

was in the secret. They were detained by contrary winds till the 24th, when they quitted the road of Aboukeer. A sealed packet, to be opened twenty-four hours after the departure of the vessels, was delivered to general Kleber likewise. In this he was appointed to the chief command, and general Desaix to the command of Upper Egypt.

Previous to his departure Bonaparte had attempted to open a negotiation with the grand vizier, by which he expected at least to retard the proceedings of an enemy by no means alert, and this negotiation Kleber was directed to pursue. Harassed indeed as the french had been by repeated actions with a desperate though unskilful foe, forced marches in such a climate, and wants of every kind; while even their victories were continually diminishing their numbers, which they had no hope of reinforcing now their fleet was destroyed; it required no small degree of bravery in the troops, and no ordinary qualifications in the commander, to maintain their footing in the country. Mourad bey had again descended the Nile; been driven back by general Morand; overtaken, surprised in his camp, and defeated by him at Samanhout: when general Desaix, in order if possible to get rid of him entirely, went in pursuit of him with two flying columns, composed of infantry mounted on dromedaries, cavalry, and artillery; one commanded by himself, the other by adjutant general Boyer. On the 19th of october Boyer came up with him in the desert of Sediman. The mamalukes began the attack with great fury, but were defeated as usual; and the french pursued them on their dromedaries, but the deserts again secured their retreat.

In the mean time a second maritime expedition was preparing to attack Egypt. A body of troops from Constantinople, under the command of Seid Ali bey, on board a squadron conducted by sir W. Sidney Smith, appeared at the mouth of the Damietta branch of the Nile; while the army of the grand vizier was approaching by the way of the desert. On the eastern side of the entrance of the Nile was a ruined castle, insulated by the inundation of the river, though the passage was fordable. Of this the boats of the Tigre took possession, and displayed the ottoman flag, which was the signal for the turkish gunboats to advance, and the french to open their fire. A carronade mounted in a breach of the castle, and field pieces in the boats, continued to annoy the french, and prevent their working at an entrenchment they were throwing up to prevent the disembarkation, which was not effected till the 1st of november, though an interchange of shot had continued with little intermission the three preceding days. As soon as the first division of the turks had landed, the french advanced to charge them with the bayonet; but the turks, instead of waiting for the attack, rushed on, and in an instant completely routed the first line. Pursuing the fugitives with too much ardour, however, they were met by the reserve of the french in perfect order, and at the same time taken in flank by their cavalry. Thus they were put to the rout in their turn, rushed into the sea, and as many as could not be taken off by the boats were killed or made prisoners. The ships continued on the coast a few days longer, when they were obliged to quit it by the weather.

Still the impending storm grew blacker round Kleber's diminished forces. A detachment from the grand vizier's army, which was encamped at Gaza, had besieged and taken el Arisch; and in the grand vizier's camp before this place a convention was signed on the 24th of january, 1800, by which Kleber agreed to evacuate Egypt. Sir W. Sidney Smith had acceded to this convention, the terms of which indeed we may presume to have been framed under his direction; and certainly they were honourable to all parties, the french, yet unsubdued, being allowed to depart with their arms and baggage, while, as far as the interests of Great Britain were concerned, they rendered her secure from any danger, that the possession of Egypt by the french might threaten; a security doomed not to be purchased without the effusion of much blood.

Unfortunately lord Keith, who commanded in the Mediterranean, found it inconsistent with his orders, to suffer the french to depart, unless as prisoners of war. Indignant at this unexpected breach of the convention, Kleber notified to the grand vizier, to whom several places had already been delivered up, and who was now encamped at Matarea, his determination to recommence hostilities. On the 20th of march, at daybreak, he began to cannonade the advanced posts of the ottoman army, and at length the engagement became general. It ended in the total defeat of the turks, who lost about 8000 men killed and wounded, nineteen pieces of cannon, and part of their camp equipage.

While the french were pursuing the grand vizier, Nasouf bashaw and Mourad bey entered Cairo, where they massacred

whatever frenchmen they found, as well as numbers of the greeks and copts. As soon as Kleber returned, he invested the city, which was obstinately defended for some time; but at length he obtained possession of it, and punished in an exemplary manner the cruelties, that had been committed on the french and their partisans.

Thus a total change in the face of affairs was produced; and the french, instead of relinquishing Egypt, appeared to be confirmed in the possession of the country. Kleber, indeed, was assassinated at Cairo, on the 14th of june, by a fanatic, at the instigation of the aga of the janissaries, and with the privity of a few sheicks; but this event was attended with no farther consequence; and his successor, Menou, for several months experienced no molestation from without, no revolt or disturbance within.

This calm, however, was the precursor of their final ruin. On the 2d of march, 1801, the fleet under the command of lord Keith, having on board general Abercrombie with an army of 16000 men, arrived in the bay of Aboukeer; but the wind blew too hard to allow any attempt to land. On the 7th the gale had subsided, and at two o'clock in the morning of the 8th about a hundred and fifty boats were filled with near six thousand men. By break of day they had all arrived at the place of rendezvous, and having made all the necessary preparations and arrangements, at eight they pushed on toward the land. On the sand hills rising in gradation from the shore four thousand french were posted, their left flanked by the castle of Aboukeer, and their centre strengthened by a hill much higher than any of the rest.

As soon as the boats were within a certain distance, a brisk fire of shot and shells was opened upon them from fifteen pieces of artillery, which the french had placed between the hillocks, beside 2500 musketry. Under this the english advanced, landed, formed on the strand, and marched up the hill in the centre, with general Moore at their head. The french could not withstand their attack, but were driven from the summit, and down the back of the hill. In the mean time the right of the french army, rushing down to the beach, and even into the sea so as to kill some men in the boats, endeavoured in vain to oppose the disembarkation of the troops. The soldiers formed with steadiness as they jumped ashore, repelled the charge of a body of cavalry, and obliged the french to give ground; who now perceiving the defeat of their centre, and that they were consequently exposed to be taken in the rear, deferred no longer their retreat.

The french having retired toward Alexandria, with the loss of near 300 men, and eight pieces of cannon, the english took up their ground, and the whole army was on shore before night. On the 12th the british army moved forward, and came within sight of the french, who were formed on an advantageous ridge, extending from the sea to the canal of Alexandria. The next morning an attack was ordered, the army marching in two lines to turn the flank of the french, who soon came down from the heights to charge the leading brigades commanded by major generals Cradock and the earl of Cavan. They were soon repulsed however, and compelled to retreat to a hill close to the walls of Alexandria. In this position major general Moore with the re-

serve, and major general Hutchinson, were preparing to attack them on the right flank, while the rest of the troops assailed them on their left; but it was found on reconnoitering it, that, being commanded by a fortified hill within the walls, it could not be tenable, and accordingly the french were left in quiet possession of it: the british army encamping at a small distance between the lake Mareotis and the sea.

On the 20th general Menou arrived at Alexandria with the main body of his army, and the next morning, about an hour before daybreak, he commenced a false attack on the left of the british encampment, commanded by general Cradock, by whom the french were repulsed. In the mean time Menou directed his grand effort against the right, which Bonaparte's invincible legion, consisting of nine hundred men, volunteered to turn. They succeeded so far as to pass between the battery that defended this flank, and a large ruin near it. Three times they stormed the battery, and three times every one that entered it was stretched breathless on the ground. The reserve, consisting of the forty-second and twenty-eighth regiments, finding the enemy in their rear, had faced about, charged the french with the bayonet in their turn, and drove them backward step by step into the ruin. There two hundred and fifty called for quarter, and were made prisoners. The rest were no more. Their standard, on which were inscribed the many victories they had gained, was destined to grace the triumph of their conquerors, remaining no longer to those, by whom it had been so hardly earned in the plains of Europe. While this was doing, the main body of the french army in a heavy column broke through the british line into the

valley, and pressed along the valley toward the rear of the encampment. A body of cavalry accompanying them wheeled to the left, as soon as they had passed the rear of the line, and directed their charge to the rear of the reserve. A circumstance unexpected by them, and not prepared for the purpose, broke this charge completely. The british soldiers, before their tents were landed, had dug holes about three feet deep to sleep in, at the same time throwing up the sand round their borders. The ground over which the french cavalry charged being full of these holes, they were at once completely routed with considerable loss. As the french soldiers were intermingled with the british, sir Ralph Abercrombie had got among them, but was extricated by some of his own troops. A french dragoon at this moment rode up, and made a stroke at him, but not being quite near enough, only cut through his coat, waistcoat, and shirt, and just grazed the skin with the point of his sword. His horse wheeling about, he brought him to the charge again, and made a second attempt by a thrust. The sword however passed between the general's side and his right arm, which he immediately closed upon it; and the dragoon being at that instant shot dead, the sword remained in the general's possession. The conflict was maintained for some time after this with considerable obstinacy, but at length the french retreated. In this battle the english lost 250 killed, and 1200 wounded. Among the latter was sir Ralph Abercrombie, who would not quit the field till the action was over, though very early in the engagement he received such a severe wound in his thigh, that he survived only till the 28th. Major general Moore and brigadier general Oakes were wounded likewise, but not dan-



BRIDGE OVER THE CANAL OF ALEXANDRIA.

*J. Meyer del.*

*Published by R. Dugrey, Historic Gallery, Pall Mall, 1802.*



gerously. On the side of the french, general Roize, who commanded the cavalry, was killed in the field, and generals Lanusse and Bodet were mortally wounded. They lost about 3000, killed, wounded, or taken prisoners, with one stand of colours, and two field pieces.

In the middle of the succeeding month general Hutchinson, on whom the command had now devolved, sent a detachment of british and turkish troops, under the command of colonel Spencer, against Rosetta. The french were soon driven from the town, and took refuge on the other side of the Nile: but the castle held out from the 16th of april to the 19th, when the garrison capitulated.

On the 23d general Hutchinson removed his head quarters to Rosetta, whither he had detached about 4000 men; with whom, and an equal number of turks, he marched to Rahmanie, where he attacked the french on the 9th of may, and drove them into their intrenchments. In the night they retired toward Cairo, leaving a small garrison in the fort, which surrendered the next day. The combined forces then pursued their march for Cairo, having concerted their movements with the grand vizier, who was now encamped about ten miles north-east of that city. On their march they captured a convoy of 550 camels for Alexandria, escorted by 600 men, whom they made prisoners; and were joined by Osmañ bey, the successor of Mourad bey, with 1500 mamalukes.

In the mean time the french general, apprised of the approach of the british troops by those who had retreated from Rahmanie, marched to attack the grand vizier, in hopes of defeating him, and dispersing his forces, before the junction took place. Fortunately for the ottoman army, it's movements were directed by

the military skill of colonel Murray and several other british officers, so that the french received a complete check, and were obliged to retreat, leaving their enemies masters of the field of battle.

General Hutchinson having reached Geeza, where the french had fortified themselves to defend a bridge of communication over the Nile, proceeded to invest it, while the grand vizier moved forward, and posted himself nearly within cannon shot of Cairo. The french thus surrounded by a much superiour force; having to defend a place of great extent, weakly fortified, and the numerous inhabitants of which were by no means friendly to them; having recently experienced too, as well as on former occasions, that all their military science could not render them irresistible even to the ottomans, when under the direction of british officers; prudently offered to surrender Cairo, and evacuate the country, on the conditions formerly accepted by Kleber. No doubt the french might have held out for some time; no doubt they might have obliged the combined forces to purchase the possession of Cairo at a great expense of blood. But to what end this lavishing of human life? What would have availed the calamities, that must have been suffered during a protracted siege; and the misery that must have been entailed on thousands, in ruined health, and mutilated limbs? As a soldier, to whom all these are but the common course of things, perhaps general Belliard may be blamed for capitulating, before his men were reduced to a state, in which capitulation would be no longer a benefit, as a man he deserves praise.

The metropolis being thus surrendered by the french, general Hutchinson returned to Alexandria, before which the main body

of his army was encamped. On the 17th of august he commenced his operations for reducing this city, which Menou professed himself resolved to defend to the last. Major general Coote embarked with a strong corps on the inundation, landed to the westward of Alexandria with little opposition, and invested the strong castle of Marabout, at the entrance of the western harbour. On the east of the town two attacks were made, to get possession of some heights in front of the french intrenchments. That on the right was led by major general Craddock, that on the left by major general Moore. A part of the 30th regiment, under the command of colonel Spencer, took possession of a hill in front of the enemy's right. General Menou, who was in person in that part of the intrenched camp, ordered about 600 men to drive it from this post. These advanced in columns, with fixed bayonets, and without firing a shot; but colonel Spencer did not wait for their attack. When they were almost close to his little corps, which was not a third of their number, he gave orders to charge; and was obeyed with such spirit and alacrity, that the french were driven back to their intrenchments in the greatest confusion, with the loss of several killed, wounded, and taken prisoners.

On the night of the 18th major general Coote opened his batteries against the castle of Marabout, which was likewise attacked by some turkish sloops, and the boats of the fleet, under the direction of the hon. captain Cochrane. On the night of the 21st the fort capitulated; and the next morning major general Coote marched to attack a strong corps posted in his front, in order to cover the approach to Alexandria. His able and judicious conduct was attended with complete success; he drove the enemy

before him every where, though strongly posted, and in a country which opposed uncommon obstacles to the progress of troops. The french suffered extremely in the action, and retreated in much confusion, leaving their wounded and seven pieces of cannon behind them.

On the 24th batteries were opened against the redoubt de Bain; and in the night of the 25th major general Coote surprised the enemy's advanced posts, when seven officers and fifty men were taken prisoners. This service was gallantly performed by lieut. col. Smith, with the first battalion of the 20th regiment, and a small detachment of dragoons under the orders of lieut. Kelly. The french endeavoured to recover the ground from which they had been driven, but were repulsed with loss: and in the morning four batteries were opened on each side of the town against their intrenched camp, which soon silenced their fire, and induced them to withdraw many of their guns.

In the evening of the 27th general Menou, who had vaunted of the almost impregnable strength of his positions, and his determination to defend them, sent an aide-de-camp to the british commander, to request a truce for three days, in order to give time for preparing a capitulation; which, after some difficulties and delays, was signed on the 2d of September.

Thus the french were completely expelled from Egypt, and obliged to relinquish the fruits of a conquest, from which they had promised themselves the greatest advantages; being obliged in a six months campaign to abandon a country, of which they had maintained possession for three years, and in which they had hitherto seemed invincible.

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VIEWS

IN

EGYPT