performed the mimic task of storming the Burmese stockades, which they practised in the cunette of Fort William, crossing the ditch, and placing their bamboo scaling-ladders against the angle of the bastion opposite Calcutta.

The "Zenobia" and "Medusa" were at length added to the squadron in the Madras roads; and we now expected to start in a few days for Rangoon.

Orders were received for immediate embarkation.

Colonel Elliott, K.H., of H. M.'s 51st Light Infantry, was to command the Madras Brigade.†

At two o'clock, on the morning of the 31st of March, the artillery set out from St. Thomas's Mount for the beach. The band accompanied the force and played several appropriate airs. The march was distinguished by the usual shouting, cheering, and singing, in which European soldiers love to indulge on departure from an old station. The embarkation presented a grand and exciting scene—such as a man may only witness once in his life. It was a splendid morning, which, added to the refreshing appearance of the blue waters, and the numerous vessels afloat, was calculated to fill the adventurer with life, and hope, and joy. The Madras shore at any time is impressive and picturesque, from the roar of the wild and

* Head-quarters of the Bengal Artillery, near Calcutta (now removed to Meerut).

† For Formation of, see "Rangoon," Appendix No. III.



dashing surf, the clear blue sky, the long line of elegant buildings fringing the beach, and then the incessant going to and fro of *massulah* boats and *catamarans* communicating with ships in the roads. But now the whole line of beach was covered with a vast multitude of living creatures, men, women, and children. Hundreds of boats were in readiness to be filled, and all the Madras troops were to embark as nearly as possible at the same time. Old bullock bandies came creaking along, very late, wending their way to the boats. Knapsacks, under the superintendence of Europeans and Jack Sepoy, were thrown into the uncouth machines, so admirably adapted for crossing the surf. In spite of the excellent arrangements made by the Quartermaster-General, and the presence of many distinguished officers, to maintain anything like order was absolutely impossible. The Madras surf alone is enough to put order out of countenance. There were parting scenes with relatives, of the most tender nature. Among many pictures, it was painful to notice the anxious countenance of the Hindu-British wife, who, perhaps, was never to see her husband more: and then, in case of misfortune, *who* would father the children in their journey through life? The grief of some relatives was excessive; for, certainly, of those now departing to encounter "moving accident by flood and field," many would not be spared to return to the familiar shore on which they had just taken such an affectionate farewell!

A total of four thousand four hundred, officers, soldiers, and followers, embarked on board the several vessels of the fleet, which consisted of six steamers of the Indian Navy, and four transports.

By the 7th of April we expected to reach the mouth of the Rangoon river, if we did not put in to Amherst for water. At break of day it was discovered that the "*Feroze*," leading the first division, was out of sight. The Commodore had been too fast for us; but after a short time, the squadron reunited. It was in two divisions: the "*Feroze*," "*Moozuffer*," "*Bere-*



nice," and "Medusa,"* forming the first, the "Sesostris" and "Zenobia" the second.

We saw land at 1 P.M., and anchored at the mouth of the Rangoon river about half-past three. The coast is a picturesque line of territory, with palmyras, mangroves, and many large trees, nobly extending to the rear. Passing Elephant Point, so styled from two famous trees growing there in the form of an elephant, a conical red pagoda, falling to ruins, appeared rising from the jungle. Gautama certainly showed some wisdom in selecting such a position for a shrine, as if he had once showered down commercial prosperity on the empire, and placed a sentinel over it at the mouth of one of his rivers, which prosperity, on account of the misconduct of his devotees, was, like the small temple, hastening to a fall.

At the mouth of the river we discovered that the Admiral and General had proceeded with H. M.'s war-steamers, "Hermes," "Rattler," "Salamander," and the Hon. Company's steamer "Proserpine," to attack Martaban, and bring on troops to the chief scene of action.

On the 28th of March, Admiral Austen, commanding in the Eastern seas, had left Penang in the screw steamer "Rattler." He arrived off the mouth of the Rangoon river on the first of April. On the 2nd the Bengal division, in four steamers, the "Hermes," "Tenasserim," "Enterprise," "Fire Queen," and four transports, arrived, under General Godwin, who, with his staff, had left Calcutta on the 25th of March.

Martaban.

On the 3rd of April, the General and Admiral left for Maulmain, nearly opposite which is Martaban, and reached the

* This useful little iron steamer had been towed by the "Berenice" since the 2nd inst. Slow at sea; but, from her drawing not more than three or four feet of water, invaluable in Burma.



capital of the Tenasserim Provinces* the next day at noon. Martaban is situated on the right or north bank of the Salween river. The town to be attacked had been considered by the Burmese a position of high importance. And there could be no doubt that it was so. In a military point of view, it is capable of making a very formidable defence. On the river appears the usual array of houses ; then, as you recede, trees extending to a hill, at the top of which is a pagoda ; then other hills stretching further away, adding dignity and grandeur to the landscape.

On the 5th of April the war-steamers appeared in front of the town, and immediately opened fire against the defences. A storming party was then formed, headed by Colonel Reynolds, H. M.'s 18th Regiment. They attacked the chief position under a heavy fire of guns and musketry, and in a few seconds Martaban fell. A company of Bengal Artillery did not come into action, and thus, with few troops engaged,† and a loss of life on our side hardly worth mentioning, the occupation of an important position formed a brilliant commencement to the campaign. Martaban is distant from Rangoon about seventy miles. On the afternoon of the 8th, the Admiral and General were again at the mouth of the Rangoon river. We were all on the tip-toe of expectation ; at length the " Rattler " came steaming in gloriously, showing off her screw power to great advantage.

Then came the " Hermes." The right wings of H. M.'s 18th and 80th Regiments, also a company of Bengal Artillery, and two of Madras Sappers,‡ were the troops brought from Maulmain by the General. Loud cheering greeted the arrival of the two steamers. The distinguished 18th Royal Irish were

* i.e. Maulmain.

† Only a wing of the Royal Irish.

‡ The Sappers under Lieutenant Ford, who commanded them at Martaban.

now "all present." While the right wing passed along in the steamer to take up position, the band struck up the favourite air of "St. Patrick's Day"; then came the "British Bayoneteers"; this music on the waters had a fine effect, producing that indescribable military enthusiasm which even the most peaceful Briton must feel at times!

Towards sunset the "Berenice," preceded by the "Feroze," started for about ten miles up the river to procure water. The luxuriant mangrove down to the water's edge was exceedingly striking. Occasionally you might see a picture of rare beauty: a small creek, like a sheet of glass, sleeping among the foliage.

On arrival, we found H. M.'s brig "Serpent," and other ships, at anchor. A party of Europeans were at Bassein Creek for the protection of those who went to fetch water. All night we were watering, watering; and very muddy and brackish stuff the water was, nearly as bad as what the tired British troops drank before fighting the battle of Múdkí in the first Sikh war.

On the 9th, the "Berenice" (with the Madras Artillery) towed the "Juliana," containing the Bengal Commissariat establishment, to Rangoon. She had a motley set on board. Some with handsome solemn faces; some with broad, grinning mouths, and every variety of *pugaree**; some very dirty, some very clean; dirty and clean, busy and idle, all packed together in a little world. As the steamer approached to take her in tow, a difficult business commenced. The hawsers would go wrong; for a time it was "confusion worse confounded"; but time, which sets nearly everything right, at last set the "Berenice" with the "Juliana" on their way rejoicing. About three in the afternoon we were rapidly advancing to a new position, some three or four miles from Rangoon. Proceeding

* Turband.



up the river, two stockades in ruins were visible. These had been destroyed by the men-of-war; the smoke, rising from some huge piles of wood, told a very recent tale of demolition.

The scenery on both banks of the river appeared of a novel character: numerous small picturesque villages, with scarcely a soul visible. At intervals, a few fishermen with their canoes were observable; but these vanished on the appearance of the "Feroze" and "Berenice," with their transports, as if they really believed his Satanic Majesty was after them.

We had a splendid view of the Syriam pagoda in the distance—a grand and imposing pile; as far as some of us could observe, like an irregular cone, elaborately gilt. Its elevated position makes it appear of enormous height. The country about is very irregular; no hills of any size, but continual elevations of ground, thickly studded with trees, resembling portions of Southern India.

About 5 P.M. we anchored a mile or two from the "Serpent," which useful craft had preceded us, as a skilful pioneer. There the wily one now lay at her position, the name impressing you with the idea that she brooded over mischief to be accomplished. The "Feroze" lay a short way before us, majestic, and rejoicing in her strength. Here we had been ordered to rest until the arrival of the remainder of the fleet. From sunset till a late hour, many an eye was turned towards Rangoon and the celebrated Shwé (Shwé) Dagon Pagoda. SHWÉ signifies GOLDEN; and everything is either yellow or gilt in this part of the world.

Mr. C. M. Crisp, merchant at Rangoon and Maulmain, less than a month before, had written to the Government of India regarding the strong position we were now about to attack. On the upper terrace of the great pagoda at Rangoon, he had formerly counted eight pieces of cannon at each of the three principal entrances to the same terrace, viz. at the south, west, and east; at the north entrance only one cannon was placed, making in all about twenty-five pieces, three of which were



eighteen-pounders; the rest may have been from six to twelve pounders. He had heard that a number of swivel-guns were kept in readiness at the pagoda; but never saw any. Along the south front of the Temple, at the lower part, a wall had been built by order of the late king, with embrasures for cannon; this being the principal entrance, the Burmese authorities had taken great trouble to defend it. The north side he considered the weakest point. On the west side, a range of go-downs for grain had been built. The *bund* (rude rampart) enclosing the new town, was very similar to the one round the cantonment at Maulmain, about fifteen feet high, and twelve feet broad at the top; twenty feet from the *bund* a ditch ran all round, about twenty feet wide, and from six to twelve feet deep. Government House, in the new town, was in a state of defence. Mr. Crisp counted twelve pieces of cannon of moderate calibre in the compound,* also two twenty-four pounders. Some guns were also at the custom-house and wharf; altogether, he considered there might be forty pieces of ordnance at Rangoon.

The forenoon of the 10th was one of great excitement among the majority on board. People doing things in place and out of place; some looking at plans, and examining swords and pistols. The deck presented a scene of extraordinary animation: many a feature seemed to be lighted up with the fire of hope; and the sick and the dying victims of that dire pestilence, cholera, momentarily revived at the prospect of a contest. Contrary to our expectations, the head-quarters, with the remainder of the fleet, did not arrive so early as we anticipated; but all were present at dawn of the next day, which was Easter Sunday.

* Ground surrounding or in front of the mansion.



CHAPTER III.

NAVAL OPERATIONS BEFORE RANGOON AND DALLA.—THE
LANDING AND ADVANCE.—THE WHITE-HOUSE STOCKADE.

THE noble and humane forbearance of the Indian Government towards the Burmese has been already mentioned. But more still may be advanced, before recording further operations. The Governor-General had written a final letter to the King of Ava, through the Commissioner of the Tenasserim Provinces, to be presented for despatch to the Governor of Martaban. Colonel Bogle, at the time of presenting the letter, informed the Burmese functionary, "that the English were sincerely desirous of peace, but that, if a reply were not received from Ava by the 1st of April, fully agreeing to the terms proposed by the Governor-General, our forces would inevitably invade the country; and that the guilt of having provoked the war would rest with them." The Burmese officers around were said to have replied, that, if we were prepared for war, so were they!

General Godwin, on his arrival at the Rangoon river from Calcutta, immediately sent Captain Latter, the interpreter, in the "Proserpine," to Rangoon, with a flag of truce, to inquire



if any reply had been received from the Court of Ava to the Governor-General's letter. On reaching the stockades, which guarded both banks of the river, the steamer was fired on. The cool courage of Commander Brooking was admirable on this trying occasion. He not only extricated the "Proserpine" from danger, but blew up a magazine on shore, which inflicted a severe loss on the enemy. The meaning of a flag of truce had been explained to them some weeks before by Commodore Lambert; so that no pretext for not understanding it would hold for one instant. Their firing on the flag was a sure indication that the Burmese authorities wished for war; that they would have it at any price: they were now about to have it "with a vengeance!"

It had been understood among us that no operations would take place before Monday. The fulfilment of this resolution, however, depended upon circumstances. These fortunately tended to expedite matters, as there was no time to be lost.

On the evening of the 10th, the "Phlegethon" had reconnoitred the enemy's works on the river in a cool and intrepid manner. Next morning, about 9 o'clock, the "Berenice," with the several war-steamers and vessels, changed position. Our place was very near the "Serpent." The steam-frigates were to our right, and in front, the smaller steamers filling up the picture—which was one of imposing grandeur. Firing had already proceeded from the direction of Rangoon; it struck us that the Burmese were simply at morning practice, in expectation of a coming struggle. The General and Admiral now steamed off to look at the defences, which had been represented of so formidable a nature. We fully expected to see a shot fired at the splendid "Rattler," and the other steamers, as they seemed to approach the works. The Burmese, however, reserved their ammunition. They either supposed that we should refrain from attacking them on the Sabbath, or deemed it superfluous to employ their artillery until our whole force should be arrayed in presence of their fortifications. We



watched for some time for the first symptom of resistance, and watched in vain.

We beheld the "Feroze," under Commodore Lynch, moving on, evidently to take up position opposite the stockades. With the animated crowd of soldiers on her decks, she was a grand picture in motion—a "political persuader," with fearful instruments of speech, in an age of progress! Next came the "Sesostris." At length, the Burmese, unable to stand this gradual augmentation of the steam-warriors in front of their position, fired at the frigates, and the operations began. The "Moozuffer," "Feroze," and "Sesostris,"* also the "Medusa" and "Phlegethon"—the two latter, from their drawing little water, approaching nearer and nearer the coast—came severally into action. The fire from the vessels, Queen's and Company's, was kept up with terrific effect against Dalla, on our left, and the Rangoon defences on our right. At first the enemy returned the fire with considerable dexterity and precision; but, shortly after the "Fox" had come up and poured in her broadside, and the "Serpent" had moved on to destroy, by about 11 o'clock the firing on our right almost ceased. However, the war-steamers kept on, thundering forth against the works on both sides of the river; utterly destroying the stockades on the shore at Rangoon, and cannonading Dalla with decided effect. The large stockade, south-west of the Shwé-Dagon, was set on fire by a well-directed shell, which caused the explosion of a powder-magazine; and then, all the work soon became filled with black smoke and vivid flame—up, up to the bright skies ascending, till the scene became one of extreme beauty and awful grandeur! At this crisis, an occasional gun was heard from the shore. Two or three pieces were still observable in the burning stockade; and, as no Burmese

* The "Moozuffer," under Captain Hewitt; the "Sesostris," under Captain Campbell.

were visible, some conjectured it to be the flame firing them off without orders.

While the ruined defences on the Rangoon side were burning, the town of Dalla, or Dalla Creek, became the chief point of attack. A determined force had evidently taken up a position in this quarter. Several of our shot and shells struck the principal pagoda of the place; but, beyond knocking a piece out here and there, with little effect. The stockade at Dalla having been silenced, a party of seamen and marines, in four boats, effected a landing, and took the place by storm. But something must be said about this exciting scene. Every one on board the fleet had his telescope with him, ready to observe with interest the proceedings of the attacking party. When the boats emptied their loads on the bank, a loud cheer sprung from several vessels in the river. The party now rushed boldly forward to the stockade: some coolly inspected it all round; some, we could behold, trying to scramble over it; at length they entered it with little opposition, its chief defenders having fled in every direction to escape the terrible fire of our guns. One unfortunate Burmese soldier, on the approach of the naval party, jumped into the water, and swam bravely; a few more followed his example, as if resolved on becoming targets for practice. The works were soon all fired by the destructive exertions of the soldiers and marines. About 2 p.m., the stockade and a portion of the town were wrapped in one mighty blaze. The quiet landscape on each side of the river became disturbed with the fierce and raging element. The enemy had played upon us with guns of considerable size—some of them twelve and eighteen pounders—and, occasionally, these were remarkably well laid. The shot flew over the decks of the war-steamers; on board one, the “Sesostris,” a young officer of H. M.’s 51st,* was mortally wounded. Several shots struck

* Ensign Armstrong.



the vessels: the "Moozuffer" was maimed a little, and the "Feroze" had part of her rigging shot away. According to some, "the fire of the enemy proved fatal to many on board the shipping"; but our casualties were by no means numerous on this day.

These highly successful operations by both the Queen's and the Honourable Company's navy—the chief work, doubtless, of the 11th having fallen to the latter—cleared the coast for nearly a mile, and made a splendid landing-place for the troops, who were now eager to commence land operations on the following morning. The Navy had acted as a pioneer of true civilisation.

Just a quarter of a century had passed away since Lord Amherst, on the conclusion of the first Burmese war, proceeded to the western provinces of India, and visited Delhi. He there told the King that all vassalage for the British Indian possessions, which till then had been acknowledged, was at an end. Thus, about seventy years after the battle of Plassey, we fairly established ourselves—and the reward was not too great for so much labour and enterprise—sole possessors, in every respect, of what Macaulay styles, "the magnificent inheritance of the house of Tamerlane."* For anything we knew now, the landing of the troops about to take place in Burma might be the foundation of a new empire, which one day may teem with Anglo-Saxon industry, and do honour to those who had secured the golden inheritance of the descendants of Alompra!

There was little sleep that night among many of us; the excitement attendant on preparation for work had kept away its refreshing influence. About half-past 3 next morning, the decks of the several steamers and vessels were crowded with living creatures, all eagerly sharing the bustle which invariably precedes the landing of troops in an enemy's country. Some of the boats for conveyance on shore did not arrive until the

* Essay on Lord Clive.



morning had considerably advanced ; and then we beheld Surya ascending in full splendour, as if seeking a vantage point whence to view the coming fray. The river before Rangoon presented an animated scene, the like of which had not relieved its monotonous aspect for eight-and-twenty years. Boats rowing to and fro, steamers changing position ; the detachments already landed drawn out in martial array ; here, the boats of the "Hermes," with two 9-pounders, brought to join their companions two 24-pounder howitzers, from the "Lahore" ; there, the men shouting and working, assisted by the gallant tars, as they took each gun from the boat, and set it in readiness for the carriage mounted to receive it. The troops landed under a well-sustained fire from the steamers. The right column consisted of H. M.'s 51st, the 18th Royal Irish, the 40th Bengal Native Infantry, and the Sappers and Miners. The 18th Royal Irish were on the right ; the 51st K. O. L. I. on the left ; and the 40th Bengal Native Infantry in the centre. The Sappers and Miners were drawn up with their ladders in rear of the left flank. The troops were ordered to carry sixty rounds of ammunition in their pouches, and all to have one day's full rations, ready cooked, with them. The Artillery formed in rear of the Brigade. Next landed, as soon as boats were available, the wing of H. M.'s 80th, and the 35th and 9th Madras Native Infantry—the wing of H. M.'s 80th in the centre ; the 9th Madras Native Infantry on the right ; and the 35th Madras Native Infantry on the left. The 9th Regiment N.I. had served in the first Burmese war. The order for position appointed by the General was quarter-distance column, right in front. The ludicrous features of the landing scene may be described as follows :—Guns and carriages dismounted, wheels lying here and there, boxes of medicine, boxes of shot, rations of beef, powder, arrack, and ladders, all in one confused mass, while the troops moved in the midst of them to form into position.

In contrast to these lively and exciting doings, the following melancholy accident may be related :—On one occasion, just



as we were employed in mounting guns for the third detachment of Artillery, some European soldiers and a sepoy had recklessly approached the smoking ashes of a ruined stockade, where quantities of loose powder had been left about by the Burmese on the previous day; a portion of this exploded, burning the poor fellows in the most dreadful manner. Some now thought that the ground we stood on was well mined; a few probably expected to be in the air shortly, especially the sepoys; but all was soon lost in some new cause of excitement. At intervals the ships' guns roared forth destruction on the town.

On, on to the Shwé Dagon! was soon the grand animating thought of every officer and soldier. The General had advanced with the first division that landed. His wise plan was to take the circuitous route and attack on the eastern side. The old road from the river led up to the southern gate of the pagoda, through the new town, by which route it was generally believed the enemy expected us. But events of considerable importance were to take place before we got near any gate of Gautama's splendid Temple. Colonel Foord, Commandant of Artillery, with Major Turton and Brigade-Major Scott, and four Bengal guns under Major Reid, were with the General in advance, the guns covered by four companies of the 51st Light Infantry. They had not proceeded far, however, when, "on opening some rising ground to the right," they were fired on by the enemy's guns, and immediately afterwards Burmese skirmishers appeared in the jungle. On this audacity, General Godwin, who served in the first Burmese campaign, afterwards remarked in his despatch, that it was a new mode of fighting with the Burmese, "no instance having occurred last war of their attacking our flanks, or leaving their stockades, that I remember to have taken place." They had profited by time, and, perhaps, by European instruction.

The enemy's artillery fire proceeded from a position which was styled the White House Stockade. It was a very strong defence, as will be seen hereafter, and well situated to

annoy our advance. Lieutenant Ford, of the Madras Sappers and Miners, had constructed three temporary bridges in a very short space of time, which would greatly facilitate the progress of more guns required to assist Major Reid's battery, which was now in full play against the stockade, at a range of about eight hundred yards. "I am sorry to say, sir," remarked an officer to the General, "that unless Major Oakes soon comes up, we shall not be able to go on. I have but two rounds a gun left." The accuracy of the enemy's range was shown by two of the Bengal gunners receiving mortal wounds at their guns, from two successive shots. At this critical time, Major Oakes fortunately came up with two 24-pounder howitzers, leaving the remaining portion of his battery in the rear. Colonel Foord told him to open with spherical case at a range of eight hundred yards. The gallant Major, with his usual alacrity, drew up in line with the Bengal battery, and opened an effective fire on the outwork, which he continued until the whole of his ammunition was expended. The Bengal guns had for some time withdrawn from the line of action, until more ammunition should arrive. The heat of the sun was now terrific; it gave Major Oakes his death-blow just as he was about to fire the last gun.

Shortly before the Artillery ceased firing, a storming party was formed from H. M.'s 51st K. O. L. I., and the Sappers and Miners. It consisted of four companies of Europeans, Major Fraser, the chief Engineer, with the Sappers under Captain Rundall. The third division of ladders was in the rear under Lieutenant Ford, who had been constructing and repairing wooden bridges for the passage of the Artillery. After the work was finished, he had orders to rejoin the leading division. While passing on for that purpose, a heavy flanking fire from the left was opened on his detachment. This not being returned, the enemy became bolder and the fire hotter, so much so, that the men were obliged to ground their ladders, unsling their carbines, and open a fire on the Burmese skir-



mishers. This silenced them for a while; and resuming their ladders, the men marched on with all speed. From the continual firing in front, it was evident that severe work was going on at the stockade. The party moved on with their heavy ladders, and, passing through a thick wood which screened the place, the officer beheld Lieutenant Donaldson, of the Bengal Engineers, passing by mortally wounded, his pale face lighted up with a smile of triumph, although suffering extreme agony. On reaching the White House Stockade,* there were to be seen the ladders reared against it, and troops crowding up them. Four ladders† went at the place in two divisions.

Closely following the gallant Major Fraser in the assault, came Captain Rundall, who mounted the ladders about the same time as his superior. The storming party immediately carried the stockade; but not without considerable loss on our side. The brave Captain Blundell, who commanded the leading company of the party, was shot down, and afterwards died of his wounds. In him the gallant 51st lost an excellent officer—one who had nobly done his duty. The companies of Sappers suffered severely, and their bravery was everywhere conspicuous. Three of them alone reared a ladder, four more having been shot down beside it. Lieutenant Trevor was here wounded, and Lieutenant Williams had a narrow escape of his life. The Burmese, on our carrying the stockade, fled precipitately; but many of these resolved to give us further trouble in the jungles. They left many dead about the place; amongst them was a warrior, clad in a red jacket with the buttons of the 50th Regiment.

It was not yet near noon, and the sun had made severe havoc among several members of our small army. Major Griffiths, Brigade Major of the Madras Division, was fatally

* For Supplementary Narrative of, See "Rangoon," Appendix No. VI. p. 249.

† Or more, as four were reared, a fifth broke; but four were enough.

struck on the field. Colonel Foord, Brigadier Warren, commanding the Bengal Division, and Colonel St. Maur, H. M.'s 51st K. O. L. I., were disabled by its overpowering effects. Many of the European soldiers suffered, and here and there were to be seen, on the ground for the advance, to the left of the White House Stockade, the medical officers and their subordinates administering relief by pouring cold water over the patients. The remaining portion of Major Oakes' battery—four 9-pounders—arrived from the shore shortly after that gallant officer was struck. Next came Major Montgomery's battery,* with the D Company 3rd Battalion of the Madras Artillery, which had done good service in China. Major Back, commanding, with Lieutenant and Adjutant Harrison, accompanied this division of the corps. Captain Cooke, with the D Company 2nd Battalion, had already made some excellent practice with his rockets while and after the Artillery fired on the stockade, clearing the jungles on the left, and thereby saving us for some time considerable trouble and annoyance.

Among the wounded in the early operations, may be mentioned Captain Allan, Quartermaster-General to the Force, and Colonel Bogle, Commissioner of the Tenasserim Provinces. The former was shot in the calf of the leg, and the latter in the knee.

Reposing in a shady spot, a small number of officers caught the attention of the passer-by. Two of them, it seemed highly probably, would recover from their misfortunes. But on the face of Major Oakes death had set his seal. Several were around him rendering every possible assistance, while the tear of sorrow fell from even those who liked him not too well.

The Artillery were now commanded not to advance till further orders; and after a good deal of sharp skirmishing, as the day

* Two 24-pounder howitzers, and two 9-pounders. To this battery the writer was attached.



drew to a close, a general cessation of operations took place. All now began to prepare for a night's bivouac on the field. In the evening it was whispered among us, that Major Oakes was dead! that he who, since being appointed to command a Service Company, had shown no ordinary zeal for the high efficiency of that Company—who, a few hours before, had rejoiced in a triumphant might—was now ranked among the fallen. He had been taken into the general hospital on the beach, where he died. The gallant deceased was in the forty-fifth year of his age. In person Major Oakes rose above the ordinary stature. Six feet one inch in height, with a chest of uncommon breadth, a striking military deportment, and a countenance betraying a restless ambition, wherever he went he could not escape observation. *Aut Caesar aut nullus*, might be read in his pale, hard features. He had entered the Madras Artillery under the old *régime*, about the time when our first war with Burma formed a subject of general interest throughout the British dominions. Towards the end of the year 1827, Majors Oakes and Montgomery were riding-masters to the Horse Brigade. The Major was great in all matters of drill, and was conspicuous as the man who gave the regiment an entire system of manœuvres. His publications on that subject were acknowledged by the Honourable Court of Directors, who rewarded him for his services.*

Major Oakes was not, in the ordinary sense, a man of genius; the creative faculty was in him but slightly developed. But he was gifted with great energy, and was remarkable for his untiring industry. Well-directed labour, steadily continued, is a rare virtue in India, where climate and the absence of any powerful motive for exertion, induce languid habits. He, therefore, who shakes off the lethargy, and toils assiduously, may, without a glimmering of genius, acquire a pre-eminence

* Order published at Fort St. George, 18th March 1851.

even over those of his fellow-men who may be more highly endowed by Nature. In this way may we account for the position Major Oakes wrought for himself. Through his efforts the Madras Artillery was presented with several very useful works, and he will long be remembered by officers of the old Corps as one of its most useful members.

After the White House Stockade was taken, and picquets had been placed in front, a good opportunity was presented for examining the work. A vast quantity of ammunition was found in the place. The grape was of the usual barbarous description, common among some of the hill-tribes of India: badly shaped iron bullets or bits of iron, closely packed in a canvas bag, dipped in dammer. Into a well outside, all the ammunition that could be found was thrown. The work, like all Burmese defences, was very strong, and they had evidently taken much trouble in its construction. In the last war the "White House" was surrounded by a brick wall, which this time they again surrounded with a stockade, at a distance of about ten feet, filling the interval with rammed earth. This formed a good parapet, to which they gave a reverse slope, so as to get up and mount their guns on it. Some excellent guns were found, of iron and brass; two of the latter kind were deemed handsome enough afterwards to be sent to Calcutta. The work had on its front face an insignificant ditch. In the centre of the little fort was the "White House," from which the place took its name. It was approached at one end only by a steep flight of steps, and within, at the further end, was placed a colossal figure of Gautama. A great deal of ammunition was found scattered about this central building. After the place was burned by the Engineers and Sappers, the same night the entire roof of the house was destroyed, and the huge figure seen from a distance, overtopping the shell of the ruined mansion, had an extraordinary effect. All the outside wood-work of the place was also destroyed by fire, so that the parapet became exposed; consequently, had the enemy attempted to



retake the stockade, we could have swept them from the face of the earth, or say, the top of it, in various ways. A Burmese warrior, who had been severely wounded, must have acquired some idea of British kindness towards an enemy, when a high officer patted him on the back, to reassure him of our protection, while others gave him water, and he was allowed with his wife and relations, who had sought him out, to leave the stockade and go peacefully away.

The "White House Picquet"—so called in the last war—was well situated for an out-post. The enemy knew every inch of the ground we should necessarily pass over to get at them; and it is highly probable they had practised for some time with ranges to bear upon certain points, which may account for their accuracy of fire in the morning. The fort being situated on slightly rising ground, a picturesque view inland was afforded: at about a mile and a half distant, was a small village, somewhat concealed by wooden ruins, to which considerable numbers of the enemy retreated.

Allusion has already been made to the Burmese skirmishers. It was amusing enough to see them chevied through the bushes, across the plain, where the Artillery were drawn up, by the European soldiers. Crack! crack! crack!—away they ran, as if a legion of evil spirits were after them! But the retreat of many was only temporary. Towards dusk, they showed themselves in front of our camp; but a few rounds of canister quickly drove them back into their jungles. There could be no doubt that Europeans were in the service of His Golden-footed Majesty. A European Portuguese was taken prisoner; and a Conductor picked up, in one of the stockades, the first volume of a work on anatomy, and a treatise on steam navigation, both in English; he also beheld plates, tumblers, and wine-glasses.

A report was current, that an officer of the Madras Artillery recognised a renegade of that corps, named Govin, in the ranks of the enemy, clad in Burmese uniform. He was soon after



shot dead. This man was said to have been an able artilleryman, and had got up light field-trains, drawn by Pegu ponies. It was strange, that the moment he was laid low the Burmese Artillery fell into confusion. A panic had ensued; and every "volunteer" knows that, in the game of war, when confusion or a panic takes place, all is nearly over. Even among Europeans confusion or panic may destroy the bravest troops; and as it may come when least expected, a reserve should ever be at hand.

No man seemed to bear the fatigues of the day better than the gallant General; he was busy everywhere—the cocked hat he wore rendering his vicinity anything but safe—animating the troops by his presence. He came forward, and expressed his sorrow to Colonel Foord—who had slightly recovered—for the accident which had befallen him. About this time, he said, regarding the conduct of the Burmese that day, that they had acted boldly and well, beyond all expectation. At night the force bivouacked on the open plain, without tents or covering of any description for officers or men. During the night, the enemy fired on the camp with musketry, but did not otherwise molest us. There may be more disagreeable things in life than sleeping beside a howitzer, on some straw, to escape as much dew as possible, after a hard day's work under a burning sun; getting up at intervals for duty; and washing in the morning out of a gun-bucket.

The alarm, when the camp had gone to rest, led some to suppose that the White House Stockade was about being re-occupied; but it turned out to be only the flickering blaze from some smouldering timbers, which looked as if people were moving about with lights. Their conjectures were groundless. The White House Picquet, or what remained of it, was speedily becoming a blackened ruin, which it would take the Burmese much trouble and time again to put in a proper state of defence.

The night of the 12th of April will long be remembered by



many of the force. Towards the new town, and the great Shwé Dagon, fire continued to spread through the darkness—observing which formed amusement for the weary who could not sleep. It proceeded from the steamers and men-of-war pouring their destructive fire into the town. Huge hollow shot and carcasses were continually projected, doing fearful execution. Sometimes the effect, from our camp, was terribly sublime. It seemed as if many a wrathful deity were, like Vishnu, hurling the fiery *discus* through the air !

CHAPTER IV.

THE GRAND ADVANCE ON THE SHWÉ DAGON PAGODA.

THE 13th of April was a busy day in camp.* In addition to the Artillery already up, four 8-inch iron howitzers were required by the General for the grand advance on the great pagoda. This was fixed for the morrow, when, many believed, from what had already been experienced, the enemy would make a desperate resistance. The whole of this day was employed in disembarking and taking into camp these noble pieces of ordnance. The Naval Brigade rendered us the most hearty assistance in this arduous task.

At one spot on the field might be seen a knot of artillerymen, under some zealous officer, cutting and fixing fuses; at another, the infantry cleaning and examining their trusty percussion muskets and bayonets, the best Infantry weapons procurable; at another, a cluster of talkers, very eloquent some of them, discussing the operations of the previous day; the sun,

* Situated about one mile from the beach, and, by the route we took, two from the pagoda.



apparently, being quite disregarded in the zeal of a wordy contest. In the shade—and a good deal was afforded by the surrounding jungles—the thermometer stood considerably above one hundred degrees.

The King of Ava, no doubt, all this time, believed that, through the re-agency of such troops as those composing "Shwé-Pee Hman-Geen," or the Mirror of the Golden Country—a body of Royal Guards—and other bodies equally well gilt, the English would soon be driven into the river; and that then the Tenasserim Provinces would be taken from us, and even Calcutta might become submissive to the Golden Feet! "On the night of the 13th," wrote an intelligent Armenian, one of the oppressed, "orders came to send us up to the great pagoda. We were accordingly conveyed thither in files of ten men, three Armenians and seven Mussulmans. Rockets and shells* poured down on every side. Our escape must solely be ascribed to the mercy of Providence. To have escaped from the shells, some of which burst near us—from the Governor's hand, and the hands of the Burmese soldiery, who had already commenced pillaging the new town—must be set down as a miracle. However, two files of our comrades had scarcely gone, when the guard placed over us thought it prudent to save themselves from the impending danger by flight; yet their chief stood with his drawn sword. We shekood,† prayed, and conjured him to save his life and ours. In my long experience of the Burmese generally, I have never found them wantonly cruel in nature. It is the system of the insane Government of Ava that produces monsters. So the man released us, and, with good grace, after seeing us depart, departed himself also. We at first returned to our abodes, but found them uninhabitable. Many of the houses in

* From the shipping.

† *Salaamed*, or made salutation.

the new town were in a blaze from the rockets. We then thought of our safety: some tried to escape to the river-side—they fell among the Burmese soldiery, were maltreated, stripped even of their upper garments, and obliged to return, and hide themselves under a Kyoung*; others took shelter under the foot of the great pagoda, and a few disguised got safely out of the town through the kind assistance of their Burmese friends. This night was a night of flight."

We were informed that, shortly before the fleet arrived, the Governor called a sort of Cabinet Council together, to deliberate over the probability of beating back the English. An old and respected inhabitant of Rangoon, who remembered the last war, and many years before it, was called on to give his opinion. The old man was afraid to speak out what he thought would be the result; but being pressed to do so, *as there was no fear he would suffer for telling the truth*, he declared that the British, on account of their superior skill and discipline, would certainly be victorious. "With them," said he, "one mind guides all; with the Burmese, each guides himself in the fight; what if we have fifty to one, the Europeans will conquer!" The fine old fellow was immediately ordered to be branded, and otherwise tortured for his candour.

An idea of the strength of new Rangoon may be gathered from the fact that the new town, already mentioned, upwards of a mile from the river, was described as "nearly a square, with a bund, or mud wall, about sixteen feet high and eight broad; a ditch runs along each side of the square, and on the north side, where the pagoda stands, it has been cleverly worked into the defences, to which it forms a sort of citadel."

Wednesday morning, the 14th, beheld the force moving on. The troops were certainly in the finest temper for dealing with the enemy. The halt of yesterday had refreshed them con-

* Poongi, or priest-house.



siderably, notwithstanding the intense heat ; and recollection of the 12th prompted them to double exertion, if such were possible, to-day.

H. M.'s 80th Regiment, with four guns of Major Montgomery's battery,* formed the advance, covered by skirmishers. About 7 o'clock, the sound of musketry fell upon the ear. It seemed to those composing the reserved force in rear to proceed from the dark jungles, through which our march lay. The troops in our front had come into action ; and the enemy were being driven before the fire of the European and Native Infantry. But this was not effected without some loss, as several *doolies*,† with their wounded, which passed by us, clearly testified.

The sound of artillery, from a Madras battery, likewise told that the guns were in position.

Major Montgomery, having brought one 9-pounder and a 24-pounder howitzer into a favourable position, had opened fire at a distance of about seven hundred yards from the stockade. Passing on through the jungle way, we at length came within range of the enemy's jinjals, which appeared to fire at us from beside a small pagoda. A succession of well-directed shots were now launched against the reserved force, in rear of which the heavy 8-inch howitzers were being nobly brought along by the gallant Naval Brigade. Our guns inclined to the right, and halted to make way for the coming young giants of ordnance—all the while, the fire proceeding from the enemy near the small pagoda by no means abating.

* The A Company, 4th Battalion, so recently commanded by his friend Major Oakes.

† Rudely constructed palankeens, for carrying sick and wounded. [They are not "ferocious" ; neither are they a "tribe," as was once cleverly imagined in England ! This is almost as good as when a member of the British Senate asked, whether Surajah Dowlah (Sir Roger Dowlah *anglicé*) was a baronet !]

Again we marched on, and came upon a large body of our troops, the Europeans, with fixed bayonets, as if ready for an attack as soon as a breach could be made. The 40th Bengal Native Infantry were likewise in this position, a petty *midan*,* sheltered by a small hill covered with jungle. Shot from the Burmese guns, as well as jinjals, fell fast and thick upon the plain. The troops wisely remained under cover of the hill, passing an occasional remark on the correct range the enemy had attained, as shot after shot bounded along only a few yards before us; and then would come a jinjal, with its strange whistling sound, over your head, making a man thankful he was not quite so tall as men are represented in ancient writ. In spite of all philosophy, such music must sound very strange to all ears, for the first time! At length, the greater portion of the infantry moved on.

The D Company's Battery,† under Captain Cooke, was ordered to remain in the old position till required. Certainly, it is galling to be under fire, without any order to advance; and such was our case for about four hours. It was amusing enough to observe the cattle attached to the guns, while the shot continued to fly about. Strange to say, not one bullock of the reserve battery was struck, nor did they seem to be at all affected by the firing of the determined enemy!

The Burmese soon got the range more exact than ever. Probably guessing that some of the troops were under cover of the small hill, they gave less elevation, when their shot fell very near us, and the jinjals continued to whistle with fearful rapidity. An intelligent Bengal officer, who had been engaged in several of the great Punjab battles, declared to us that he had not, on those occasions, "bobbed" his head so much as he had

* Plain.

† Madras Artillery. With this battery, which was in reserve, the writer and Lieutenant Bridge remained. Lieutenant Onslow was occupied at the beach in landing stores and ammunition.



done to-day. At length, the range of one of the enemy's guns entirely differed from the previous practice; which led us to believe that the devoted warrior, who had shown so much skill, was no more.

Major Montgomery's battery had, no doubt, done considerable execution.* It may have laid the aforesaid warrior low. The gallant Major himself came past us while the jinjals were flying, his Lascar orderly following him. A spent ball struck the unfortunate orderly in the forehead, when he immediately fell, but not dead, as at first supposed.

About this time, our Assistant-Surgeon, Dr. Smith, was slightly wounded. A tar of the Naval Brigade was also struck while giving assistance in bringing along a heavy gun; and several others, European and native, were wounded near the spot we occupied. The 9th Madras Native Infantry had gallantly driven back a body of Burmese skirmishers in our rear.

At about 10 A.M., the heavy howitzer battery, under Major Back, manned by the Bengal Artillery, was, after great labour, brought into position.† We were delighted to hear the howitzers sounding forth in the advance, as they opened fire against the great stockade. This continued about one hour and a half, under a very galling and well-directed fire from

* After firing a few rounds, the commanding officer left those pieces—the 9-pounder, and 24-pounder howitzer—under the charge of 2nd Lieutenant Lloyd, who kept up a well-directed and spirited fire during the whole time the action lasted. The Major then placed the other three 9-pounders of his battery in another position, about a quarter of a mile to the right of the first one. Lieutenant Tayler and 2nd Lieutenant Blair had each of them charge of a piece in this position, which they served with precision and effect. With reference to the Burmese gunners, we found, in some cases, that they had been chained to the guns.

† But for the valuable assistance of Lieutenant Dorville, of Her Majesty's ship "Rattler," with a party of one hundred and twenty seamen, we could scarcely have got the heavy howitzers into position, and to them also we are chiefly indebted for disembarking these pieces on the previous day.—Major Back's Report.—The two howitzers on the right were under the charge of Captain Malloch, of the Bengal Artillery.

the enemy's guns and wall-pieces, from which our troops suffered considerably. The Artillery operations of the Wednesday were under the direction of Major Turton, of the Bengal Army, whose accustomed zeal was fully displayed throughout. Colonel Foord had not recovered from the *coup de soleil* in time to proceed with the force; nothing could have disappointed him more.

It may be mentioned that, just before the heavy guns were dragged into position, Major Turton told Lieutenant Ashe, of the Bengal Artillery, to take his gun, a 24-pounder howitzer, to the left of the heavy battery, to dislodge some Burmese skirmishers from the bushes in front. This was the only Bengal light field-gun engaged that day; and it was highly necessary, as those determined skirmishers were fast closing in on the crowded mass of our troops, who with great difficulty kept down their fire.

At about half-past 11, Captain Latter, the Interpreter, proposed to the General an attack on the eastern entrance of the great pagoda; it was his opinion that, for ten of our troops now being killed or disabled, we would lose but one with a storming-party; which would naturally draw off the enemy's attention, and excite their surprise. This sensible advice was by no means disregarded.

Eventually, Captain Latter asked General Godwin's permission to lead the storming-party. The gallant General replied, "With the greatest pleasure, my dear friend!" This reply was quite characteristic of our brave and courteous Commander.

The storming-party was formed of the wing of H. M.'s 80th, under Major Lockhart, two companies of the 18th Royal Irish, under Lieutenant Hewitt, and two companies of the 40th Bengal Native Infantry, under Lieutenant White; the whole commanded by Colonel Coote, of the 18th Royal Irish, Captain Latter leading. From the elevated position—on which were our heavy guns—to the pagoda is a sort of valley to be



crossed before reaching the eastern entrance; the distance might be about eight hundred yards. The hill on which the great temple stands is divided into three terraces, each defended by a brick and mud rampart.* There are four flights of steps up the centre of each terrace, three of which are covered over; the east, south, and west. On went our gallant troops, crossing over to the pagoda in the most steady manner, under a heavy and galling fire from the enemy on the walls. At length they reached the desired gate, which was immediately pushed open. Captain Latter had beheld Lieutenant and Adjutant Doran, of H. M.'s 18th Royal Irish, rather in advance of his proper position: on being spoken to, we believe he said that his regiment was in rear. Now, a grand rush was made up the long flight of steps they had discovered. The storming-party, however, suffered from the shower of balls and bullets which immediately came down upon them with dreadful effect; but nothing could ever check the determined rush of British Infantry! Near the foot of the steps fell Lieutenant Doran, mortally wounded; and by his side fell also two men of his regiment. The young hero lay pierced by four balls. Colonel Coote was also wounded. But our troops nobly gained the upper terrace. A deafening cheer rent the air! The Burmese defenders fled in all directions before the British bayonet. The Shwé Dagon, or say, "Dagon the Great," had fallen for the second time into our hands! The blow had been struck; the first grand act of the drama was over!

"On the 14th," wrote the Armenian, "there were but a few thousand Shwaydown and Padoung men, say about five thousand in all, that kept to their post on the pagoda, under the immediate command of the Governor. They held out until

* Their heavy guns were on the upper terrace; their light ones on the second and third. The rampart of the upper terrace, being mostly of bricks and mortar, is of a superior description.

OUR BURMESE WARS.

noon, when the Governor, in despair, gave orders to retreat, himself setting the example of flight. His men, distinguished by their gilt hats, remained to the last. They stood the first onset of the British, and then fled to the west"; that is, towards Kemmendine. "Had there been a brigade of cavalry, or a division of troops, at the north-west, the Governor could not have escaped. He had a few days previously despatched his plunder to his country, Shwaydown, in charge of one of his trusty relatives. Thus dispersed the grand army of Rangoon, computed at about twenty thousand strong at the beginning, some of whom did not even exchange a shot with the English, and many were driven away by the rockets and shells."

The reserved force moved on. A loud cheer from the advance made us long to get near the heavy guns. There was enough in that hearty cheer to tell that Rangoon was entirely in the British possession. Having proceeded a short distance, the battery halted in rather dense jungle. There, among other sights, we beheld three of the 40th Bengal Native Infantry lying dead on a bank—all three, as well as a bullock, having been struck down with a shot from one of the enemy's 18-pounders. Ascending a little, we found the four 8-inch guns in position*; and a good view of the piece of country at the base of the Shwé Dagon was presented, to all appearance jungly and confined. We were now informed that the General and his Staff had entered the Pagoda.

After our Europeans had refreshed themselves with a little tea—and nothing is more refreshing on the field—the Artillery†

* Lieutenant and Adjutant Voyle, of the Bengal Artillery, in addition to commanding a howitzer, had cut and set many of the fuzes for these guns, which had now done their duty. Brigade-Major Scott, Madras Artillery, was observed doing everything in his power to encourage the gunners as they worked under a heavy fire. Lieutenant and Adjutant Harrison, Madras Artillery, is likewise reported by Major Back as most active in pointing and commanding one of the 8-inch howitzers.

† Covered by the 40th Bengal Native Infantry.



were ordered to proceed in a southerly direction, and take up quarters where they best could till the morrow. These were on the cold ground, as on the two previous nights. To get thither, we had a short march through the jungle; and while passing along, we frequently came across a Burmese soldier who lay dead, with a look of determination, and a smile of apparent contempt on his countenance. Curious enough, many of them had adopted a sort of red jacket as a portion of their costume; this had been frequently a source of confusion to our troops, who could with difficulty distinguish them from our own skirmishers. The *Burmese* muskets were old flint ones from England, "condemned," the excuse for their being sold to our enemies; and with the dhá—a sharp, square-pointed sword with a long wooden handle—and with other weapons, such as a British bayonet stuck on the handle of a spear, the Burmese Infantry equipments were found to be tolerably complete. It may be mentioned that the enemy's musket-ball was found to be considerably smaller than ours, composed of iron as well as lead, not cast in a mould, but rough and varying in size.

Towards the south side of the pagoda we passed a Poonghi house in ruins. Gautamas of huge size gazed upon the stranger with beneficent countenance, as if they were giving him a hearty welcome to the new land. A huge tree, lying across the road, was speedily cut asunder, to make way for the light field-guns; after a short period a portion of the heavy battery arrived. When the guns were all in position, preparations were made for the night's bivouac. Beside our halting-place we found a fine tank and well. Many had never before enjoyed a bathe or a wash so much as they did upon this occasion. After a comfortable night's rest in the open air, in the morning we moved into a Poongi house for breakfast.

Some necessary stores for hot-weather campaigning had found their way to us through the faithful followers, who, since the capture of the Great Pagoda, had been streaming forth to the camp; some of them, during the early part of the

OUR BURMESE WARS.

day, having nearly fainted from fear, while performing their philanthropic duties, as the enemy's bullets flew about rather too near to be agreeable. Where we now were stood various ruins of the new town. The remainder of the force passed the night in the covered entrances and immediate vicinity of the pagoda. By the route we had come, it was expected there would be no very great difficulty in placing our guns on the ramparts for the defence of Gautama's Temple.

Notwithstanding what has been already said in the first part of this Abstract; a few particulars by another valuable authority—no less than Sir Henry Havelock, the future hero of Lucknow—regarding the occupation of Rangoon by the British in the first Burmese war, may be interesting at this stage of our narrative.

The Court of Ava had never dreamed of the sudden blow about to be aimed against the southern provinces, and maritime commercial capital of the Burmese Empire. At this time,* there was no actual Governor (*Myo-woon*) in Rangoon. A subordinate officer, styled *Rewoon*, exercised the chief authority in the town.

On receiving intelligence of the arrival of a large fleet of ships at the mouth of the Rangoon river—ships of unusual size and belonging to the British—"this unfortunate barbarian became almost beside himself with wonder, consternation, and rage." His first order ran thus—"English ships have brought foreign soldiers to the mouth of the river. They are my prisoners; cut me some thousands of spans of rope to bind them."

He next ordered the seizure of all the English residents in Rangoon. The order extending to all those "who wore the English hat," American missionaries, American merchants, and other foreign adventurers, were confined in the same building with

* May, 1824.



five British merchants, a ship-builder, and two pilots. They were immediately loaded with fetters, and otherwise cruelly treated.

At length the fleet came in sight of a "considerable Asiatic town." This seemed to be encircled by a rampart of solid timber from fifteen to twenty feet in height, pierced with embrasures. Boats of various sizes and shapes lay moored along the banks of the river; on these were constructed wharfs, jetties, and landing-places. Clumps of light green forest occupied the plains around.

They were everywhere decorated with the gilded spires of pagodas. Above them all, on a height at some distance, was seen the grand monument, which had first attracted remark. But attention was now fixed by the defences of the town. A Burman stockade had been the theme of wonder and curiosity for weeks and months at either Presidency. It was to try its mettle against this redoubted species of work that the army had sailed. Hence, as each ship neared the town, the first glance towards the embrasures produced a murmur of deep interest amongst the troops. "There it is, at last; the stockade, the stockade of Rangoon!" *

The enemy heard the roar of that cannonade which covered the landing of the troops. The streets were swept with cannon-shot from the fleet. The Rewoon abandoned himself to his fears. "He mounted a horse, and hurried through the south-eastern gate into the country, followed in confused flight by the armed rabble he had collected." Terror reigned in the town. "Burman, Peguer, Portuguese, Parsee, Moguls, and Chinese, male and female, young and old, followed by the rushing sound of eighteen and thirty-two pounder shot, fled like frightened deer to the neighbouring forests."† When the

* Havelock's "Campaigns in Ava," p. 26.

† *Ibid.*, page 33.

OUR BURMESE WARS.

troops were fairly landed, several of the unhappy prisoners were released. The reason of four of them had given way. Major Sale, afterwards the hero of Jellalabad, found Mrs. Judson, of missionary celebrity, tied to a tree, and immediately released her.

The troops took possession of a town scarcely tenanted by a living being. With regard to the disposition of the troops in Rangoon during the first war, we read that the Brigade from Bengal had its right supported in the direction of the town, and its left on the great temple. The troops from Madras rested their right on "Shoé-da-gong-praw" (Shwé Dagon), and their left on the town.* Their houses were wooden dwellings of the priests, convents or monasteries, the abodes of pilgrims, under the arched recesses of shrines, and in the square chambers of temples. All of these abounded in either road. The army in 1852 found little or no difference in this respect.

And now let us return to our second visit to Rangoon and the Shwé Dagon Pagoda. With regard to the Burmese troops at first opposed to us, the "Armenian" of 1852 gave the following information:—These had commenced pouring down upon Rangoon from different towns and villages since the seizure of the King of Ava's ship, "Helen," the golden apple; and a large army arrived from Amarapura itself. They were all in high spirits, and were employed in erecting the stockade round the mud wall or fort, which they finished in the short space of two months. They even fortified the king's old wharf, the roof of which was constructed like a vat about two feet deep, and filled with water to extinguish the shells and rockets that might fall on it. But their magazine, in large jars, ranged in rows on each side, having, as before stated, caught fire on the 11th, blew this one of their seven wonders into the air, at the

* Four miles were occupied by the force, with a continuous chain of sentries.



same time killing many men on duty. Before the works had been completed, a portion of the Burmese army became dispirited by over-fatigue and disease. "Many determined not to fight the English, and they stuck to their determination. Shwé-Pee Hman-Geen, or the Mirror of the Golden Country, a body of Royal Guards stationed at the south and west, were the first to set the example on the first day of the fight."

Some curious Burmese plans were discovered in a magazine by our excellent Commissary of Ordnance, Captain Robertson, of the Bengal Artillery. Some square feet of a compressed black substance, as usual in this country, took the place of cloth or drawing-paper, and the drawing was produced by means of a sort of hard chalk and a ruler. This we believe to be the common mode of planning in Burma. One of the plans in question minutely exhibited the stockade, also gave in Burmese the strength of each detachment, with its designation, told off for its defence. We saw a translation of the writing, from which it would appear the Burmese think there is much in a name.

The following were among the detachments which composed the Burmese garrison of Rangoon* :—

	MEN.
The Dennobhew (Donabew) City Contingent .	500
The Golden Palm Royal Boat's crew . . .	500
The Kanaung City Contingent	600
The Padoung	300
The Great Hill Royal Boat's Crew .	130
The Water Fowl	119
The Golden Parrot	65
The Rethay Braminy Goose	76

* For the complete list, see "Rangoon; a Narrative," p. 101.



And so on, with the White House Picquet and village of Puzendown (2,500), making a total of nearly 10,000 men in 33 detachments.

Each man with two baskets of rice and a piece of silver.

The names of the gates were also remarkable :—

GATES.

1. North Gate.
2. Shwé Gyeen Gate.
3. Red Earth Gate.
4. Sacred Tray Gate.
5. Shwé Doung Gate.
6. Tree Gate.
7. Tree Gate.

GATES.

8. Banyan Tree Gate.
9. Smith's Gate.*
10. Sacred Hair Gate.
11. Little Lake Gate.
12. Twisted Umbrella Gate.
13. Stone Gate.

The enemy had, in the opinion of the General, "settled" that the British should attack the town by the old road from the river to the pagoda, leading to the south gate, and running through the town, "where they had made every preparation to receive us, having armed the defences with nearly a hundred pieces of cannon and jinjals, and with a garrison of at least ten thousand men. The attempt to assault on this side would, I am convinced, from the steady way the Burmese defend their works, have cost us half our force."

Our casualties in the land force were at first reported to be nearly two hundred. They were afterwards set down at three officers killed in action, and two by *coup de soleil*. Out of fourteen officers wounded, one, Captain Blundell, died. The total number of killed was reckoned at seventeen, and wounded at one hundred and thirty-two. The casualties in the fleet were about seventeen, out of which one of the "Fox's" men was

* South Gate.



accidentally drowned, and another of the "Tenasserim" was "blown away from an after pivot gun."

An indefatigable chronicler of the 12th of April wrote:—"14th, *Wednesday*.—Our troops attacked the enemy at the Dagon pagoda; the contest was severe and bloody; several of our men were so badly wounded, that it was found necessary to amputate their limbs on the field of battle. The enemy fell in heaps, and we are in possession of Rangoon. . . . The Burmese fought like furies; the poor fellows had no alternative: their wives and children being held in security by their king for the fulfilment of their duty as fighting men."

It is impossible to give a correct estimate of the number of the enemy who fell at the capture of the pagoda, or during the previous operations. Say, out of 18,000 who were at first prepared to meet us, and 20,000 is the number generally supposed, only two hundred bodies were discovered, it does not follow that only that number fell.

It is the Burmese custom on the field to carry away, if possible, the dead and wounded. This is considered a sacred duty, and it is performed with every alacrity. A bamboo is quickly passed through the cloth encircling the loins, and the dead man is carried off. Should he be only wounded, more care and ceremony are used to take the sufferer to some place of refuge.—Our force consisted of European troops, 2,727, and Native, 3,040 = 5,767. According to one authority, the entire force engaged in this expedition consisted of 8,037 men of all arms; that is, reckoning, in addition to the foregoing, for five Queen's ships,* 808; six steamers of the Indian Navy, 952; seven Bengal Government steamers, and one gun-boat, 510. Some of these vessels, and a portion of the land force, did not come into action.

* Including three steamers. To the force were attached fourteen transports.



RETURN of Killed, Wounded, and Missing, at the attack and storming of Rangoon on the 11th, 12th, and 14th April 1852.

Corps or Department.	Killed.	Wounded.
Personal Staff . . .	.....	One officer.
General Staff . . .	.....	One officer.
Madras Engineers . .	.....	Three officers, one N. C. officer.
Madras Sappers . .	Three rank and file .	Two officers, one sergt., eight rank and file.
ARTILLERY.		
Bengal Contingent .	One N. C. officer . .	Six N. C. officers.
Madras ditto. . .	ditto.	One N. C. officer, one Lascar, three Syce drivers.
INFANTRY.		
<i>1st or Bengal Brigade.</i>		
H. M.'s 18th Royal Irish.	One officer, one sergt., and two rank and file.	Three officers, one N. C. officer, one trumpeter, thirty-seven rank and file.
H. M. 80th Foot (one wing).	One N. C. officer . .	One officer, three N. C. officers, one trumpeter, twenty-one rank and file.
40th Regt. N. I. . .	One trumpeter, three rank and file.	Eleven rank and file.
<i>2nd or Madras Brigade.</i>		
H. M.'s 51st Regt.* of Foot.	One officer, one rank and file.	One officer, three N. C. officers, thirteen rank and file.
9th Regt. Mad. N. I. .	One rank and file . .	One officer.
35th Regt. Mad. N. I.	.....	One officer, one N. C. officer, five rank and file.

* We were pleased to observe, while in England in 1862, a handsome monument erected in the noble old York Cathedral to the memory of the 51st officers and men who died or were killed during the Burmese war. In the middle of 1864 the news reached us in Burma that Capt. Glover, of the 51st L. I., had been killed in New Zealand, with his gallant Colonel (Booth) and other officers. Captain Glover (then Lieutenant) served at the capture of Rangoon.



Officers and Men.	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.
European officers	2	14	0
Native officers	0	0	0
Warrant and Non-commissioned officers, rank and file, &c.	15	114	0
Lascars, Syce drivers, Syces, &c.	0	4	0
Total	17	132	0
Grand total of killed, wounded, and missing—149.			

(Signed) H. GODWIN, Lieutenant-General,
Commanding the Forces in Ava,
Arakan, and Tenasserim.
W. MAYHEW, Captain,
Assistant Adjutant-General of
the Forces.

OFFICERS KILLED AND WOUNDED.

No. Killed.	No. Wounded.	Corps or Department.	Killed.	Wounded.
1	0	H. M. 18 R. I.	Lt. R. Doran, 14 April.	
1	0	H. M. 51 Foot	Ensign A. N. Armstrong, 11 April.	
0	1	Personal Staff	.....	Lieutenant W. J. Chads (slightly).
0	1	General Staff	.....	Captain G. Allan (severely).
0	1	Eng. Depart.	.....	2nd Lieutenant E. C. S. Williams (slightly).
0	1	ditto	.....	2nd Lieutenant L. Donaldson (mor- tally), 12 April.
0	1	ditto	.....	2nd Lieut. W. S. Trevor (severely).
0	1	Madras Sapp. and Miners	.....	Captain J. W. Rundall (slightly).
0	1	ditto	.....	Lieutenant B. Ford (slightly).
0	1	H. M. 18 R. I.	.....	Lieut.-Col. C. J. Coote (severely).
0	1	ditto	.....	Captain W. T. Bruce (slightly).
0	1	ditto	.....	Lieutenant G. H. Elliott (slightly).
0	1	H. M. 80 Foot	.....	Lieutenant J. L. W. Nunn (slightly).
0	1	H. M. 51 Foot	.....	Captain W. Blundell (dangerously).
0	1	9th Mad. N. I.	.....	Ensign G. F. O. B. Hawkes (slightly).
0	1	35th ditto	.....	Lieutenant W. C. P. Haines (dan- gerously).
0	1	Commissioner Tenasserim Provinces	.....	Lieutenant-Col. A. Bogle (severely).

OUR BURMESE WARS.

LIST OF ORDNANCE Captured at the WHITE HOUSE STOCKADE, on the 12th,
and at Rangoon on the 14th April 1852.

Description of Ordnance.		No.	Remarks.
Iron Guns	3-pdrs.	2	Captured at the "White House" Stockade, on the 12th April 1852.
Brass "	3 "	2	
Iron "	18 "	9	
" Carronades*	18 "	3	
" "	12 "	2	The whole of these are mounted on carriages.
" Guns	9 "	6	
" "	6 "	3	
" Carronades	6 "	1	
" Guns	3 "	11	
" "	2½ "	7	
" "	2 "	2	
" "	1½ "	11	
Brass "	6 "	5	
" "	4 "	3	
" "	3 "	13	
" "	2½ "	3	
" "	1½ "	9	
Total		92	
Iron Jinjals or Wall Pieces, on Wooden Carriages		82	

(Signed) H. S. FOORD, Lieutenant-Colonel,
Shwé Dagon Pagoda, Commanding Artillery serving in Burma.
Rangoon, 15th April 1852.

* Regarding carronades, we gained the following information while in Europe in 1862, having also visited the country of their Royal inventor:—"I caused a light gun, a 12-pounder" (writes the far-famed Patrick Miller, of Dalswinton) "to be cast at Carron." Eventually, "I caused a privateer to be fitted out at Liverpool, under the direction of a relative, who was a merchant there. She was a ship of two hundred tons burden, and carried sixteen light 18-pounder guns, which, from being cast at Carron, I directed to be named CARRONADES, —and these were the first carronades put aboard a ship. This ship I named the 'Spitfire.' Gustavus Adolphus may be said to have been the inventor of the carronades. Having always thought so, I directed the following inscription to be engraved upon a brass 32-pounder carronade:—

'Quantum momenti sit in levibus tormentis, monstravit
Gustavus magnus qui coriaceis usus est.'"

A pamphlet exists, printed by Miller in 1779, giving a full account of the carronade, which he would appear to have invented ten years before.



CHAPTER V.

CAPTURE OF BASSEIN.—BURMESE ATTACK ON MARTABAN.

THE capture of Bassein, on Wednesday, the 19th of May, brought about by an attack, ably planned, well timed, and bravely executed, formed one of the most brilliant achievements recorded in this narrative.* Bassein, it appears, was once a valuable port, under the Portuguese power; and this position was declared by Sir Archibald Campbell to be the key of the Burmese Empire. In the last war the gallant Sale occupied Bassein, with a considerable force; but neither the force nor the station rendered much service to the army. This, of course, was occasioned by circumstances over which the British commander had no control; for Bassein really is an important position. With Prome and Donabew it forms a right-angled triangle, of which Prome and Bassein constitute the hypotenuse. It may be some eighty-five or ninety miles nearly direct west from Rangoon. Its chief advantage consists in

* See "Rangoon," Appendix No. VIII. p. 270.

commanding one of the three great navigable branches of the Irawady.

On the 17th of May, General Godwin proceeded with a detachment of 800 men, some 400 European and 300 Native Infantry, 60 Sappers, and a party of Marines, to take possession of Bassein. To reach this port they were forced to make for Negrais's island, and ascend the Bassein river—"the Rangoon river not being yet quite navigable upwards by the steamers"; or rather, being navigable for boats only, by the way of Bassein Creek. The squadron consisted of the "Sesostris," the "Moozuffer," the "Tenasserim," and the little steamer "Pluto," all under the command of Commodore Lambert.

Bassein, about sixty miles above Negrais, was reached on the afternoon of the 19th. The "Pluto," in advance, had intercepted a boat, filled with Burmese, on its way to give warning of our approach. Nothing could be got out of the crew save—"that it did not much matter whether news reached the Governor of Bassein or not, that a force was coming up against him, as everything was in a perfect state of readiness up there to blow us out of the water."

A good authority wrote:—"By four o'clock in the afternoon of the 19th of May the steamers were ranged opposite the fortifications of Bassein, having accomplished a voyage of sixty miles, without a pilot, up an unknown river, lined with stockades, without an accident, and without a shot having been fired. The Governor-General, in his Notification, thanking General Godwin and his force for their achievements, alludes to this circumstance as heightening in no small degree the difficulty, and therefore the *credit* of the exploit." We agree with the writer in considering that, in the capture of Bassein, General Godwin displayed some of the best qualities of an English general.

There is discrimination in the following remarks by another able authority:—

"We read of no errors, the results of misinformation, of no



losses proceeding from rash or ill-digested movements. The work marked out could hardly have been executed with greater despatch; nor could the resistance of the enemy, strongly posted, confident and determined, have been subdued and overcome with less loss. It is pleasing to have to record a success, alloyed by no imprudence, unaccompanied by a numerous list of casualties, resulting either from blundering ignorance, or rash, ill-considered and unnecessary attacks."

The conduct of all the troops employed, particularly H. M.'s 51st, was truly admirable on this occasion.

There is something magnificently cool, too, about the gallant Captain Latter—parleying with the Burmese behind their own works, to the effect that if they would not fire at us, we would not fire on them. The reply of the enemy was, that if our force advanced one step further they would fire on us. Captain Latter rejoined, that in that case we would turn them out root and branch. At the same time a heavy discharge of musketry and jinjals and round shot was poured into us.*

Our troops then commenced work in right earnest. The non-commissioned officer accompanying Captain Latter was killed, and fell over that officer, who lay prostrate and stunned from the effects of a spent shot; every one supposed him to have been killed. But, no!—he bore a charmed life; and more glory was in store for him.

The noble Captain, in relating to us the story of this dangerous adventure, did not think the projectile fired at him was "a round shot."* He considered himself, however, to have had a very narrow escape; and who will deny that he had?

"The whole affair," wrote a describer of the scene, "occupied fifty minutes, and a gallant one it was; 5,000 of the King of Ava's picked soldiers were there, and 2,000 men of Bassein." Of course, an Armenian, or European, was, as usual, seen on the works directing the Artillery. "The loss of the enemy was

* Despatch of Major Errington.



calculated at 800 ; the gunnery from the ships was terrific and most effectual." Considering our small numbers, the loss on the side of the British was not trifling.

The following officers were wounded:—Major Errington, Captains Darroch and Rice, and Lieutenant Carter—all of H. M.'s 51st Foot ; also, Lieutenant Ansley, of the 9th Madras Native Infantry, and Lieutenant Rice, R.N.

The grand total of guns and jinjals captured amounted to eighty-one. Immediately after the conquest, the Burmese evacuated the town ;—and thus Bassein fell !

The event is thus recorded in the Governor-General's Notification, and General Godwin's Despatch. From the latter all the important details concerning the capture of Bassein may be culled :—

“NOTIFICATION.

“Fort William, Foreign Department, 5th June 1852.

“The Governor-General in Council has the gratification of announcing the capture of Bassein, and of publishing, for general information, the Despatches which report the combined operations of the Naval and Military Force by which this service has been executed.

“In ascending for sixty miles a river still very imperfectly known, in effecting the landing of the troops and capturing the city, the fort, and the stockaded defences on both sides of the river, fully garrisoned and armed, and in accomplishing all this with very unequal numbers, and within the limits of a single day, the combined forces at Bassein performed a gallant and spirited service, which well deserves the approbation and applause of the Government of India.

“To Lieutenant-General Godwin, C.B., and to Commodore Lambert, the Governor-General in Council has again the satisfaction of offering his cordial acknowledgments of the ability and good-will with which they have united their exertions for ensuring success to the operations in which they were engaged.



"The Governor-General in Council begs to repeat his thanks to Major Boulderson, Deputy-Judge-Advocate General, to Captain Latter, to Captain Chads, A.D.C., and to Lieutenant Ford, of the Madras Sappers, for their conduct in the field on this occasion.

"His Lordship in Council desires especially to mark his sense of the services rendered by Major Errington, H. M.'s 51st Light Infantry, commanding the detachment of troops at Bassein, and to Commander Campbell, of the Indian Navy, by whom the stockade upon the right bank of the river was stormed and taken.

"To Captain Rice, Captain Darroch, and Lieutenant Carter, of H. M.'s 51st Light Infantry, to Lieutenant Ansley, 9th Madras Native Infantry, to Lieutenant Craster, Bengal Engineers, and to Dr. McCosh, of the Medical Department, the Governor-General in Council begs leave to convey his best thanks.

"Equal acknowledgments are due to Lieutenant Rice, R.N., to Lieutenant Elliot and Lieutenant Nightingale, R.M., to Commander Hewett, to Lieutenant Robinson and Lieutenant Lewis, Indian Navy, and to Captain Dicey, Captain Burbank and Mr. F. Duncan, of the Bengal Marine, whose services have been commended.

"The Governor-General in Council has particular satisfaction in adding the expression of his entire approbation of the gallantry and good conduct of the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of H. M.'s 51st Regiment, of 9th Regiment Madras Native Infantry, of the Madras Sappers and Miners, and of the seamen and marines employed in the capture of the City of Bassein.

"By order of the Most Noble the Governor-General of India in Council.

"C. ALLEN,

"Officiating Secretary to the Government
of India."



From Lieutenant-General H. Godwin, C.B., Commanding the Forces in Ava, Arakan and Tenasserim Provinces.

"SIR,—The Governor-General having expressed some anxiety about the south part of Arakan, as being in the neighbourhood of Bassein, I resolved, as soon as I could conveniently leave Rangoon, to take a detachment, and personally visit the place. On expressing this opinion to Commodore Lambert, he, to my very great pleasure, said he would accompany me. I fixed on Monday the 17th of May, and had a detachment warned to be ready to embark on that morning, consisting of 400 of the 51st K. O. L. I., 300 of the 9th Madras Native Infantry, 67 Madras Sappers, and a sergeant and 6 gunners of the Bengal Artillery. The whole party was placed under the command of Major Errington of the 51st Light Infantry.

"The Commodore appointed three fine vessels to carry the troops—the H. C. S. F. 'Sesostris' and 'Moozuffer,' and the 'Tenasserim,' with a smaller steamer, the 'Pluto,' carrying the Naval Brigade and Marines of H. M.'s frigate 'Fox.'

"We cleared the Rangoon river on the afternoon of Monday the 17th, and on the next evening anchored off Negrais Island, leading into the Bassein river. At daybreak the next morning the flotilla weighed and we ascended that most beautiful stream for sixty miles, which at 4 o'clock brought us in view of the defences, of about a mile long, of the City of Bassein. We had passed some new stockades, one at and the other south of Naputa, a few miles below the town, which were not armed, but these consisted of one extensive stockade, with several hundred men in it, fully armed with cannon.

"The enemy looked at us, but did not show any disposition to molest. The flotilla arrived at the left of their position, a strong well-built mud fort, armed with cannon and men. This we passed within two hundred yards, and so in succession all their defences for nearly a mile, till the 'Tenasserim,' with the Commodore and myself on board, anchored opposite a



golden pagoda, centrally situated within the defences. The steamers anchored in succession without bringing down the fire of a single musket.

"The admirable position taken up by the steamers induced me to order the immediate landing of the troops. The enemy appeared so completely surprised and paralyzed by our approach, that I gave orders not to fire unless fired on, and to take possession of the pagoda. Nearly all the men of H. M.'s 51st Foot got on shore under the pagoda before a shot was fired. Captain Latter, my interpreter, accompanied Captain Darroch with a company of the 51st on shore, and landed on the extreme right of the works, opposite a traverse covering a gateway, and there a parley was held between Captain Latter and some Burmese on the walls, which brought on the first discharge of musketry, killing a sergeant and wounding two men. This fire was taken up and ran down the works, but soon ceased.

"At this time Major Errington made his advance on the pagoda and carried it in most gallant style, the 51st Light Infantry maintaining nobly the character they had ever commanded by their courage and distinguished conduct in the field.

"The contest that stamped the operations of this remarkable day with a brilliant conclusion, was the attack on the mud fort, most scientifically built, and of great extent, which could only have been constructed under a despotism that commanded the labour of its subjects, in the short time they had been about it. It was not entirely completed in its details within. The storming party under Major Errington proceeding to the left of the Burmese works, accompanied by Lieutenant Rice, of H. M.'s frigate 'Fox,' and Lieutenant Ford of the Madras Sappers, came upon this mud fort fully garrisoned and well armed. The attack was most determined, as was the defence obstinate. It was bravely stormed, but with the consequence of Major Errington and several officers and men being severely wounded; Lieutenant Ansley, with a small detachment of the



9th Madras Native Infantry shared in this contest; he was severely wounded, and the corps proved itself to be as good as it looks, and it is one of the nicest* corps I have ever seen; its gallantry and devotion on this occasion claiming the admiration of all who witnessed it. The whole affair was over a little after 6 o'clock.

"While these operations had been going on, the Commodore had claimed the services of Captain Campbell of the 'Sesostris,' and his men, in destroying a stockade on the opposite bank of the river. They drove off the Burmese, fired the stockade, and took six guns.

"I am informed from several sources that the enemy suffered very severely in the contest in the mud fort.

"In having the honour, as well as the gratification of reporting to the Governor-General in Council the possession of this important station, I will observe that, from every indication of preparations going on, the Government of this country intended to make it a most powerful place and to repair the loss of Rangoon by establishing Bassein as their mart of communication with this country, as well as a powerful position to keep in subjection the Pegu population, so decidedly and ever our friends, and also to maintain a threatening attitude towards the south of Arakan.

"By leaving Bassein to itself, I should have been giving it back to the soldiery just driven out, as the defences had been built and put into the improved state I have described, by five thousand men from the Upper Country, commanded by a man of reputation. To secure it I have left a garrison of two companies (160 men) of the 51st Light Infantry, and 300 men of the Madras Native Infantry. These will be reinforced by an officer of artillery and half a company with two 9-pounder guns—the garrison now possessing two 12-inch howitzers.

* It will be seen from this curious expression, and the despatch generally, that our gallant and amiable Commander was not a master in the art of despatch-writing.



These, with two months' rations, will leave this on or about the 26th instant. Major Roberts, of the 9th Madras Native Infantry, will proceed in the same vessel to take command of Bassein; he is an experienced and excellent officer.

"I consider that in a few weeks the Burmese soldiery of the Upper Country will have returned to their homes, meeting with no sympathy from the Pegu population, and the Pegu soldiers themselves are already with their families, so that the garrison I have left could, in a military point of view, be withdrawn in six weeks; and it will then remain with the Government of India to decide whether it will hold during the war this very important place. If so, further arrangements will be very necessary. Major Fraser, the Commanding Engineer, should visit it. A very little expense will make it a sure position. The barrack houses the soldiery are now in are excellent, and well built of wood. Fresh meat can be had, as the population of the place are coming under our protection in great numbers.

"I may here remark, that that most admirable officer, and clear-seeing man, my most respected late Commander Sir A. Campbell, attached great importance to the holding of Bassein.

"After passing two clear days in arranging for the stability of the detachment to be left here, on the morning of the 22nd, the flotilla, with the exception of the 'Sesostris,' which remains, weighed at daybreak, and reached Rangoon on the 23rd of May, after an absence of only seven days.

"To Commodore Lambert, and to this combined expedition, the Governor-General in Council owes all that professional ability and unremitting exertion could accomplish towards success to which they so largely contributed. The Hon. Company's steamer 'Proserpine,' Commander Brooking, arrived twenty-four hours after the place was taken, but even so his activity was not lost, for he and his vessel went off the morning before we weighed and destroyed the stockade that I have mentioned to have passed on the way up to the river.

"Major Errington, of H. M.'s 51st Light Infantry, who



commanded the detachment of troops embarked for Bassein, who principally directed this detachment, and who fought this detachment, deserves the particular thanks of the Most Noble the Governor-General in Council. I have great pleasure in forwarding his report of the operations, for the perusal of his Lordship in Council.

"I beg the best consideration of Government for Captain Rice and Lieutenant Carter, of the 51st Light Infantry, and for Lieutenant Ansley, of the 9th Madras Native Infantry, all three severely wounded at the assault of the fort, and also for Lieutenant Ford, of the Sappers and Miners, on the same occasion, for Lieutenant Rice, 1st of H. M.'s frigate 'Fox,' who commanded the Naval Brigade, and who was severely wounded whilst particularly distinguishing himself in the attack of the fort.

"It has been brought to my notice that Mr. Duncan, the 2nd officer of the Hon. Company's steamer 'Tenasserim,' at the head of a party of men of his ship, behaved most gallantly upon the same occasion.

"To Captain Darroch, of the 51st Light Infantry, and to Captain Latter, my interpreter, thanks are due for their gallantry in forcing the traverse, and entering at the gate on the right of the enemy's position. Lieutenant Craster, of the Bengal Engineers, also merits thanks; and the plan of Bassein, which I enclose for the Governor-General's inspection, will prove his professional competency. To Lieutenants Elliot and Nightingale, with the Marines of H. M.'s frigate 'Fox,' and to Captain Campbell, of the Hon. Company's steam frigate 'Sesostris,' I beg your Lordship in Council's kind consideration. To Doctor McCosh and the officers of the Medical Department, thanks are particularly due.

"The naval part of the expedition, both sailors and marines, supported the character that has ever been theirs of undaunted courage.

"I have been considered wanting sometimes, in not more particularly naming corps or individuals, but in this peculiar



warfare of constant assaults on well armed and strong positions, often well defended, it has been the noble emulation of all to be first into the enemy's works. It was in such an effort of ambition that that fine and gallant young officer, Lieutenant Doran, of the 18th Royal Irish, fell pierced with four balls, far in advance of his proper post; indeed, I might fill my report with names, were all to be individualised.

"I now beg particularly to bring to the notice of the Governor-General in Council, Major Boulderson, of the Madras Army, the Deputy Judge-Advocate-General of the Force, who, on this occasion accompanied me and filled the two posts of Assistant-Adjutant and Assistant-Quartermaster-General to the expedition, as I could not move from their important duties at Rangoon Adjutant-General Mayhew nor Quartermaster-General Allan.

"The Major has been of much essential service to me in various ways; and the judicious manner in which he posted the picquets after the capture of Bassein, in that wilderness of houses and jungle, tended to the perfect security of the force. Captain Chads, my Aide-de-camp, never leaves me, and always makes himself particularly useful.

"Since my last report, nothing worthy of note has occurred at Rangoon. The town is increasing in importance by crowds of natives who daily come in with their families and goods; as is the case throughout the neighbourhood, but especially at Kemmendine, which is as large a place as Rangoon.

"The conduct of the troops is excellent, and their health is improving daily since the rain has set in.

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

(Signed) "H. GODWIN, Lieutenant-General,

"Commanding the forces in Ava,
Arakan and Tenasserim Provinces.

"Head-Quarters, Rangoon, 24th May 1852.

"To CHARLES ALLEN, Esq.

"Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign
Department, Fort William.

On Monday, May 24th, the General returned from Bassein. The town of Pegu was said to be occupied by a Burmese chief, who had been victorious over the Peguese. In the morning there was a grand parade round the Shwé Dagon Pagoda, with all the customary honours, to celebrate her Majesty's birthday. The effect was very grand and impressive.

It was supposed that the unfortunate ex-Governor of Rangoon, who on a recent occasion was so nearly caught by Colonel Apthorp, had at length been captured and sent in chains to Ava. He was the same Mightiness who, at the commencement of operations, had put the Line-Myoothoon-Gee in irons for failing to re-capture the King's ship. What an example of the biter bit!—Lieutenant Tayler, with a detachment of Artillery and two guns, proceeded to Bassein. Major Roberts, with the remainder of his regiment, likewise went to take command of the new position.—Such were a few of the small and great events which followed the capture.

On May 31st, intelligence arrived of an

Attack on Martaban.

At 6 o'clock on Wednesday morning (26th), a Burmese advanced force, consisting of about 600 men, under Moungh-Bwosh, the Governor of Martaban, marched over the hill from the western side, and made a sudden and unexpected rush upon the picquets guarding the heights. The alarm now being given, the troops were under arms and at their guns. Major Hall ordered the picquets at the northern pagoda into camp, and subsequently sent a strong party of sepoys, under the command of Lieutenant Holmes, to reconnoitre, under cover of the artillery guns. The Burmese, however, advanced; a party of about 1,000 kept near the small white pagoda below the hill; another of about 2,000 lay a mile away in reserve, while a smaller force kept up a smart fire on the troops at the distance