

On the 7th instant, the *Amphion* arrived from Nargen, completing the British squadron, to the ships and vessels named in the margin,* and the intention of Rear-Admiral Pénaud and myself being to commence operations against the Fortress and Arsenal of Sweaborg, no time was lost in making the necessary preparations.

My former reports will have informed their Lordships, that during the past year, and in the course of the last five months, the enemy has been actively employed in strengthening the defences of the place and completing the sea defences, by erecting batteries on every advantageous position and commanding every practicable approach to the harbour in this intricate navigation.

It has therefore formed no part of my plan to attempt a general attack by the ships on the defences; and the operations contemplated by the Rear-Admiral and myself were limited to such destruction of the fortress and arsenal as could be accomplished by means of mortars.

The intricate nature of the ground, from rocks a-wash and reefs under water, rendered it difficult to select positions for the mortar vessels at proper range. In completing the arrangements for this purpose, I have derived the greatest advantage from the abilities of Captain Sullivan, of Her Majesty's ship *Merlin*, and the positions ultimately chosen were in a curved line on either side of the Islet of Oterhall, with space in the centre reserved for the mortar vessels of the French squadron, as concerted with Rear-Admiral Pénaud.

The extremes of the line were limited, with reference to the extent of the range and the distance from the heavily armed batteries of Bak-Holmen to the eastward, and of *Stora Rantan* to the westward of Sweaborg; and a most effective addition to the force of the Allied squadrons consisted in a battery of 4 lighter mortars established by Admiral Pénaud on an islet in advance of Oterhall.

To carry these arrangements into effect I directed Captain Ramsay, of Her Majesty's ship *Euryalus*, with Captain Glasse, of the *Vulture*, Captain Vansittart, of the *Magicienne*, and Captain Stewart, of the *Dragon*, to anchor to the southward of Oterhall, and the mortar vessels, under the charge of Lieutenant the Hon. Augustus C. Hobart, of the Duke of Wellington, being distributed to the care of those officers, the whole were anchored on the evening of the 7th instant in position, in readiness to warp into action, and hawsers for that purpose were laid out before daylight. Much assistance in towing was rendered by the officers of the gun boats, and great praise is due to all concerned for their active exertions.

In the course of the same night Rear-Admiral Pénaud had commenced the establishment of his battery with sand bags, on the rocks within Oterhall, but the active arrangements could not be completed before the morning of the 9th instant.

During the whole of the previous day the royal standard of Russia was flying upon the citadel of Gustafsvard, but was not afterwards observed.

The success of our operations being dependent entirely on the state of the weather and the rapi-

dity with which shells could be thrown, no time was lost in trying the ranges of the mortars which proved to be accurate, and general firing commenced soon after 7 o'clock. The direction of this service was confided to Captain T. M. Wemyss, of the Royal Marine Artillery, assisted by Captain Lawrence and Captain Schomberg, and every exertion was used by these officers to press the fire of the mortars to the fullest extent which could be deemed proper.

The gunboats, having been previously armed with additional guns of heavy calibre, removed temporarily from ships of the line, and the *Stork* and *Snapper* gunboats, being armed with Lancaster guns, I availed myself of the experience of Captain Hewlett to direct the fire of the two latter vessels to the greatest advantage, and his attention was specially directed to a three-decked ship of the line moored to block the passage between Gustafsvard and Bak Holmen.

Commander Preedy, of the ship bearing my flag, was directed to take the *Starling* and four other gun-boats under his orders, and to manoeuvre and attack the batteries in front of the mortar-vessels towards the west extremity of the line.

The remainder were distributed in a similar manner to stations assigned to them, with orders to engage the batteries and protect the mortar-vessels under the general direction of Captain Ramsay, assisted by Captains Glasse, Vansittart, and Stewart.

On the evening of the 8th instant, I had despatched Captain Key in Her Majesty's ship *Amphion*, to proceed off *Stora Miölo*, and to place himself under the orders of Captain Wellesley of Her Majesty's ship *Cornwallis*; and I instructed the latter officer to employ the *Hastings* and the *Amphion*, and to take advantage of any proper opportunity to engage the enemy at the east end of the Island of Sandhamn.

Captain Yelverton, in Her Majesty's ship *Arrogant*, was detached to the westward with the *Cossack* and *Cruiser* under his orders, and was directed to occupy the attention of troops which were observed to be posted on the Island of Drumsio, and to watch the movements of small vessels which had been noticed occasionally in creeks in that direction.

Early in the day I observed that the detached squadrons in both directions had opened fire upon the enemy, and the action was general upon all points. A rapid fire of shot and shells was kept up from the fortress for the first few hours upon the gun boats, and the range of the heavy batteries extended completely beyond the mortar vessels; but the continued motion of the gun boats, and the able manner in which they were conducted by the officers who commanded them, enabled them to return the fire with great spirit, and almost with impunity throughout the day.

About ten o'clock in the forenoon fires began first to be observed in the different buildings, and a heavy explosion took place on the Island of Vargon, which was followed by a second about an hour afterwards; a third, and far more important explosion, occurred about noon on the Island of Gustafsvard, inflicting much damage upon the defences of the enemy, and tending greatly to slacken the fire from the guns in that direction.

The advantage of the rapidity with which the fire from the mortars had been directed, was apparent in the continued fresh conflagrations, which spread extensively on the Island of Vargon.

The intricate nature of the reefs on which the gun-boats had occasionally grounded, compelled me also to recall them before sunset, and the fire of the enemy was slack. The boats of the fleet

* Duke of Wellington (bearing my flag), *Exmouth* (bearing the flag of Rear-Admiral Sir Michael Seymour), *Euryalus*, *Arrogant*, *Pembroke*, *Cornwallis*, *Cossack*, *Merlin*, *Vulture*, *Hastings*, *Edinburgh*, *Amphion*, *Magicienne*, *Dragon*, *Belleisle*, *Cruiser*, *Geyser*, *Locust*, *Lightning*, *Eolus*, *Princess Alice*, *Volcano* (arrived on the 10th).

Gun-Boats.—*Starling*, *Lark*, *Thistle*, *Redwing*, *Magpie*, *Badger*, *Pelter*, *Snap*, *Dapper*, *Weazel*, *Stork*, *Pincher*, *Gleaner*, *Biter*, *Skylark*, *Snapper*.

Mortar Vessels.—*Rocket*, *Surly*, *Pickle*, *Blazer*, *Mastiff*, *Manly*, *Drake*, *Porpoise*, *Prompt*, *Sinbad*, *Carron*, *Red-breast*, *Beacon*, *Grappler*, *Havock*, *Growler*.