

Anapa and Soujak, and the only two vessels that were on that coast have been captured, as noted in my letter, No. 214.

3. All the places were evacuated, and the forts and materiel more or less destroyed (many of the guns however being serviceable), except Redoubt Kalé and Poti, from which the Russian soldiers were driven by the fire of the French and English ships, and they were then garrisoned by a battalion of Turkish soldiers who, with three field-pieces, had been previously embarked on board our vessels at St Nicolai (Chefketil). The Russians, about 700 or 800 men, are supposed to have gone in the direction of Khutais, where also the garrison of Soukhum Kalé, 2,000 or 3,000, is supposed to have directed its march.

4. The Sampson is on the coast, and last night the Sans Pareil and two Turkish steamers left for Redoubt Kalé, with arms, ammunition, and 200 or 300 Circassians.

5. I am happy to say that there is an appearance of more unity and stronger feeling among the different tribes against the Russians.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) J. W. D. DUNDAS,  
Vice-Admiral.

The Secretary of the Admiralty.

No. 243.

*Britannia, off Baljik,  
May 28, 1854.*

SIR,  
I ACQUAINT you, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that Sir E. Lyons rejoined me this morning from the coasts of Circassia, Georgia, and Anatolia; and I have very great pleasure in transmitting, for their Lordships' information, Sir E. Lyons' official reports of the proceedings of the detachment placed under his orders.

2. The operations therein detailed, as well as the intelligence as to the state of the coasts he has visited, are very important and interesting; and I trust my Lords will consider I have done right in expressing my entire approval of the great skill and judgment displayed by Sir E. Lyons, and his colleague Viscount de Chabannes; and I beg to add my testimony to the ability and conduct of Lieutenant Rolland, of the Agamemnon, of whom Sir E. Lyons has made such honourable mention.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) J. W. D. DUNDAS,  
Vice-Admiral.

No. 21.

*Agamemnon, at Redoute Kaleh,  
May 21, 1854.*

SIR,  
I HAVE great pleasure in reporting to you that the small squadron placed under my orders by you and Admiral Hamelin, have been the means of expelling the Russian garrison from the only place on this extensive coast, with the exception of the strongholds of Anapa and Soujak Kaleh, near the Crimea; that the Emperor Nicholas exempted from the general abandonment two months ago.

2. At Soukoum Kaleh I learned that the Russians were still in possession of Redoute Kaleh, and that they attached great importance to maintaining themselves there as long as possible, in order to forward their army at Khutais, a large quantity of ammunition and stores still in the magazines; and at the same time to intercept the communications of Selim Pacha at this critical juncture, and prevent his occupation of so favourable a point for the introduction of supplies.

3. The squadron left Soukoum Kaleh on the morning of the 18th, and as we passed Redoute Kaleh we observed a body of about a thousand infantry under arms, and that the few guns on the sea defences were manned. If we had opened our broadsides we could have obliged the enemy to retire, but he would, no doubt, have returned to re-occupy the place on our disappearing, and I therefore went on with the squadron as fast as possible to Chouruksoo, in hopes of inducing the General commanding there to aid me with a sufficient number to occupy and maintain the place, after we should have driven the enemy out of it with our guns; he sent an express to Selim Pacha, whose reply arrived early on the following morning, and who placed at my disposal a battalion of 800 infantry and 3 field-pieces, which were immediately embarked on board the ships of the squadron with a degree of alacrity I have never seen surpassed.

4. At 4 P.M. the squadron re-appeared off Redoute Kaleh, where the troops were disembarked, under cover of the steam-vessels, about two miles from the batteries, and at the same time a summons was sent to the Commander of the Russian forces by Vicomte de Chabannes, the senior officer of the French division of the squadron, and myself, under cover of a flag of truce, and in charge of Lieutenant Maxse, of this ship, by whom it was delivered to an officer who spoke French fluently, and alleged, as the reason why an answer could not be given without considerable delay, that the Commandant was not on the spot.

5. After a delay of nearly half-an-hour Lieutenant Maxse left the shore without an answer, and consequently the Agamemnon and Charlemagne stood in, as close as the depth of water would permit, and opened their fire upon the quarter occupied by the Russian troops, as well as on the sea defences, which tried an ineffectual fire on the boats. The enemy soon retired out of reach of the ships' guns, and the Turkish troops advancing rapidly along the beach, took possession of the batteries, when the firing ceased.

6. The enemy retreated so precipitately from under the fire of the ships, that he failed in his attempt to ignite the combustibles which were laid for the destruction of the Military Quarter, but when out of gun-shot, and his retreat secured by crossing the river and destroying the bridge, he set fire to the magazines and storehouses, and at nightfall the Commercial Town, which commenced at some distance from the sea, and extended about a mile and a half up each bank of the river; was in a blaze, so that in the morning the flourishing place of the evening presented an awful scene of desolation; the Mingrelian inhabitants, who had rendered themselves very obnoxious to the displeasure of the Turks, having retired with the Russians.

7. This devastation is no doubt deeply to be deplored, but it is some consolation to have deprived the enemy of a dépôt of military stores, and to have driven him from a place of so much importance, without any accident, or any irregularity arising from success.

8. Nothing could exceed the cordial co-operation and assistance I received from my French colleague, the Vicomte de Chabannes, as well as from Commandant Wailly of the "Mogador," Captain Jones of the "Sampson," Captain Symonds of this ship, and Captain Moore of the "Highflyer," and indeed from every officer in the combined squadron, during this fatiguing day; but I should be doing injustice to a highly deserving officer, if I did not particularly mention

