

Valorous, in Dnieper Bay,
October 18, 1855.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to inform you, that, in pursuance of your orders, I hoisted my flag in Her Majesty's steam frigate *Valorous*, on the afternoon of the 14th instant, immediately after the arrival of the allied fleets off Kimburn Spit, and proceeded, under the able guidance of Captain Spratt, of the *Spitfire*, to take up positions at the entrance of Dnieper Bay, where, with the division of steam vessels, placed under my orders (as per margin),* and in company with those under the orders of my colleague, Rear-Admiral Odet Pellion, we remained in readiness to force an entrance into the Dnieper, for the purpose directed by you, of preventing, as far as possible, any reinforcements being thrown into the forts on Kimburn Spit, as well as to cut off the retreat of the garrison, should either be attempted.

At 9 P.M. I instructed Lieutenant Joseph H. Marryat, of the *Cracker*, to take on board Mr. Edward W. Brooker, additional Master of the *Spitfire*, and endeavour with him to determine the course of the intricate channel through which we were to pass, and to lay down buoys along the south side of it; the French having undertaken to perform the same service on the north side.

I likewise directed Mr. Thomas Potter, Master of the *Furious* (lent to do duty in the *Valorous*), to proceed with two boats of the *Tribune*, and, protected by the *Cracker*, to search for the spit on the north bank, and on his return endeavour to place a buoy on the edge of the shoal off Kimburn Spit, that the entrance of the channel might be assured.

As soon as the preconcerted signal was given, indicating that this operation was effected, I despatched the *Fancy*, *Boxer*, and *Clinker*, into Dnieper Bay, with orders to anchor in such positions as would best protect the right flank of our troops, upon the disembarkation taking place, and to make that their chief care, as long as there was any possibility of the enemy threatening them.

During the night, Rear-Admiral Odet Pellion also sent in the French gunboats for the same purpose.

At daylight on the following morning I had the satisfaction of observing all the gunboats, French and English, anchored safely to the north-east of Kimburn Fort, and without any of them having sustained damage, although the enemy had fired both shot and shell and musketry at them during their passage in. Thus the chief part of the object you had most anxiously in view was accomplished.

While still in considerable doubt as to the extent to which the channel for the larger ships was buoyed, at ten A.M. Lieutenant Marryat and Mr. Brooker came to inform me that the work entrusted to them had been completed, and that the latter officer was ready to pilot the ships in. The zealous desire evinced by these officers to furnish me personally with their report on the difficult navigation of the Dnieper deserves my warmest thanks, and the gallant manner in which Lieutenant Marryat brought the *Cracker* out for that purpose, under a very heavy fire from the whole of the forts and batteries, elicited the admiration of all who witnessed the proceeding.

We were now fully prepared to advance, and, in obedience to your directions, awaited the signal for general attack.

The whole of the proceedings of yesterday must be already fully known to you; but it is right that I should state briefly the share taken in them

* *Valorous*, *Gladiator*, *Fancy*, *Cracker*, *Grinder*, *Boxer*, *Clinker*.

by the division you did me the honour to place under my orders, which consisted of the ships and vessels as already stated, reinforced by those named below.

It being necessary to advance in single line, it was arranged that the ships should do so in the following order.

Valorous—Captain C. H. M. Buckle, C.B., bearing my flag.

Furious—Captain William Loring, C.B.

Asmodée (French), bearing the flag of Rear-Admiral Odet Pellion.

Cacique (French).

Sidon—Captain George Goldsmith.

Leopard—Captain George Giffard, C.B.

Sané (French).

Gladiator—Captain C. F. Hillyar.

Firebrand—Captain E. A. Inglefield.

Stromboli—Commander Cowper Coles.

Spiteful—Commander F. A. Shortt.

At noon, the signal being made from your flagship to weigh, we proceeded through the channel, each ship engaging the spit batteries and Kimburn Fort as they came within range.

To Lieutenant Marryat, of the *Cracker*, is due the merit of preceding and piloting us through, which he did with great judgment.

Had the enemy continued his defence of the spit batteries, the *Sidon*, *Leopard*, *Sané*, and *Gladiator* were directed, in that case, to remain in front of them until their fire was completely silenced; but as they were subdued by the accurate and well sustained fire which was poured upon them by the ships which you had placed to the westward of the Spit, and by those of our own squadron on passing to the eastward, this became unnecessary; the whole division, therefore, continued its course through the channel, and anchored well inside Fort Nicolaev and Oehakof Point.

During this time the four gunboats, *Fancy*, *Grinder*, *Boxer*, and *Clinker*, did good service, by placing themselves in such position as to throw a flanking fire on the middle battery and Kimburn Fort at the time our division passed within short range.

Immediately on anchoring, I transferred my flag to the *Cracker*, and followed by the other gunboats, proceeded close off the east front of Kimburn Fort, to be ready to act as circumstances required, should the enemy's fire, which at that moment had entirely ceased, be renewed; however, the necessity for further action did not arise.

As the service entrusted to me was carried out under your own observation, I feel it to be unnecessary to do more than to record my grateful sense of the very satisfactory manner in which the whole of the ships under my orders took up their appointed stations, and of the manner in which all employed performed their duty.

I think myself fortunate in having for my temporary flagship so efficient and well ordered a man-of-war as the *Valorous*, and I feel much indebted to Captain Buckle and his zealous First Lieutenant Joseph Edge, for their unremitting attention and assistance.

I am delighted to add, that in concerting with our gallant Allies the arrangements necessary for carrying into effect the present successful operations, I have received the cordial support and concurrence of my excellent colleague, Rear-Admiral Odet Pellion.

The anxiety which you yourself ever feel to do full justice to merit and exertion must be my excuse for presuming to request your most favour-