



SECOND SUPPLEMENT  
TO  
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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 29, 1855.

*War-Department, August 29, 1855.*

**L**ORD PANMURE has this day received two Despatches and their Enclosures, of which the following are copies, addressed to his Lordship by General Simpson.

*Before Sevastopol,  
August 18, 1855.*

MY LORD,

In my despatch of the 14th instant, I informed your Lordship that I had reason to believe that the Russians would attempt, by a vigorous attack, to force us to raise the siege.

This they endeavoured to do on the morning of the 16th, but the result was most glorious to those of the Allied troops who had the good fortune to be engaged.

The action commenced before daylight, by a heavy column of Russians, under the command of General Liprandi, and composed of the 6th and 17th Divisions, with the 4th and 7th Divisions in reserve, attacking the advanced posts of the Sardinians.

The ground occupied by them is on commanding hills on the right of the position, on the left bank of the Souhaia river, where it forms its junction with the Tchernaya, with two advanced posts on the opposite side. These were held with very determined gallantry for a considerable time, but being separated from their supports by the river, and not having the protection of artillery, they were compelled to leave the most advanced one.

About the same time, the 5th and 12th Divisions, to which was added a portion of the 17th; advanced against the bridge of Tractir, held by one battalion of French infantry of the line, who were for a short time obliged to yield and fall back upon the main supports; with these, however, they quickly retook the bridge at the point of the bayonet.

Again the Russians attacked with persevering courage, and were enabled to follow up their advantage by gaining the heights which rise precipitously on each side of the road; their success was but momentary—they were driven back across

the river, leaving the ground covered with dead and wounded.

The Russian General, in no way daunted by the failure of his two attempts, ordered a second column, of equal force to the first, to attack; they advanced with such impetuosity, covered by the fire of their numerous artillery, that a third time the bridge was carried, and the heights above it crowned, but they were again repulsed, and retired in great confusion into the plain, followed by the bayonets of our gallant Allies.

The General Officer who commanded the Russian column, and who is supposed to be General Read, was killed, and in his possession was found the orders for the battle, signed by Prince Gortchakoff, who commanded in person.

From these it would appear that it was a most determined attempt to force us to raise the siege. Had they succeeded, Balaklava was to have been attacked by one portion of their army, whilst the heights on which we now are, were to have been stormed with the other; at the same time a vigorous sortie was to have been made from the town on the French works, on our extreme left, from the Quarantine, and another on the works on our extreme right on Mount Sapoune.

The action which I have endeavoured to describe is most glorious to the arms of the French and Sardinian troops. To meet the force of the Russians, the former had but 12,000 infantry, and 4 batteries of artillery engaged; the latter had 10,000 men in position, 4,500 actually engaged, and 24 pieces of cannon.

The Russian force consisted of from 50,000 to 60,000 men, with 160 pieces of artillery, and cavalry to the amount of 6,000.

This disparity of numbers will readily explain to your Lordship the difficulty that would have been experienced, had an attempt been made to follow up the advantage by a pursuit. The Russian retreat, moreover, was protected by the fire from the heavy guns in position on the Mackenzie heights.

The loss sustained by the Russians is estimated at between 5,000 and 6,000 men, including 600