

*Admiralty, December 14, 1855.*

**D**ESPATCHES, of which the following are copies, have been received from Admiral Sir Edmund Lyons, Bart., G.C.B., Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's Ships and Vessels in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

No. 962. *Royal Albert, Kazatch Bay,*  
SIR, *December 1, 1855.*

I REQUEST that you will lay before the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the enclosed copy of a letter from Captain Sherard Osborn, of the *Vesuvius*, dated the 24th ultimo, informing me that as the formation of ice had commenced in the Sea of Azof, and as he had been informed by both M. Gopcevitich, the Austrian merchant, charged with the shipment of corn in Austrian vessels, and by the Russian authorities at Mariaupol, that all chance of neutral vessels obtaining cargoes this year was at an end, he had withdrawn to Kertch with the squadron under his orders, after assuring himself that no merchant vessels remained in that sea.

I have so frequently had occasion to bring the merits of Captain Osborn under their Lordships' notice, that it is perhaps unnecessary, on the present occasion, that I should say more than that he has maintained his high character up to the close of the service upon which he was employed for six months, and he brings under my favourable notice the gallant and zealous support he has received, from first to last, from the officers and men under his orders.

I am, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND LYONS,  
Rear-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief.

*The Secretary of the Admiralty, London.*

No. 42. *Vesuvius, off Kertch,*  
SIR, *November 24, 1855.*

BEING now, in accordance with your instructions, on my road to rejoin your flag, I have the honour to report the close of operations in the Sea of Azof, and the proceedings of the squadron in that sea subsequent to my last letter dated off Gheisk, 7th November, 1855. On the 7th, I received your instructions, with notices relative to neutrals quitting the Sea of Azof on the 20th November, 1855.

The weather became most severe, and I could only succeed in serving the notices upon the authorities on shore at Mariaupol.

But on the 8th November, 1855, the shipping anchored off Mariaupol were duly warned, and on the 9th those off Taganrog likewise.

A gale of extreme violence from the eastward blew continually from that date until the 18th November, I then immediately served a notice upon the neutral shipping in Berdiansk.

There, from Mr. Gopcevitich, as well as previously at Taganrog and Mariaupol, we learnt that the Russian authorities had kept the neutrals in quarantine ever since their arrival, and that the likelihood of cargoes being procured was almost at an end.

A Russian officer at Mariaupol laughed at the idea of the neutrals believing they would get

wheat this year, and told Commander Kennedy, whom I sent in there with a flag of truce, that the neutrals must stay the winter.

Under these circumstances, looking to your wishes and instructions upon the subject, it became a cause of great anxiety for me lest, by the sudden commencement of winter, or intentionally, the neutral vessels should fail to quit the sea on the 20th November, 1855.

I, therefore, as the ice had begun to make and the temperature to fall rapidly after the 13th, despatched all the squadron to Kertch except the *Ardent*, *Snake*, and *Clinker*, and with them proceeded up the Gulf of Azof.

We arrived off Mariaupol on the 19th and found all the neutrals had sailed for Kertch, and on the 20th I sighted Taganrog and found the roads empty, all the vessels that were there having likewise left.

The ice already extended on either hand some miles from the shore, the *Don* appeared to be frozen, and every indication of winter having set in, in that neighbourhood, was apparent.

At Mariaupol the river or harbour was frozen, and much ice lined the coast as far down as *Bielosarai Lighthouse*; the temperature at mid-day as low as 29° Fahrenheit.

From thence I separated the squadron so as to examine the whole coast from *Ghenitch* to *Enikalé Lighthouse*, most minutely, and not a single boat of the smallest description was to be seen.

In surrendering into your hands the prominent position in which you have been pleased to employ me for the last five months, that of Senior Officer of a detached squadron, allow me, Sir, to express, most respectfully, my deep sense of the honour you conferred upon me, and the grateful recollection of the unvarying kindness, confidence, and consideration I have experienced at your hands; without it I feel I never should, as I trust I have, succeeded in carrying out your views and instructions.

Next to that let me again remind you that my anxiety to execute your plans has ever been an easy task, supported as I have ever been by the gallant and zealous exertions of every officer and man serving in this squadron; I know not how sufficiently to express my approbation of their conduct.

And it is not the less pleasing part of my duty to assure you of the kindly co-operation I have ever received from the officers of the French Navy serving in the Sea of Azof. Among those more especially known to me, I feel justified in mentioning Lieutenant *Cloué*, commanding the *Brandon*; Lieutenant *La Juchette*, *Fulton*; and Lieutenant *Vidal*, of the *Caton*.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) S. OSBORN.

*Rear-Admiral Sir Edmund*  
*Lyons, Bart., &c., &c., &c.*  
*G.C.B.*

*Foreign Office, December 15, 1855.*

The Queen has been pleased to approve of Mr. Albert Pillsbury as Consul at Halifax, Nova Scotia, for the United States of America.