

H.M. Minister & Nubar Pasha. 30.7.84.

Yr telegram 3.5.84 received. Thanks for kind expressions. Nile now high, and we hope to open route to Sinnar in few days. We have had no serious losses, Stewart was slightly wounded in arm near Palace, he is all right now. Be assured that these hostilities are far from being sought for but we have no option, for retreat is impossible unless we abandon civil employes and their families, which the general feeling of troops is agst. I have no advice to give, is we open Sennar and clear Blue Nile, we will be strong enough to retake Berber, that is, if Dongola still holds out. As for Mahdi he will not send succour here. Not one Pound of the money you gave me got here, it was captured at Berber. We want 200 000 £ sent to Kasala. The expenses of these garrisons must be met. Kartoum costs 500 £ per diem. If route gets open to Kasala I shall send Stewart there, with journal, that is, if he will consent to go. You may rely on this, that if there was any possible way of avoiding this wretched fighting, I would adopt it for the whole war is hateful to me. The people refuse to let me go out on expeditions [Phrase deleted] for the bother which would arise if anything happened so I sit on tenter hooks of anxiety. If I could make any one chief here, I would do it, but it is impossible, for all the good men were killed with Hicks. To show you that Arabs fire well, two of our steamers which are blinded received 970 and 860 hits in their hulls respectively. Since our defeat 16.3.84, we have had only 30 killed, 50 or 50 wounded, which is very little. I should think we have fired half million cartridges. The conduct of people and troops has been excellent. I was thinking of issuing Proclamation liberating the slaves of those in arms, but have deferred doing so, for fear of complications. I have great trust that God will bring us out triumphantly, and with no great loss on either side. We hear queer stories as to fall of Berber. Arabs captured there all Stewart's Hussar uniform and my medals &c &c. It may be bad taste to say it, but if we get out of this, give Stewart a KCMG and spare me at all costs. You will thus save me the disagreeableness of having to refuse, but I hate these things: if we get out, it is in answer to prayer, and not by our might and it is a true pleasure to have been here, though painful enough at times. Stewart's journal is copious, I only hope it will get down to you when I send it. I wish W.O. would pay my brother 200 £ of my pay. Landmines are the thing for defence in future, we have covered the works with them, and they have deterred all attacks and done much execution. Since 30.3.84 date of your Cairo dispatch, we have had no news from you. Sayd Mahomet Osman of Kasala ought to be the route for your dispatches, and you ought to give him a present 500 £, for he saved Kasala. We have made a decoration with three degrees, silver gilt, silver and pewter, with inscription Siege of Kartoum with a grenade in centre. School children and women have also received one: consequently I am very popular with the black ladies Kartoum. We have issued paper notes to amount of 26000 £, and borrowed 50000 £ from merchants, which you will have to meet. I have sent in addition 8000 £ paper notes to Sennar. What Kasala is doing for money I do not know. Of course we only get taxes paid in lead, so you are running up a good bill up here. The troops and people are full of heart, I cannot say the ...

... same for all the Europeans. The Arabs are in poor heart. I should say that about 2000 determined men alone keep them in the field. I expect it will end in a terrible famine throughout the land. Spy yesterday stated the "Queen of England" had arrived at Korosko, perhaps it is a steamer. The only reinforcements the Soudan has received since 27 Nov' 83, date when Kicks defeat was known at Cairo is seven persons including myself! and we have sent down over 600 soldiers, and 2000 people. The people here and Arabs laugh over it. I shall not leave Kartoum until I can put some one in. If the Europeans like to go to Equator, I will give them steamers, but I will not leave these people after all they have gone through. As for routes I have told you that the one from Wadi Halfi along right bank of Nile to Berber is the best, and, had not Berber fallen, would have been a picnic. The other route is from Senhit to Kasala, and to Abou Haraz on Blue Nile, which would be safe up to Kasala, but I fear it is too late, we must fight it out with our own means; if helped by God, we shall succeed, if not, His will, so be it. The main thing is to send money to Kasala. [Sentence deleted] Where is the Wood? Kind regards to him and Genl Stevenson, Graham. Why write in cypher, it is useless, for Arabs have no interpreter. You say your policy is to abandon Soudan, so be it, but before you do that, you must take down Egyptian populations, and this the Arabs do not see. According to all accounts 5000 were massacred at Berber. [Two lines deleted]

All is for the best. [Two lines deleted] I will conclude  
in saying we will defend ourselves to the last, that I will not  
leave Kartoum, that I will try and persuade all Europeans to  
escape, and that I am still sanguine that, by some means  
not clear, God will give us an issue.

CG Gordon

31.7.44  
Kartoum

What was result of your negotiations for opening road Suakin to Berber?!

The Arabs captured the money (you gave me) at Berber, but it  
is only the money which the Egyptian Pachas here ground out  
of the Soudan, since their occupation.

P.S. Reading over yr telegram, 5.5.84, you ask me "to state cause and  
Intention in staying Kartoum, knowing Govt means to abandon Soudan", and  
in answer I say, I stay at Kartoum, because Arabs here shut us  
up & will not let us out, I also add that even if the road was open  
the people would not let me go, unless I gave them some Government  
or took them with me which I could not do. No one would leave more  
willingly than I would, if it was possible. C.G. Gordon.