

## Incidents of the War.

## OFFICIAL DESPATCHES.

HEAD QUARTERS BEFORE SEBASTOPOL,  
May 26.

Monsieur le Maréchal.—Since the storming of the Russian counter-approaches in front of the Central Bastion, on the night of the 22nd of May, and the occupation of that important work by our troops, the enemy, to impede our progress and take our attacks in flank, turned their attention to the Quarantine side, and erected their new line of counter-approaches.—They formed the plan of connecting by a gabionade, the ambuscades at the extremity of the bay, those of the cemetery, and to connect the work by a continuous covered way with the right lunette of the Central Bastion. In the night between the 21st and 22nd, by an enormous effort of labour, skillfully concealed, they commenced laying out vast place d'armes, so threatening for our left attack, and so convenient for enabling the enemy to assemble large bodies of men and make considerable sorties.

The danger of this Russian work was evident. I saw at once its extent, and ordered General De Salles, commander of the First Corps, to carry that position, and turn the enemy's new works against themselves—a delicate and difficult operation, as a strong resistance and obstinate struggle might be counted upon under the fire of formidable batteries.

The General of Division Pate, was charged with the operation. Two attacks were organised,—one on the ambuscades at the bottom of the bay; the other on the ambuscades of the cemetery by the south-east angle of that enclosure; they were to be simultaneous.

After having carried the new gabionades of the enemy, the object was to maintain ourselves in advance with sufficient solidity to protect the work and to transform the Russian work to our own use. But the development of the lines was immense; two successive phases were to be expected in the action—one of battle and one of labour. The combat took place on the night between the 22nd and 23rd of May; it commenced at nine o'clock in the evening.

Our left attack was led by General of Brigade Beuret, and consisted of three companies of the 10th battalion of Chasseurs-à-pied, three battalions of the 2nd Regiment of the Foreign Legion, and one battalion of the 98th of the Line.

The right attack, intrusted to General de la Motterouge, consisted of picked companies of the 1st Regiment of the Foreign Legion, supported by two battalions of the 28th Line, with a battalion of the 18th and two battalions of Voltigeurs of the Garde as reserve. Other battalions were ready to march, in case General Pate should need reinforcements.

The enemy, whether they had determined on a great attack, or with the intention of completing their lines in one night by a great effort, and covering their works by a vigorous demonstration and an effectual protection against our attacks, were there in great force to receive us. We estimated at more than twenty battalions the force of the enemy our brave soldiers had to attack and defeat. According to prisoners they were twenty-six battalions.

The action commenced on a signal given by General Pate, with inexpressible impetuosity. In a few minutes all the ambuscades on our right were in our hands. The veterans of the Foreign Legion had carried every thing before them, and, supported by the 28th of the Line, they established themselves in front of the Russian works, covering our workmen. But formidable masses of Russians soon issued from the Quarantine ravine, joined in the combat, and disputed the ground with an extraordinary obstinacy. The two battalions of the 28th, the battalion of the 18th, and the Voltigeurs of the Garde, were successively engaged, and this heroic struggle lasted till daybreak. Five times the most distant ambuscades were taken and retaken by the Russians and our troops. These bayonet melees were terrible. Two other battalions of Voltigeurs of the Garde, the 9th Chasseurs-à-pied, and the 8th of the Line were called to the battle-ground—some to fight, some to carry off the killed and wounded; all did their duty.

In the midst of this sanguinary and glorious struggle, it was impossible for the engineers to work. We were obliged to destroy the enemy's works, so as to prevent them holding them themselves, and were compelled to adjourn the second act of our enterprise to the following night. As the dawn broke the Russians had ceased fighting, and our battalions returned to the trenches, leaving the ground covered with the enemy's slain.

On the left attack the ambuscades were carried with the same impetuosity. There, also, the Russians returned to the charge with extraordinary tenacity. Numerous assaults were made at the point of the bayonet; but after two hours the enemy, discouraged, beat a retreat, and our engineers entailed themselves solidly in the Russian gabionade, which became definitively our conquest.

On the following night it was necessary to complete what we had so vigorously commenced; I ordered a second attack, expecting full

success from this new effort of our brave infantry.

General of Division Levaillant was intrusted with the accomplishment of this task, with 10 battalions, of which two of the Voltigeurs of the Garde acted as a reserve.

Four of these battalions, under the orders of General Coustou, were charged to cover our conquest of the preceding night on the extreme left. The six others, commanded by General Duval, were to retake on the right the gabionade running parallel with the great wall of the cemetery, to beat the enemy, and allow our engineers to make the works definitively our own.

The action commenced at the same hour as on the previous evening. The impetuosity of these brave battalions, belonging to the 46th, 98th, 14th, and 80th, was irresistible. The ambuscades were turned and carried; the enemy driven back on all sides, retreated, keeping up a skirmishing fire, which gradually ceased. The engineers immediately set to work, despite a fire of grape and every sort of missile from the place. Colonel Guerin and Commandant Durand de Villers conducted the works with as much intelligence as vigour.

Our success has therefore been complete.—The considerable work upon which the enemy had counted to arrest our attacks is in our hands; their gabions cover us; their own ambuscades are turned against themselves. Those which we could not combine in our system have been destroyed.

These vigorous actions were not accomplished without considerable loss, and we have paid for our victory with generous blood. I await on this head the report of General De Salles.

Yesterday, upon the reiterated demand of General Osten-Sacken, a flag of truce was hoisted, and an armistice concluded for carrying off the dead. We handed over more than 1200 corpses to the enemy. This field of slaughter reminded us of our old struggles with the Russians, and, as in those memorable times, the honor of arms in those bayonet fights always remained entirely with our infantry.

According to the number of dead given up to the enemy, and the results ascertained from recent affairs, we are assured that the losses of the Russians are at least four times our own; they give to these engagements the proportions of a battle. These calculations are, however, under those made by prisoners and deserters.

Our artillery under the direction of General Le Bœuf, gave proof of extraordinary vigour and skill. It constantly swept with its fire the ravine where the enemy assembled their reserves. Our projectiles did not cease to make sanguinary gaps in the Russian masses, each time they mustered for a fresh attack. I cannot praise too highly the coup d'œil and coolness of General Le Bœuf.

The service of the ambulances was admirably performed, and great praise is due to all who took part in this rough affair. I shall afterwards have the honour of making known to you the names of the brave men who distinguished themselves among the brave. The country may be justly proud of possessing such troops, and I intend shortly to reward the most deserving.

The Commander-in-Chief,

PELISSIER.

Crimea, June 1, 1855.

We have sprung two mines in front of the Flagstaff Bastion. The second explosion did considerable damage to the enemy. In the ravine of Careening Bay, in advance of our works, our engineers discovered a transverse line of 24 cubic cases filled with gunpowder, each 40 centimetres thick in the inside, placed at equal distances and buried beneath the sod—each case containing 1-50th of a kilogramme of powder, is covered with a full fulminating apparatus, which would explode by the simple pressure of the foot; these cases have been taken up by our engineers.

## FRENCH GENERAL ORDERS.

The following order of the day was issued by General Pelissier on assuming the command of the army:

Soldiers.—Our former General-in-Chief has made known to you the will of the Emperor, who at the General's request has placed me at the head of the army of the East. In receiving from the Emperor the command of this army so long exercised by such noble hands, I feel certain that I express the sentiments of all of us, when I proclaim that General Canrobert carries with him all our regrets and all our gratitude.

To the brilliant *souvenirs* of Alma and of Inkermann he has added the merit, greater still, perhaps, of having, during a formidable winter campaign, preserved for our country and our sovereign, one of the finest armies that France ever had. You owe it to him that you are now in a position to bring the struggle to an issue (*engager a fond la lutte*), and to triumph.

If, as I feel certain it will, success should crown our efforts, you will not fail to pronounce his name in your songs of victory.—He has resolved to remain in our ranks, and although he might have had a higher command he wished but one thing, and that was to put himself at the head of his old division. I have deferred to the entreaties, the inflexible desires of him, who was but yesterday our chief, and who will ever be my friend.

Soldiers, I have the fullest confidence in you. After so many trials, so many generous efforts, nothing can be too much for your courage.—You all know what the Emperor and the country expect from you. Be what you have hitherto been, and thanks to your energy, and to the assistance of our intrepid allies and the brave sailors of our squadrons, we shall conquer with the help of God.

PELISSIER,

Head-quarters before Sebastopol, May 19.

General Canrobert's adieu to the army has been already published. The following is the order of the day issued by him on resuming the command of the first division:—

## SECOND CORPS.—FIRST DIVISIONAL ORDER.

Comrades of the First Division.—You have given me under circumstances the most arduous and the most glorious, so many proofs of devotedness, you have inspired me with so great confidence, that while voluntarily, and out of a sense of duty to my country, resigning the command in chief of an army of 130,000 men, I desired above all things the honor of again becoming your immediate chief, and fighting at your head against the enemies of France and of the Emperor.

CANROBERT.

General of Division, Aide-de-Camp to the Emperor, commanding the 1st Di. of In. Before Sebastopol, May 22.

"On board the Montebello, before Kertch, May 26.

"Monsieur le Ministre.—As I had the honor to inform you by my telegraph despatches of the 22nd and 25th of May, a new expedition to Kertch was resolved upon on the 20th.

"The embarkation commenced on the evening of the 21st, the expedition sailed on the 23rd, it landed on the 24th at Kamiesch Bournou, and on the 25th occupied Yenikale, having passed Kertch and taken possession of the batteries situated in the vicinity of Ak Bournou.

"On the 25th Admiral Lyons and myself entered the Sea of Azoff, whence we sent a squadron to Berdiansk and Arabat. It left during the night, and consisted of four French steamers, and 10 English steamers, some of which are gunboats.

"The complete success of this expedition, where our troops, led with great decision by General Autemarre, displayed their usual ardour, is also due to the rapidity of its execution. In this respect I must acquit your excellency how complete and cordial, under all circumstances, the co-operation of Admiral Lyons has been.

"On the very day we cast anchor the landing of the French troops commenced in order under the direction of Captain Jurien de la Graviere, of the navy, the chief of my staff.

"Having assured myself of the promptitude, with which the landing of the troops was being effected, I hoisted my flag on board the Laplace and proceeded to reconnoitre the batteries of Cape Ak-Bournou, the powder magazine of which the Russians had already blown up. Perceiving they would be turned, the enemy lost no time in blowing up the others, and evacuating their positions.

"Shortly afterwards an English gunboat, of a light draught of water, made for Yenikale, to cut out a Russian steamer which had left Kertch and was trying to gain the Sea of Azoff. A sharp encounter soon commenced between the two vessels, in which the batteries of Yenikale took part. I ordered the Fulton to hasten to the aid of the gunboat, which arrived with all speed at the scene of combat, and had to withstand a very heavy fire. I ordered the Megere to support her, and Admiral Lyons on his part also ordered succour to be given to the gunboat. Nevertheless the enemy's steamer, which we knew had the treasury of Kertch on board, escaped, leaving in our hands two barges containing precious objects and a portion of the military and civil archives. But the confusion of the Russians, attacked unexpectedly by land and sea, became so great that they soon relinquished all thoughts of further resistance and did not even take care to remove the wounded from Sebastopol who were in the hospital of the citadel. In the course of the day they had set fire to considerable storehouses they possessed at Kertch. Finally before evacuating Yenikale, they blew up a powder magazine containing about 30,000 kilogrammes of powder; the shock was so great that many houses were destroyed, and vessels anchored ten miles out at sea felt it severely.

"To sum up, the enemy has lost up to the present—160,000 sacks of oats, 360,000 sacks of corn, and 100,000 sacks of flour. A carriage factory and a foundry were burnt down; three steamers, one of which was a war steamer, were sunk by the Russians themselves. Some 30 transport ships were destroyed, and at least as many taken. In the different explosions about 100,000 kilogrammes of powder were destroyed. A great store of shells and cannonballs no longer exists.

"I shall send your excellency later a statement of the condition of the guns which have fallen into our hands. They are 60 or 80 in number. These guns are highly finished, and of large calibre.—I am in &c.

BRUAT, Vice-Admiral, Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Squadron.

Before Sebastopol, May 26.

My Lord.—I have the honour to report to your Lordship that a position of the allied armies took up a position yesterday on this side of the Tchernaya, the left of the French resting under a redoubt established upon the edge of this ridge, overhanging the valley, and opposite the Inkermann heights; the right extended beyond Tractir and the ground more to the right, behind Tehorgoun, being occupied by the Sardinian troops, aided in their advance by the 10th Hussars and 12th Lancers and the Horse Artillery, under Colonel Pariby.

Omar Pacha at the same time moved forward to the low heights in front of Falaklava, and thus afforded support to the French divisions before him. These were commanded by General Canrobert, who pushed forward across the bridge of Tractir, and drove the enemy, who were not in great numbers, off; and having cleared his front, he withdrew to this side of the river, where he now remains.

Sir Colin Campbell advanced the Royal Marines from the high ridge on our extreme right to a point commanding the old Baidar road; and Colonel Pariby, with the regiments I have mentioned, reconnoitred the country on the immediate right of Gen. La Marmora's position, and patrolled along the Woronzoff road in the direction of Baidar.

The appearance and bearing of the Sardinian troops are highly satisfactory, and I anticipate the greatest advantage from their addition to this army, under their distinguished leader, General La Marmora, whose zeal for the service and ardent desire to co-operate with us I am happy to have so early an opportunity of acknowledging and recording. Nothing of importance has occurred in the British trenches since I wrote to your lordship on the 19th instant.

The death of Colonel Egerton, of the 77th, on the night of the 19th ultimo, as already announced to your lordship, prevented my receiving in due course the official report of the conduct of the officers serving immediately under him, and it is only a few days ago that I learnt that Captain Gilby was the next in seniority to him, of the 77th on the occasion, and that he had highly distinguished himself.

I deem it an act of justice to a most deserving officer to bring his conduct under the notice of your lordship.

I enclose the returns of casualties to the 24th instant. Your lordship will regret to see that Lieut. Williams, of the 17th, has been severely wounded.

I have the greatest pleasure in announcing to your lordship the brilliant success which attended an attack by the French army of some ambuscades at the head of the Quarantine Bay, and in front of a cemetery near it. The attack was made on the night of the 22nd, and the operation was completed on the following evening. The enemy had collected a very large force on the last occasion to resist our Allies; but, notwithstanding, the French were enabled by their brilliant gallantry and determined resolution to maintain themselves in the pits at the head of the bay on the 22nd, and on the 23rd to occupy the whole with less resistance on the part of the Russians, who are stated to have sustained a very severe loss.

The French were necessarily exposed to a very heavy fire, and were assailed by vastly superior numbers. The achievements they accomplished redounds therefore highly to their renown, and is hailed with satisfaction by their allies.

An expedition, composed of British, French and Turkish troops, sailed for Kertch on Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning, and I hope soon to be able to announce the landing of the corps, and the result of its operations. It is commanded by Lieut. General Sir George Brown, and has been conveyed by English and French ships, under the command of Admiral Sir E. Lyons and Admiral Bruat, whose exertions to carry out this important service have been most conspicuous.

The 31st Regiment has arrived from Corfu.

I am much concerned to have to report that Major-General Buller has been obliged by the failure of his health to leave the army. He has been constant in the discharge of his duty since he joined this army distinguished himself both at Alma and Inkermann, and preserved in taking his turn in the trenches until driven by illness to withdraw.

I regret the loss of his services exceedingly.

I have, &amp;c. RAGLAN.

The Lord Pamure, &c.  
Total return of casualties from the 18th to the 20th of May inclusive:—2 rank and file killed; 1 drummer 13 rank and file wounded.

Royal Albert, Straits of Kertch, May 24th.

Sir.—I have great pleasure in requesting you to inform the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that the allied forces are masters of the Straits of Kertch, and that they have in the Sea of Azoff a powerful steam flotilla, of light draught of water, capable of cutting off the enemy's supplies, and harassing him at all points; and moreover, that the means are at hand for sending in a vast number of gunboats of the lighter draught, if it should be found desirable to do so.

My letter on the 22nd instant, No. 396, will have informed their lordships that an allied expedition consisting of 15,060 men of all arms,