

No. 76.

## GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.

His Excellency the Governor, Commander-in-Chief, &c., &c., having received a despatch from His Excellency Rear-Admiral SIR MICHAEL SEYMOUR, K.C.B., commanding H.B.M.'s Naval Forces in China, reporting the results of an Expedition sent against a Fleet of Pirates off Linting, has been pleased to cause the same to be published for general information.

By Order,

W. T. BRIDGES,  
*Acting Colonial Secretary.*

Colonial Secretary's Office, Victoria, Hongkong, 26th August, 1858.

Calcutta, AT HONGKONG, 25th August, 1858.

SIR.—Information having reached me on the 22d instant, from Mr Caldwell, that a Fleet of 23 Pirate Vessels were cruising in the neighbourhood of Linting, I sent the *Surprise*, steam gun-vessel, at daylight on the following morning, to cruise for their destruction. Commander Cresswell returned the same evening, having succeeded in capturing or destroying 26 Vessels. She brought in 7 Junks, which I have ordered to be delivered over to the Marshal of the Admiralty Court. I enclose Your Excellency a copy of Commander Cresswell's letter of proceedings.

As I learn that the neighbourhood to the westward abounds with Pirates, it is my intention to send the Ships named in the margin to-morrow morning, to proceed in search of them; and as Your Excellency has placed at my disposal the valuable services of Mr Caldwell, I hope they will be able to render a good account of these marauders.—I have the honor to be, Sir, Your Excellency's most obedient humble servant,

M. SEYMOUR,  
*Rear-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief.*His Excellency SIR JOHN BOWRING, L.L.D.,  
&c., &c., &c.,  
Hongkong.\* *Magacienne, Infexible, Algerine, and Plover.*

Copy.

(Signed) W. D. JEANS, *Secretary.*

## REPORTING THE CAPTURE AND DESTRUCTION OF PIRATICAL VESSELS.

H.M.'s SHIP *Surprise*, AT HONGKONG, 24th August, 1858.

SIR.—I have the honour to inform you that, in compliance with instructions received from you on the night of the 22d instant, directing me to proceed in search of a Fleet of Piratical Junks near the Leman Islands and effect their capture or destruction, I proceeded to sea at daylight the following morning, having with me the Launch and Barge of H.M. Ship *Cambrian*.

Shortly after opening out from Hongkong Bay, the Pilot pointed out three Boats working to windward, and informed me that they were part of the Piratical Fleet. I fortunately at this time observed many masts in a small bay in the N.W. part of the Island of Lingting; and being informed it was the main body of the Piratical Force, I proceeded towards them.

When within about 1,700 yards they opened fire on me, which I did not return until within about 1,000, when we engaged them with our port broad-side firing Shot and Shell.

I then directed the *Cambrian's* Boomboats to take up a position in-shore of us, so as to be able to advance, taking them in the flank so soon as their guns came within range. The enemy directed much of their fire to the boats, which was admirably replied to by Lieutenant J. W. Webb, as he steadily advanced with his boats.

The enemy opened on us at 8 A.M., keeping up a smart and well-directed fire with round Shot and spear-headed Rockets, and as we closed, with Grape and Canister, hulling the ship on several occasions; and had we not kept on a continual move, would doubtless have caused us material damage.

After about 35 minutes their fire considerably slackened; and at about 9 o'clock two of their largest Lorchas blew up with a tremendous explosion, caused apparently by the bursting of one of our shells. They appeared immediately paralyzed, and their firing ceased. Taking advantage of this, I pushed on with my own boats, and joining with the *Cambrian's*, effected a landing within a very short distance of the junks, having observed the crews desert their vessels and take to the hills.

On advancing to the top of a neighbouring ridge, some more Piratical Vessels were discovered in a snug creek on the opposite side, crowded with men, and evidently prepared for an attack from seaward. Our position completely commanded them, and by opening fire on them with our rifles, killing a great number, caused the others to run away, after a vain attempt to reach us with their gingalls, our height being too great for any effective fire from their large guns.

Not deeming it prudent to expose the men unnecessarily to the scorching heat of the sun, I ordered their return to the boats in preference to advancing by land, and returning myself to the *Surprise*, closed, and taking the boat in tow, steamed round abreast the Creek, and fired a few shells. I then despatched the *Cambrian's* and our own boats under cover of our fire, to effect the capture of the junks. No resistance was offered beyond the occasional fire of gingalls from the neighbouring hills, the junks being deserted.

Several of them being aground, and many others much shattered from our fire, we only succeeded in bringing out seven; so I ordered the remainder to be destroyed by fire.

On boarding and landing to effect this, we found a number of dead Chinamen, and observed for the first time several Guns mounted on shore, commanding the Creek, which were destroyed.

The capture of the Piratical Fleet being completed, 19 having been set fire to, and 7 taken possession of, and observing the total destruction of the ones fired by the explosion of their several magazines, I proceeded on my return to Hongkong, taking four of the junks in tow, the three others being in charge of Officers with orders to follow; and arrived at this Port at 9.30 P.M. with the four junks, the others arriving during the night.

Of the seven vessels we have in our possession, two are Lorchas built,—one mounting 28 Guns, the other 24, from 6 to 24-pounders—the remaining ones being junks of from 7 to 16 Guns.

Of those destroyed five were heavily-armed Lorchas, the remainder junks averaging the same armament as above. In all mounting on board and on shore 327 Guns, 103 of which are on board the vessels brought in.

I have great pleasure in bringing to your notice the conduct of Lieutenant J. W. Webb, of H. M. Ship *Cambrian*, for the very gallant and judicious manner in which he fought the Boats of that vessel; and of the assistance rendered me both on board and on shore of Lieutenant Charles Parry, Senior Lieutenant of the *Surprise*; as also of the steadiness and zeal displayed by the other officers and men under my command.

The only casualty was Mr Mallet, mate of the *Cambrian*, who, I regret to say, was severely burnt from an explosion whilst firing one of the junks.—I have, &c.,

(Signed) S. GURNEY CRESSWELL,  
*Commander.*His Excellency Rear-Admiral SIR MICHAEL SEYMOUR, K.C.B.,  
*Commander-in-Chief.*

No. 77.

## GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.

The Honourable W. T. BRIDGES, D.C.L., having resigned the office of Acting Colonial Secretary, to which he was appointed during the absence of the Honourable W. T. MERCER, Esquire, the Honourable FREDERICK FORTH, Esquire, has been provisionally appointed (pending reference to Her Majesty) to discharge the duties of the said Office.

By Order,

FRED. FORTH,  
*Provisional Colonial Secretary.*

Colonial Secretary's Office, Victoria, Hongkong, 28th August, 1858.