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WAR-DEPARTMENT, October 11, 1855.

LORD PANMURE has this day received a Despatch and its Enclosures, of which the following are Copies, addressed to his Lordship by General Simpson:—

Sevastopol,
 MY LORD, *September 29, 1855.*

SINCE my last Despatch the troops have been employed, to the number of 9,500 men, daily, in making the road from Balaklava to the camp; and as, after a few hours of rain, the whole distance is converted into a mass of deep mud, the work that has to be performed, from this reason as well as the great distance that the stones have to be transported, render it one of great labour and difficulty.

Large fatigue parties are daily employed in the town dismantling and conveying timber and other materials from the ruins of the buildings, and I hope, by this means, to get a considerable portion of the troops under cover previous to the commencement of the bad weather.

The enemy have been firing from the batteries on the north side at the working parties in the town; and although causing some little annoyance, they have not prevented the work being carried on, and, I am happy to add, that one man killed and one wounded are the only casualties occasioned by their fire.

I regret to have to report to your Lordship that owing to the explosion of a Russian magazine on the 27th instant, 1 Officer and 19 men were wounded. I ordered an investigation to be made, and, from the report I have received, the origin was from the explosion of a hidden fougass, a number of which have been dug up in various parts of the town and batteries.

The invention of this machine is peculiarly Russian.

I have received a letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Ready, 71st Regiment, commanding Her Majesty's troops at Yenikale, reporting the proceedings of a trifling affair, in which a detachment of the 10th Hussars, in company with the Chasseurs d'Afrique, were engaged on the 21st instant with the Cossacks.

Colonel D'Osmont, commanding the French troops at Kertch, received information that the Cossacks were collecting and driving away all the arabas from the neighbourhood, and as he deter-

mined to endeavour to prevent this, he invited the assistance of the English cavalry to co-operate with the Chasseurs d'Afrique. For this service Lieutenant-Colonel Ready ordered two troops, commanded by Captains the Hon. F. FitzClarence and Clarke of the 10th Hussars.

The Cossacks were supposed to have assembled their arabas at two villages named Koss-Serai Min and Seit Ali, equidistant from Kertch about 15 miles, and from one another $6\frac{1}{2}$. Captain FitzClarence's troop was ordered to the first village, and Captain Clarke's to the latter. At each of these villages they were to join a troop of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, who had preceded them. On arriving at Koss-Serai Min, Captain FitzClarence found both troops of the French Dragoons, and immediately sent off an order to Captain Clarke to join him that night; the letter was unfortunately not delivered until the following morning. In complying with this order, Captain Clarke, whose troop consisted only of 34 men, fell in with a body of about 50 Cossacks, which he immediately charged and pursued, but as they were soon reinforced by upwards of 300, he was forced to retire upon the village, with a loss of his serjeant-major, farrier, and 13 men taken prisoners.

Captain FitzClarence's troop, with the Chasseurs, the whole under the command of the Officer commanding the French troops, having seen a large body of the enemy, skirmished with them at some distance, and moved in the direction of the village of Serai Min; where, after having joined Captain Clarke's troop, the whole force commenced their march upon Kertch.

At about the distance of half a mile from the village they were attacked by a large body of Cossacks, who were, however, beaten back by repeated charges. The loss of the 10th Hussars consisted of—

- 2 Privates, supposed to have been killed.
- 1 Wounded.
- 1 Troop Serjeant-Major, 1 Farrier, 13 Men, 15 Horses, Missing.

From information that has since been received, the Cossacks were supported, within a quarter of an hour's march, by eight squadrons of Hussars and eight guns.

Colonel Ready informs me that nothing could exceed the coolness and courage of the troops in

