

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 21.
OFFICIAL DESPATCHES.

The following are the material parts of a letter from Lord Wellington, dated at Lazaca, the 2d September, and published in a London Gazette Extraordinary on Tuesday last:—

"The fire against the fort of San Sebastian was opened on the 26th of August, and directed against the towers which flanked the curtain on the eastern face, against the demy bastion on the south eastern angle, and the termination of the curtain of the southern face. Lieut. Gen. Sir T. Graham had directed that an establishment should be formed on the Island of Santa Clara, which was effected on the night of the 26th; and the enemy's detachment on that island were made prisoners. Captain Cameron, of the 9th had the command of the detachment which effected this operation, and Sir T. Graham particularly applauds his conduct, and that of Capt. Henderson, of the royal engineers. The conduct of Lieut. the Hon. James Arbuthnot, of the royal navy, who commanded the boats, was highly meritorious, as likewise that of Lieut. Bell, of the royal marines. All that it was deemed practicable to carry into execution, in order to facilitate the approach to the breaches before made in the wall of the town, having been effected on the 30th of August, and another breach having been made at the termination of the curtain, the place was stormed at 11 o'clock in the day on 31st and carried. The loss on our side has been severe. Lieut. Gen. Sir J. Leith, who had joined the army only two days before, and Major Generals Oswald and Robinson were unfortunately wounded in the breach, and Col. Sir R. Fletcher of the royal engineers, was killed by a musket ball at the mouth of the trenches. In this officer, and in Lieut. Colonel Crawford, of the 9th regiment, his Majesty's service has sustained a serious loss. The garrison retired to the castle, leaving about 670 prisoners in our hands.

"Since the fire against St. Sebastian's had been recommenced, the enemy had drawn the greatest part of their forces to the camp of Urogne, and there was every reason to believe that they would make an attempt to relieve the place. Three divisions of the 4th Spanish army, commanded by General Don Manuel Freyre, occupied the heights of San Marcial, and the town of Irun, by which the approach to San Sebastian by the high road was covered and protected, and they were supported by the 1st division of British infantry, under Major Gen. Howard, and Major General Lord Aylmer's brigade, on their left, and the rear of Irun; and by Gen. Loga's division encamped near the Sierra de Aya, in the rear of their right.—In order to secure them still further, I moved two brigades of the 4th division on the 30th to the convent of San Antonio, one of which (Gen. Ross') under Lieut. Gen. the Hon. Sir L. Cole, moved up the same day to Sierra de Aya, and the other on the morning of the 31st leaving the 9th Portuguese brigade on the heights between the convent and Vera, and Lezaca. Major Gen. Inglis' brigade of the 7th division was moved on the first to the bridge of Lezaca; and I gave orders for the troops of the Puertos of Echalar, Zugarramurdi and Maya to attack the enemy's weakened posts in front of these positions. The enemy crossed the Bidassoa by the fords between Andara and the destroyed bridge on the high road between day light on the morning of the 31st with a very large force, with which they made a most desperate attack along the whole front of the position of the Spanish troops on the heights of St. Marcial. They were driven back, some of them even across the river, in the most gallant style, by the Spanish troops, whose conduct was equal to that of any troops that I have ever seen engaged:—and the attack having been frequently repeated, was upon every occasion defeated with the same gallantry and determination. The course of the river being immediately under the heights on the French side, on which the enemy had placed a considerable quantity of cannon, they were enabled to throw a bridge across the river about three quarters of a mile above the high road, over which in the afternoon, they marched again a considerable body, which with those who had crossed the fords, made another desperate attack upon the Spanish positions.—This was equally beat back; and at length finding all their efforts on that side fruitless, the enemy took advantage of the darkness of a violent storm to retire their troops from this front entirely. Notwithstanding that, as I have above informed your Lordship, I had a British division on each flank of the 4th Spanish army, I am happy to be able to report, that the conduct of the latter was so conspicuously good, and they were so capable of defending their post without assis-

tance, notwithstanding the desperate efforts of the enemy to carry it, that finding that the ground did not allow of my making use of the 1st or 4th divisions, on the flanks of the enemy's attacking corps, neither of them were in the least engaged during the action. Nearly at the same time that the enemy crossed the Bidassoa in front of the heights of San Marcial, they likewise crossed that river with about three divisions of infantry in two columns, by the fords below Salin, in front of the position occupied by the 9th Portuguese brigade. I ordered Major General Inglis to support this brigade with that of the 7th division under his command;—and as soon as I was informed of the course of the enemy's attack, I sent to Lieut. Gen. the Earl of Dalhousie, to request that he would likewise move towards the Bidassoa, with the 7th division and to the light division, to support Major Gen. Inglis by every means in their power. Major Gen. Inglis found it impossible to maintain the heights between Lezaca and the Bidassoa, and he withdrew to those in front of the convent of San Antonia which he maintained. In the mean time Major Gen. Kempt moved one brigade of the light division to Lezaca, by which he kept the enemy in check, and covered the march of the Earl of Dalhousie to join Major Gen. Inglis. The enemy, however, having completely failed in their attempt upon the position of the Spanish army on the heights of San Marcial, and finding that Major Gen. Inglis had taken a position from which they could not drive him, at the same time that it covered and protected the right of the Spanish army, and the approaches to San Sebastian by Oparzun, and that their situation on the left of the Bidassoa was becoming at every moment more critical, retired during the night. The fall of rain during the evening and night had so swollen the Bidassoa, that the rear of their column was obliged to cross at the bridge of Vera. In order to effect this object, they attacked the posts of Major Gen. Skerritt's brigade of the light division at about three in the morning, both from the Puerto de Vera and from the left of the Bidassoa. Although the nature of the ground rendered it impossible to prevent entirely the passage of the bridge after day-light, it was made under the fire of a great part of Major Gen. Skerritt's brigade, and the enemy's loss in the operation must have been very considerable.

"While this was going on upon the left of the army, Marshal de Campo Don Pedro Giron attacked the enemy's posts in front of the pass of Echalar, on the 30th and 31st. Lieut. Gen. the Zugarramurdi, with the 6th Portuguese brigade, on the 31st; and the Hon. Major Gen. Colville made Col. Douglass attack the enemy's post in front of the pass of Maya, on the same day, with the 6th Portuguese brigade. All these troops conducted themselves well. The attack made by the Earl of Dalhousie delayed his march till late in the afternoon of the 31st, but he was in the evening in a favorable situation for his further progress: and in the morning of the 1st, in that allotted for him. In these operations in which a second attempt by the enemy to prevent the establishment of the allies upon the frontiers, has been defeated, by the operations of a part only of the allied army, at the very moment at which the town of St. Sebastian was taken by storm; I have had great satisfaction in observing the zeal and ability of the officers, and the gallantry and discipline of the soldiers. The different reports which I have transmitted to your Lordship from Lieut. Gen. Sir Thomas Graham, will have shewn the ability and perseverance with which he has conducted the arduous enterprise entrusted to his direction, and the zeal and exertion of all the officers employed under him."

[Here his Lordship bestows his praise on the several officers and corps engaged, which we regret our want of room to insert at length: namely, Sir George Collier, his officers, seamen and marines; the Spanish Generals, their officers and troops; Major Gen. Inglis, Cols. Michell and Hawkins, Major Gen. Pakenham, &c.]

OFFICIAL LETTER

From Sir THOMAS GRAHAM to Lord WELLINGTON—dated

OPARZUN, SEPTEMBER 1.

My Lord—In obedience to your Lordship's orders of the preceding day, to attack and form a lodgment on the breach of St. Sebastian, which now extended to the left, so as to embrace the outermost tower, the end and front of the curtain immediately over the left bastion, as well as the faces of the bastion itself, the assault took place at 11 o'clock, A. M. yesterday; and I have the honor to report to your Lordship, that the heroic perseverance of all the troops concerned was at last crowned with success.—The column of attack was formed of the se-

cond brigade of the 5th division, commanded by Major Gen. Robinson, with an immediate support of detachments as per margin, and having in the reserve the remainder of the 5th battalion of Cacadores of General Bradford's brigade, under Major Hill; the whole under the direction of Lt. Gen. Sir J. Leith, commanding the fifth division. Having arranged every thing with Sir J. Leith, I crossed the Urumia to the batteries of the right attack, where every thing could be most distinctly seen, and from whence the order for fire of batteries according to circumstances, could be immediately given. The column, in filing out of the right of the trenches, was as before exposed to a heavy fire of shells and grape shot, and a mine was exploded in the left angle of the counter-scarp of the horn-work, which did great damage, but did not check the ardor of the troops in advancing to the attack. There was never any thing so fallacious as the external appearance of the breach; without some description, the almost insuperable difficulties of the breach cannot be estimated. Notwithstanding its great extent, there was but one point where it was possible to enter and there by single files. All the inside of the wall to the right of the curtain formed a perpendicular scarp of at least 20 feet to the level of the streets. So that the narrow ridge of the curtain itself, formed the breaching of its end and front, was the only accessible point. During the suspension of the operations of the siege, from want of ammunition, the enemy had prepared every means of defence which it could devise, so that great numbers of men were covered by intrenchments and traverses in the hornworks, on the ramparts of the curtain, and inside the town opposite to the breach and ready to fire a most destructive fire of musketry on both flanks of the approach to the top of the narrow ridge of the curtain. Every thing that the most determined bravery could attempt was repeatedly tried in vain by the troops, who were brought forward from the trenches in succession. No man outlived the attempt to gain the ridge; and though the slope of the breach afforded shelter for the enemy's musketry, yet still the nature of the stone rubbish prevented the great exertions of the engineers and working parties from being able to form a lodgment for the troops exposed to the shells and grape from the batteries of the castle, as was particularly directed, in obedience to your Lordship's instructions; and at all events, a secure lodgment could never have been obtained without occupying a part of the curtain.

In this most desperate state of the attack, after consulting with Col. Dickson, commanding the Royal Artillery, I ventured to order the guns to be turned against the curtain. A heavy fire of artillery was directed against it; passing a few feet over the heads of our troops on the beach, and was kept up with a precision of practice beyond all example. Meanwhile I accepted the offer of a part of Major Gen. Bradford's Portuguese brigade to ford the river near its mouth. The advance of the first battalion, 13th regiment, under Major Snodgrass, over the open beach, and across the river, and of a detachment of the 24th regiment, under Lieut. Colonel M'Bean, in support, was made in the handsomest style, under a very severe fire of grape. Major Snodgrass attacked and finally carried the small breach on the right of the great one, and Lt. Colonel M'Bean's detachment occupied the right of the great breach. I ought not to omit to mention, that a similar offer was made by the 1st Portuguese regiment of Brigadier General Wilson's brigade, under Lieut. Colonel Fearon; and that both Major General Bradford and Brigadier General Wilson, had from the beginning, urged most anxiously the employment of their respective brigades in the attack, as they had so large a share in the labor and fatigues of the right attack. Observing now the effect of the admirable fire of the batteries against the curtain, though the enemy was so much covered, a great effort was ordered to be made to gain the high ridge at all hazards, at the same time that an attempt should be made to storm the hornwork. It fell to the lot of the 2d brigade of the 5th division, under the command of Colonel the Hon. C. Greville, to move out of the trenches for this purpose, and the 3d battalion of the royal Scots, under Lt. Col. Barnes, supported by the 38th, under Lt. Col. Mills, fortunately arrived to assault the breach of the curtain, about the time when an explosion on the rampart of the curtain (occasioned by the fire of the artillery,) created some confusion among the enemy. The narrow pass was gained, and was maintained, after a severe conflict, and the troops on the right of the breach, having about this time succeeded in forcing the barricades on the top of the narrow line of wall, found their way into the houses that joined it.

Thus, after an assault which lasted above two hours, under the most trying circumstances, a firm footing was obtained. It was impossible to restrain the impetuosity of the troops, and in an hour more, the enemy were driven from all the complication of defences prepared in the streets, suffering a severe loss on their retreat to the castle, and leaving the whole town in our possession.

PLAGUE AT MALTA.

EXTRACT OF A PRIVATE LETTER DATED MALTA, June 17.

"Thank God, the plague has not as yet interfered with the military in any one instance. You will of course be anxious to hear some account of it, and I will now endeavor to give you as concise a detail as I can of the rise and progress, and I wish I could add of the fall of the dreadful malady, which has prevailed here now six weeks. Nobody yet knows how it got into the island. Vague suspicions have been entertained, but until we hear with tolerable certainty I shall not mention one report. It is my intention only to state facts, some of which come under my own knowledge, others I have from the best authority. I have kept a journal from the commencement. On the 4th of May a letter was written to Mr. Green by Dr. Gravagna, who had visited the family of a shoe maker in Strada Paola, No. 150, by the name Salvador Borg, one of whose children died on the 19th April, after a very short illness. The mother was taken ill on the 2d, and died on the 3d of May. The doctor suspected the disease was the plague, in consequence of which he wrote to Mr. Green. In the margin of the following page you will find a daily state of the exact numbers who died of it, and have been infected. The shoe maker was infected on the 7th of May, and died on the 12th; but, generally speaking, death succeeded the infection in 36 hours. Only three instances of recovery have as yet taken place, and I believe the reason has been want of attention. Nobody will come within yards of an infected person.—If you are too ill to assist yourself, you must necessarily die, and several cases have occurred where death takes place almost immediately. On the 5th May Government published a proclamation to inform the people that the disease had made its appearance, and recommending precautionary measures, which were only pursued by the English, as the natives would not believe for a very long time that it was the plague, in consequence of the small number of deaths and infections. It is the same in every country; the disease makes its appearance with so many different symptoms, besides the difficulty of finding out those with whom infected persons have had communication. It has spread through Casal Iola, Florina, St. Julian, Vitoriosa, Burmola, and every part of the island of Malta, Goza has not been infected, nor Lampedusa. Fort Manuel was cleared out as a place to put those in who had not the disease, but had been in infected houses, or those who had survived infected families.—About 300 persons have died there, as they were at last obliged to send all infected persons to that fort, which destroyed those who were sent in the first instance. Those infected in town are allowed to remain in their own houses, if they are respectable persons and the houses airy. In the country all remain in their own houses. The men servants of Capt. Chilcott, agent of transports, were taken ill; one of them died, the other is recovering in Fort Manuel. Capt. Chilcott, by taking every precaution, has escaped, and is as well as ever, though the servants were infected a fortnight ago; all the family are also well. It has not spread so rapidly as might have been expected, considering the immensity of the population. No. 20, Strada Pozzi had originally 52 inhabitants, who have all died, except a little girl, and she was infected this morning. I should fill a volume were I to relate all the affecting scenes I have witnessed. In one hour the father and mother were dying in bed, the mother with an infant at her breast, two children on the floor helpless, another infected, but able to move, and employed in bringing milk, &c. to the family, which was left at the door, without touching any thing herself. They are all now dead.

"June 19.—I have opened this again, as the packet was detained by Government, in the hope of giving a more favorable account of the plague, instead of which the numbers in the last two days have increased; and this is one of the most determined bad days for it—a Levanter, and rains. I dread to-morrow's report. The mail is to be made up this afternoon, and you will see by the details on the 17th and 18th that we are getting worse."

[Here follows a statement, by which it appears, that from the 19th of April to 18th June inclusive 529 have died, 419 of whom fell victims in the month of June.]

The Board of the National Vaccine Establishment having received intimation of an asser-tion, "that vaccination protects people from the small pox for a few years only," and being