



The London Gazette

EXTRAORDINARY.

Published by Authority.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1854.

BATTLE OF THE ALMA.

War Department, October 8, 1854, 8½ o'clock a.m.

MAJOR the Lord Burghersh arrived this morning with a Despatch from General the Lord Raglan, G.C.B., to His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, of which the following is a copy:

*Head Quarters, Katscha River,
September 23, 1854.*

MY LORD DUKE,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Grace, that the Allied Troops attacked the position occupied by the Russian Army, behind the Alma, on the 20th instant; and I have great satisfaction in adding, that they succeeded, in less than three hours, in driving the enemy from every part of the ground which they had held in the morning, and in establishing themselves upon it.

The English and French Armies moved out of their first encampment in the Crimea on the 19th, and bivouacked for the night on the left bank of the Bulganac, the former having previously supported the advance of a part of the Earl of Cardigan's brigade of Light Cavalry, which had the effect of inducing the enemy to move up a large body of Dragoons and Cosaques, with artillery.

On this, the first occasion of the English encountering the Russian force, it was impossible for any troops to exhibit more steadiness, than did this portion of Her Majesty's cavalry.

It fell back upon its supports with the most perfect regularity under the fire of the Artillery, which was quickly silenced by that of the batteries I caused to be brought into action.

Our loss amounted to only four men wounded.

The day's march had been most wearisome and, under a burning sun, the absence of water, until we reached the insignificant but welcome stream of the Bulganac, made it to be severely felt.

Both Armies moved towards the Alma the following morning, and it was arranged that Marshal St. Arnaud should assail the enemy's left by crossing the river at its junction with the sea, and immediately above it, and that the remainder of the French divisions should move up the heights in their front, whilst the English Army should attack the right and centre of the enemy's position.

In order that the gallantry exhibited by Her Majesty's troops, and the difficulties they had to

meet may be fairly estimated, I deem it right, even at the risk of being considered tedious, to endeavour to make your Grace acquainted with the position the Russians had taken up.

It crossed the great road about 2½ miles from the sea, and is very strong by nature.

The bold and most precipitous of heights, of from 350 to 400 feet, that from the sea closely border the left bank of the river here ceases and formed their left, and turning thence round a great amphitheatre or wide valley, terminates at a salient pinnacle where their right rested, and whence the descent to the plain was more gradual. The front was about two miles in extent.

Across the mouth of this great opening is a lower ridge at different heights, varying from 60 to 150 feet, parallel to the river, and at distances from it of from 600 to 800 yards.

The river itself is generally fordable for troops, but its banks are extremely rugged, and in most parts steep; the willows along it had been cut down, in order to prevent them from affording cover to the attacking party, and in fact everything had been done to deprive an assailant of any species of shelter.

In front of the position on the right bank, at about 200 yards from the Alma, is the village of Bouliouk, and near it a timber bridge, which had been partly destroyed by the enemy.

The high pinnacle and ridge before alluded to was the key of the position, and consequently, there the greatest preparations had been made for defence.

Half way down the height, and across its front was a trench of the extent of some hundred yards, to afford cover against an advance up the even steep slope of the hill. On the right, and a little retired, was a powerful covered battery, armed with heavy guns, which flanked the whole of the right of the position.

Artillery, at the same time, was posted at the points that best commanded the passage of the river and its approaches generally.

On the slopes of these hills (forming a sort of table land) were placed dense masses of the enemy's infantry, whilst on the heights above was his great reserve, the whole amounting, it is supposed, to between 45,000 and 50,000 men.