

the splendid appearance of our infantry in line in the distance. Red is the color after all, and the white slashings of the breast of the coat and the cross belts, though rendering a man conspicuous enough, give him an appearance of size which other uniforms do not produce. The dark French columns on our right look very small compared to our battalions, though we knew they were quite as strong; but the marching of our allies, laden as they were with all their packs, &c., was wonderful; the pace at which they went was really "killing." It was observable, too, that our staff was more conspicuous and more numerous than the staff of our brave friends. Nothing strikes the eye at such a distance as a cocked hat and bunch of white cock's feathers, and several of our best officers very wisely doffed the latter adornment, thinking that they were quite conspicuous enough by their advanced position on horseback and by the number of their staff around them.

The scheme of operations concerted between the generals, and chiefly suggested to Lord Raglan, it was said, by Marshal St. Arnaud and General Carnobert, was, that the French and Turks on our right were to force the passage of the river, a rivulet of the Alma, and establish themselves on the heights over the stream at the opposite side, so that they could enfilade the position to their right and opposite to our left and centre. The Alma is a tortuous little stream which has worked its way down through a red clay soil, deepening its course as it proceeds seawards, and which drains the steppe-like lands on its right bank, making at times pools and eddies too deep to be forded, though it can generally be crossed by waders who do not fear to wet their knees. It need not be said that the high banks formed by the action of the stream in cutting through the soil are sometimes at one side, sometimes at another, according to the sweep of the stream.

At the place where the bulk of the British army crossed, the banks are generally at the right side, and vary from two and three to six or eight feet in depth to the water; where the French attacked, the banks are generally formed by the unvaried curve of the river on the left hand side. Along the right or north bank of the Alma are a number of Tartar houses, numerous and close enough to form a cluster of habitations deserving the name of a hamlet, at times scattered wide apart amid little vineyards surrounded by walls of mud and stone of three feet in height. The bridge over which the post road passes from Bouljanak to Sebastopol runs close to one of these hamlets—a village, in fact of some 50 houses. This village is approached from the north by a road winding through a plain nearly level till it comes near the village where the ground dips so that at a distance of 300 yards a man on horseback can hardly see the tops of the nearer and more elevated houses, and can only ascertain the position of the stream by the willows and verdure along its banks. At the left or south side of the Alma the ground assumes a very different character—smooth where the bank is deep, and gently elevated where the shelf of the bank occurs; it recedes for a few yards at a moderate height above the stream, pierced here and there by the course of the winter's torrents, so as to form small ravines, commanded, however by the heights above. It was in the upper height that the strength of the Russian position consisted. A remarkable ridge of mountain varying in height from 500 to 700 feet runs along the course of the Alma on the left or south with the course of the stream and assuming the form of cliffs when close to the sea. This ridge is marked all along its course by deep gullies, which runs towards the river at various angles and serve, no doubt, to carry off the floods produced by the rain, and the melting of the winter snows on the hills and table lands above.

If the reader will place himself on the top of Richmond Hill, dwarf the Thames in imagination to the size of a Hampshire rivulet, and imagine the lovely hill itself to be deprived of all vegetation and protracted for about four miles along the stream, he may form some notion of the position occupied by the Russians, while the plain on the north or left bank of the Thames will bear no inapt similitude to the land over which the British and French armies advanced, barring only the verdure and freshness. At the top of the ridges, between the gullies, the Russians had erected earthwork batteries, mounted with 32lb. and 24lb. brass guns, supported by numerous field pieces and howitzers. These guns enfiladed the tops of the ravines parallel to them, or swept them to the base, while the whole of the sides up which an enemy, unable to stand the direct fire of the batteries, would be forced to ascend, where filled with masses of skirmishers armed with an excellent two-groove rifle, throwing a large solid conical ball with force at 700 and 800 yards, as the French learnt to their cost. The principal battery consisted of an earthwork of the form of two sides of a triangle, with the apex pointed towards the bridge, and the sides covering both sides of the stream, corresponding with the bend in the river below it, at the distance of 1000 yards, while, with a fair elevation, the 32-pounders threw, as we saw very often, beyond the houses of the village to the distance of 1400 and 1500 yards. This was constructed on the brow of a hill about 600 feet above the river, but the hill rose behind it for another 50 feet, before it dipped away towards the road. The ascent of the

hill was enfiladed by the fire of three batteries of earthwork on the right, and by another on the left, and these batteries were equally capable of covering the village, the stream, and the slopes which led up the hill to their position.—In the first battery were 12 32-pounders brass guns of exquisite workmanship, which told only too well. In the other batteries were some 25 guns in all. It was said that the Russians had 100 guns on the hill, and 40,000 men (40 battalions of infantry 1000 strong each of the 16th, 31st, 32nd, and 52nd regiments.) We were opposed principally to the 16th and 32nd regiments, judging by the number of dead in front of us. I have not been able to ascertain by whom they were commanded; but there is a report that Menschikoff commanded the army in chief, and that the left was under Gortschakoff, a relative of the diplomatist; and that the right was under Bodahoff, the military governor of Sebastopol. It seems strange that an admiral should be appointed to command an army but strange things do happen in Russia. It is also affirmed that the carriage of Menschikoff was taken, and in it was found a copy of a despatch to the Emperor, in which the prince stated that 40,000 men might take Sebastopol but that 80,000 men could be held in check for weeks by the position of the Alma. Large masses of cavalry, principally lancers and heavy dragoons, manœuvred on the hills on the right of the Russians, and at last descended the hills, crossed the stream, and threatened our left and rear. As we came near the river our left wing was thrown back, in order to support our small force of cavalry, and a portion of our artillery was pushed forward in the same direction. Our danger in this respect was detected by the quick eye of Sir George Brown, and I heard him give the order for the movement of the artillery almost as soon as he caught sight of the enemy's cavalry, and just as we were coming to the village. As I have already said, our plan of operations was that the French should establish themselves under the fire of the guns on the heights on the extreme of the enemy's left.—When that attack was sufficiently developed, and had met with success, the British army was to force the right and part of the centre of the Russian position, and the day was gained.—When we were about three miles from the village the French steamers ran in as close as they could to the bluff of the shore at the south side of the Alma, and presently we saw them shelling the heights in splendid style, the shell bursting over the enemy's squares and batteries, and finally driving them from their position on the right, within 3000 yards of the sea.

The French practice commenced about half-past twelve o'clock, and lasted for about an hour and a half. We could see the shells falling over the batteries of the enemy, and bursting right into them; and then the black masses inside the works broke into little specks which flew about in all directions, and when the smoke cleared away there were some to be seen strewn over the ground. The Russians answered the shells from the heights, but without effect. A powder tumbrel was blown up by a French shell; another shell fell by accident into an ambuscade which the Russians had prepared for the advancing French, and at last they drew off from the sea-side, and confined their efforts to the defence of the gullies and heights beyond the fire of the heavy guns of the steamers. At one o'clock we saw the French columns struggling up the hills, covered by a cloud of skirmishers, whose fire seemed most deadly. Once, at the sight of a threatening mass of Russian infantry, in a commanding position above them, who fired rapid volleys among them, the French paused, but it was only to collect their skirmishers, for as soon as they had formed they ran up the hill at the pas de charge, and at once broke the Russians, who fled in disorder, with loss, up the hill. We could see men dropping on both sides, and the wounded rolling down the steep. At 1.50 our line of skirmishers got within range of the battery on the hill, and immediately the Russians opened fire at 1200 yards with effect, the shot ploughing through the open lines of the riflemen and falling into the advance columns behind.—Shortly before this time dense volumes of smoke rose from the river, and drifted along to the eastward rather interfering with the view of the enemy on the left of our position. The Russians had set the village on fire. It was a fair exercise of military skill—was well executed—took place at the right time and succeeded in occasioning a good deal of annoyance. Our troops halted when they neared this village their left extended beyond it by the verge of the stream; our right behind the burning cottages, and within range of the batteries. It is said the Russians had taken the range of all the principal points in their front and placed twigs and sticks to mark them. In this way they were assisted by the post signboards on the road. The Russians opened a furious fire on the whole of our line, but the French had not yet made progress enough to justify us in advancing. The round shot whizzed in every direction, dashing up the dirt and sand in the faces of the staff of Lord Raglan, who were also shelled severely, and attracted much of the enemy's fire. Still Lord Raglan waited patiently for the development of the French attack. A length an aide-de-camp came to him and reported the French had crossed the Alma, but they had not established themselves sufficiently to justify us in an attack. The infantry were, therefore, ordered to lie down

and the army for a short time was quite passive only that our artillery poured forth an unceasing fire of shell, rockets, and round, shot which ploughing through the Russians, and caused them great loss. They did not waver, however and replied to our artillery manfully their shot falling among our men as they lay, and carrying off legs and arms at every round. Lord Raglan at last became weary of this inactivity, his spirit was up; he looked around, and saw men on whom he might stake the honour and fate of Great Britain by his side, and, anticipating a little in a military point of view the crisis of action he gave orders for our whole line to advance.—Up rose these serried masses, and passing through a fearful shower of round, case shot, and shell, they dashed into the Alma, and, "floundered" through its waters which were literally torn into foam by the deadly hail. At the other side of the river were a number of vineyards, and to our surprise, they were occupied by Russian riflemen. Three of the staff were shot down, but, led by Lord Raglan in person, the rest advanced cheering on the men.

And now came the turning point of the battle, in which Lord Raglan, by his sagacity and military skill, probably secured the victory at a smaller sacrifice than would have been otherwise the case. He dashed over the bridge, followed by his staff. From the road over it, under the Russian guns, he saw the state of the action.—The British line, which he had ordered to advance, was struggling through the river and up the heights in masses, firm indeed, but mowed down by the murderous fire of the batteries, and by grape, round shot, shell, cannister, case shot, and musketry, from some of the guns of the central battery, and from an immense and compact mass of Russian infantry. Then commenced one of the most bloody and determined struggles in the annals of war. The second division, led by Sir De L. Evans in the most dashing manner, crossed the stream on the right.—The 7th fusiliers, led by Colonel Yea, were swept down by fifties. The 55th, 30th and 95th led by Brigadier Pennefather, who was in the thickest of the fight, cheering on his men, again and again were checked indeed, but never drew back in their onward progress, which was marked by a fierce roll of Minie musketry; and brigadier Adams, with the 41st, 47th and 49th, bravely charged up the hill, and aided them in the battle. Sir George Brown, conspicuous on a grey horse, rode in front of his light division, urging them with voice and gesture. Gallant fellows! they were worthy of such a gallant chief. The 7th diminished by one half, fell back to reform their columns lost for the time; the 23rd, with eight officers dead and four wounded, were still rushing to the front, aided by the 19th, 33rd, 77th, and 88th. Down went Sir George in a cloud of dust in front of the battery. He was soon up, and shouted "23rd, I am all right. Be sure I'll remember this day," and led them on again, but in the shock produced by the fall of their chief the gallant regiment suffered terribly while paralysed for a moment. Meantime the guards, on the right of the light division, and the brigade of Highlanders, were storming the heights on the left.—The line was almost as regular as though they were in Hyde-park. Suddenly a tornado of round and grape rushed through from the terrible battery, and a roar of musketry from behind thinned their front ranks by dozens. It was evident that we were just able to contend against the Russians, favoured as they were by a great position. At this very time an immense mass of Russian infantry were seen moving down towards the battery. They halted. It was the crisis of the day.

Sharp, angular, and solid, they looked as if they were cut out of the solid rock. It was beyond all doubt that if our infantry, harassed and thinned as they were, got into the battery they would have to encounter a formidable fire, which they were ill-calculated to bear. Lord Raglan saw the difficulties of the situation. He asked if it would be possible to get a couple of guns to bear on these masses. The reply was "Yes," and an artillery officer, whose name I do not now know, brought up two guns to fire on the Russian squares. The first shot missed, but the next, and the next, and the next cut through the ranks so cleanly, and so keenly, that a clear lane could be seen for a moment through the square. After a few rounds the square became broken, wavered and broke, and fled over the brow of the hill, leaving behind it six or seven distinct lines of dead, lying as close as possible to each other, marking the passage of the fatal messengers. This act relieved our infantry of a deadly incubus, and they continued their magnificent and fearful progress up the hill. The duke encouraged his men by voice and example, and proved himself worthy of his proud command and of the royal race from which he comes. "Highlanders," said Sir C. Campbell, ere they came to the charge, "don't pull a trickier till you're within a yard of the Russians!" They charged and well they obeyed their chieftain's wish. Sir Collin had his horse shot under him, but his men took the battery at a bound. The Russians rushed out, and left multitudes of dead behind them. The guards had stormed the right of the battery ere the Highlanders got into the left, and it is said the Scots fusilier guards were the first to enter. The second and light division crowned the height. The French turned the guns on the hill against the flying masses, which the ca-

valry in vain tried to cover. A few struggles from the scattered infantry, a few rounds of cannon and musketry, and the enemy fled to the south-east, leaving three generals, three guns 700 prisoners, and 4000 wounded behind them. The battle of the Alma was won. It is won with a loss of nearly 3000 killed and wounded on our side. The list will appear in a few days.—The Russians' retreat was covered by the cavalry but if we had had an adequate force we could have captured many guns and multitudes of prisoners.

Sept. 22, The Army moves on from the Alma tomorrow. We were busy to-day and yesterday sending off sick and wounded to the fleet and burying the dead.

It is said the Russians have retired from the Katscha, and will defend the line of the Belbek.

Her Majesty's Ship Agamemnon, Sept. 23.—I witnessed the greater part of the battle from the Agamemnon's maintop, and no one could have seen it better. Had I been on the field I should have seen more of personal valour, and of the movements of particular bodies of men; but I wished to have a complete view of the whole of the part taken both by the English and French armies, and in this I was entirely successful, as I looked down upon the field of battle as upon a map. Towards the end of it I joined the French, who formed the extreme right, and advanced under cover of the guns of the in-shore squadron. The French commenced the action, scaling the heights with great courage and skill. I have never seen anything more beautiful than the way in which the zouaves and tirailleurs scrambled up the almost perpendicular cliffs, and then formed in line on the summit under a very heavy fire. They held their ground until Bosquet's division and the artillery reached the heights. The battle then became general, and the Russians were steadily beaten back. Their flank having thus been turned I could scarcely doubt the issue of the battle. The position, however, was enormously strong. Fancy a gradually sloping country, without a single object to protect advancing troops, ending in a river sweeping round high cliffs of earth, in the centre of which, about three miles from the sea, was an amphitheatre of hills; this amphitheatre commanded the principal fords over the river and the open country beyond; it was strengthened by an earthwork with 10 or 12 guns and a permanent battery of 12 guns more. The great mistake of the Russians consisted in not sufficiently fortifying the heights to their left, which might have been rendered exceedingly strong. Indeed, it is the general feeling that such a position held by French or English troops would have been almost impregnable.—The armies were fortunately so placed that they had the work to do which best suited the peculiar qualities of their men. The English could not have scaled the heights like the French, nor would French columns, in all probability, have marched up to the batteries with that dogged courage which so distinguishes British troops when placed in the position in which they were during this battle.

The French having turned the Russian flank and held the heights, our troops advanced steadily under a most tremendous fire from the batteries. They broke in crossing the river, and the light divisions rushed up the slope without pausing. Two regiments—it is impossible to reconcile the conflicting accounts, each regiment saying that the other gave way—recoiled beneath the tremendous fire of the Russian batteries. This part of the battle is much criticised by some of the military authorities who declare that our troops were exposed to almost inevitable destruction; the earthwork was, however, triumphantly carried, and the battle decided by an admirable movement of the Highland brigade under Sir Collin Campbell, to whom every one assigns the decisive movement which secured complete victory; but the slaughter here was terrific. The oldest generals declare that in no battle heretofore fought have so many dead been heaped up in one spot. It would be impossible to describe to you the frightful scene which I witnessed in the square mile comprising this earthwork, the slope beneath it and the slope above it, upon which were formed the enormous squares of the Russian infantry. The greater part of the English killed and wounded were here, and there were at least five Russians to every Englishman.

You could not walk for the bodies. The most frightful mutilations the human body can suffer—the groans of the wounded—the packs, helmets, arms, clothes, scattered over the ground—all formed a scene that one can never forget. The two principal batteries having been carried the day was ours; the Russians retired under a well sustained fire from our horse artillery and foot artillery.

Unfortunately our utter want of cavalry enabled the Russians to retire in good order, and to carry off all their guns but three. Had we possessed cavalry the retreat must have ended in a complete rout. Our infantry was too much exhausted to pursue them, and the horse artillery, unsupported by cavalry, was unable to follow the enemy very far; it inflicted fearful injury upon the retreating columns, however, as the immense number of dead since found on the road to Sebastopol sufficiently proves. This most brilliant affair only lasted from the very