

the air to such a prodigious height that it was distinctly seen on board the *Centurion*, though she was at least thirty miles distant.

Whilst the Commodore and his people were labouring at the fire, and the terror of its becoming general still possessed the whole city, several of the most considerable Chinese merchants came to Mr. Anson, to desire that he would let each of them have one of his soldiers (for such they styled his boat's crew from the uniformity of their dress) to guard their warehouses and dwelling-houses, which, from the known dishonesty of the populace, they feared would be pillaged in the tumult. Mr. Anson granted them this request; and all the men that he thus furnished behaved much to the satisfaction of the merchants, who afterwards highly applauded their great diligence and fidelity.

By this means, the resolution of the English in mastering the fire, and their trusty and prudent conduct, where they were employed as safeguards, was the general subject of conversation amongst the Chinese. And the next morning many of the principal inhabitants waited on the Commodore to thank him for his assistance; frankly owning to him that he had preserved their city from being totally consumed, as they could never have extinguished the fire of themselves. Soon after, too, a message came to the Commodore from the Viceroy, appointing the 30th of November for his audience; which sudden resolution of the Viceroy, in a matter that had so long been agitated in vain, was also owing to the signal services performed by Mr. Anson and his people at the fire, of which the Viceroy himself had been in some measure an eye-witness.

The fixing this business of the audience was on every account a circumstance with which Mr. Anson was much pleased; since he was satisfied the Chinese government would not have determined this point without having agreed among themselves to give up their pretensions to the duties they claimed, and to grant him all he could rea-