Official Report of the Russian Landing Parties from the Battle-Ships "Navarin" and "Sissoi Veliki" in Peking from the 18th (31st) May to 2nd (15th) August, 1900

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OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE RUSSIAN LANDING
PARTIES FROM THE BATTLE-SHIPS
"NAVARIN" AND "SISSOI VELIKI" IN
PEKING FROM THE 18TH (31ST) MAY TO
2ND (15TH) AUGUST 1900

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18th (31st) May.—The Russian, French, and Italian landing parties arrived in Tientsin under the command of Colonel Vogak, and having left all our things, at his order, except what was actually carried by the men, in the barge where two sentries were posted, I proceeded to the town where the men had their breakfast. At 3 o'clock on the same day the men were entrained, and Colonel Vogak¹ ordered the contingent to take only what was actually on them, *i.e.*, 60 cartridges each, their bags and intrenching tools, saying that on the morrow he would send reserve ammunition and arms. At 9 o'clock in the evening, after a forced march from the railway station, the contingent arrived at the Russian Legation, where it was met by our Minister and all the members of the Legation. The men were billeted in various rooms that night and patrols and sentries were posted. The contingent had only two changes of linen each and 60 cartridges in their pouches. In the town a numerous crowd of Chinamen accompanied us and stood in lines on either side glaring at us in a most unfriendly manner, but with the exception of individual cries and hisses they showed no specially hostile intention.

19th May (1st June).—The German and Austrian landing parties arrived. Colonel Vogak commissioned Lieutenant Blonsky, who had also left for Tientsin on the 18th (31st) May, to send on our gun with its ammunition and additional rifles. The men were finally quartered in the Legation and made acquainted with its position and surroundings. On going out into the street I was struck by the way in which the Chinese regarded us—not a single friendly look.

20th May (2nd June).—In the morning a cook-house, wash-house, and sleeping boards for the men were constructed. All were in good health. In the evening some of our things we had left behind arrived, but unfortunately not all of them. The gun had not been sent, though its shells had been,

¹ "Wogack" as written in the English newspapers.

and only 3 out of a total of 7 boxes of reserve ammunition for rifles had arrived, and many things belonging to the men had not come, so that they were obliged to borrow from one another.

21st May (3rd June).—News arrived that the enemy was commencing to destroy the railway line and that the station of Huang-tsun, 15 miles from Peking, had been burnt. Reported that a great many Boxers were in the town. In order to make sure of this, I made a tour of the town accompanied by four Cossacks. The crowds looked threateningly at us and boys cried out from behind corners "Kill," with other insults. Everywhere in the bazaars, in the blacksmith shops, work was going on: pikes and knives were being made and red scarves (the emblem of the Boxers) were being openly sold.

22nd and 23rd May (4th and 5th June) were spent in putting the Legation into a better state of defence. At that time we did not know that we should have to do with soldiers and guns, and, therefore, chief attention was directed towards securing the place against fire, and ladders were ordered to be put up so as to enable the defence to fire at the Boxers from the walls and roof.

24th May (6th June).—The ladders are ready, the men are posted along the walls and on the roof, and, in case of an alarm, the guard is reinforced. In the Legation Street the first barricade is erected in conjunction with the Americans of the adjacent Legation. It consists of wagons, barrels filled with earth, and boxes, etc., while a Colt Q.F. gun is mounted on the flank.

25th May (7th June).—A military council was held amongst the commanding officers of the contingents, and the general wish was to increase the strength of the landing parties; the decision was unanimous and everyone drew up his own plan for the defence of the Legation and endeavoured to make the others agree to it. Reported that incendiarism is general all over the town. All the railway stations are burnt down.

26th May (8th June).—Our Ambassador proceeded with a Cossack guard to the Russian missionary post Beguan; it appears it was still intact, but that crowds of Boxers are collecting round it. The Ambassador brought with him the Archimandrite and the priest and deacon with their servants, and installed them in the Legation. The Government posted 10 soldiers of the Banner Army at the gates of each Legation, armed with spears, but they go away, leaving their spears piled. They are absolutely useless as a guard—almost children, half-starved and in rags. At night Chinese patrols (of the Chinese police) ride round the Legation.

27th May (9th June).—Detachments of General Tung-fu-Siang, recruited in the western provinces, arrived in the town; they are almost exclusively Mussulmans, and the bravest troops. It is said, the infantry are armed with Mauser rifles, the magazines of which are fitted to take ten rounds, and the cavalry have spears and Mannlicher carbines with five rounds in the magazines. Besides these troops it is reported that Yung-lu's forces have arrived; these are European-drilled troops, and

have several guns with them. Until now we had thought that these were meant to suppress the Boxer movement. In the evening the instructor in the Russian language, at the Borodavkin University here, when proceeding on horseback to his university in the Imperial city, came upon a detachment of Tung-fu-Siang's cavalry, some of whom thrashed his horse, and he had to gallop home. Batteries were built on the walls, and the weaker walls were strengthened on the inside by layers of bricks. Our men had now 140 rounds apiece, less than anyone else. Our neighbours, the Americans, who were stationed alongside us at the barricade, had 35,000 rounds, and the Austrians had still more.

28th May (10th June).—A fresh meeting of the officers commanding the contingents took place. It was decided that the English, Russian, and American Legations should comprise one-half of the combined defence, and each should agree to render mutual assistance when subjected to a specially formidable attack, while the Austrian, Italian, French, Japanese, and German, lying on the other side of the Canal, should comprise the other half; at the same time communications were to be kept up between all the Legations. One more European (an English student) was insulted by Chinese soldiers.

29th May (11th June).—Rumoured that reinforcements were to be sent to our assistance. The English summer-houses were burnt down, the racing club and our ecclesiastical mission. The telegraph is interrupted. By order of the Chinese Emperor, a new council of Ministers has been appointed, nearly all of whom are inimical to Europeans, and the chief of whom is Prince Tuan, father of the heir to the throne, and the soul of the Boxer movement. The Japanese interpreter was killed at the Tsing-Ming gates. He was dragged from his carriage and cut to pieces as he was on his way to the station to learn the state of affairs.

30th May (12th June).—Began to build a stone barricade 4 feet high between our Legation and that of the Americans. The Ministers visited our Ambassador, but, it is said, behaved with suspicion. A letter was received from Kalgan from our merchants to say that they were in danger. Telegrams were sent through Kalgan concerning our threatening situation, as well as an express messenger to Tientsin.

31st May (13th June).—Finished the barricade. Positions for firing through loop-holes in the *enceinte* were made all round the Legation. Windows and roofs were barricaded. Provisions were bought in. Fires broke out on the outskirts of the town. The Manchurian city empties and the inhabitants rush out from their homes. Boxer flags are displayed in several houses. The mail is received from Tientsin. We hear that our landing parties are advancing under the command of Admiral Seymour.

1st June (14th).—Searched the houses contiguous to the Legation. The Chinese hurriedly leave. The Catholic mission Nantan is burnt.

2nd June (15th).—Proceeded with 30 sailors and 15 Americans to Nantan to save the Christians, whom the brutes were killing. Over-

took the Boxers on the march, slew 50 and rescued 300 Christians and brought them into the Legation; many of them were terribly mutilated. Nantan itself was entirely sacked and burnt, and heaps of mutilated corpses of women, children, and old men who had not been able to escape were to be met with everywhere. When we defeated the Boxers the Christians who were left alive threw themselves on their knees before us, weeping and showing crosses and trembling with fear; several went mad. We took 10 Boxers prisoners. In the evening an incendiary was captured by the sentry on the bridge over the canal.

3rd June (16th).—The burning of Chinese houses round the Legation began. Great fire in the Chinese city. Went to put out the fires nearest the Legation and ordered the surrounding houses to be knocked down. At night three men of our detachment are stationed in the Russian-Chinese Bank, and the bank clerks keep guard between the bank and the great wall.

4th June (17th).—The captured Boxers were handed over to the Chinese authorities for punishment.

5th June (18th).—The railway line continues to be destroyed. Tchagin's letter received by way of the detachment rejoiced all, but all wonder why the Admiral repairs the road instead of coming straight on here, all the more so as it is known to us through scouts that the road is being again destroyed in his rear.

A third meeting of officers: It is decided that if the Regular troops take part in the attacks against us, all the women and children shall be sent to the British Legation, as being the central one, and the remaining one to be held as the main defence. The Japanese occupy the Fu garden, belonging to one of the Chinese princes; thus the line of defence embraces the English Legation on three sides, so that they only have to defend the northern and a portion of the north-west side, where no serious onslaught can be delivered, owing to the city wall being in the way. The 9th East Siberian Rifle Regiment arrived in the Legation under the command of Staff Captain Vrublevsky. Provisions and stores were taken to the British Legation, where the central store is to be during the siege.

6th June (19th).—The day passed fairly quietly, occasional shots were heard in the city. Received a notification from the Chinese Government to the effect that war having been declared owing to the demand of the admirals that the Taku forts should be delivered up, all Europeans are invited to leave Peking in 24 hours.

At 6 p.m. commenced the first serious attack on all the Legations at once, but it was principally directed against the Russian and American Legations. We answered the enemy's fire, endeavouring to husband our ammunition as much as possible. The firing continued all through the night, and we drove the Chinese from the barricades, when they shut themselves up in the houses and fired through loop-holes made in the walls.

7th June (20th).—The German Minister was murdered and his dragoman wounded. Firing continued with short intervals. We strengthen

the barricade with barrels, bags filled with earth, etc., and make loop holes through.

8th June (21st).—The night passed comparatively quietly. The Chinese barricade the streets and burn the houses. In the morning the Chinese commence a furious fusilade on all sides, and a simultaneous attack on all the Legations was made. At 10 o'clock the Germans, French, Italians, and Austrians retreated to the English Legation, and shortly afterwards the Americans came to our Legation having lost two killed. Then we all retired to the British Legation according to an order from the senior of the commanding officers, the captain of the Austrian cruiser.

On arriving in the British Legation, I at once saw that complete chaos reigned there, therefore immediately rushed back with my men, and, after beating off the Chinese, let the Americans pass through, who then cleared their Legation, after which they went out on the wall, and having entrenched themselves, took possession of the entrance, and we sent ten men to their assistance.

9th June (22nd).—Up to mid-day there was furious firing. The Dutch Legation was burnt down and looted. From 2 p.m. until the evening firing ceased, but with the approach of darkness it recommenced.

10th and 11th June (23rd and 24th).—Firing continued; the hospital is quickly filling! and two doctors can hardly get through the work.

12th June (25th).—Firing continued all night. At 12 o'clock noon the Chinese broke into the Russian-Chinese Bank and set fire to it, keeping up a hot fusilade from all sides, so that it was impossible to put the fire out.

13th June (26th).—We made a sortie and killed about 20 of the enemy. One sailor belonging to the "Sissoi Veliki" was wounded. In order to have some kind of leadership over all the landing parties, and in view of the incapacity of the Austrian commander for such a post, all the commanding officers of the contingents agreed to appoint the English Minister, Sir Claude Macdonald, to take over the command. This was very unpleasant, but, as the necessity was apparent, I agreed to it. I must, however, say that with the exception of requests concerning reinforcements, I received no single order from him and all my reports were approved by him.

14th June (27th).—A desperate attack was made on the Fu garden occupied by the Japanese. We sent 10 men to their aid, the British 15, and the remaining nationalities 10 men each. These made a counter-attack on the Chinese, when a bluejacket belonging to the "Navarin" was wounded. Another sailor from the "Sissoi Veliki" was wounded about 4 p.m. Both were taken to the British hospital.

15th June (28th).—A petty officer and sailor wounded.

16th June (29th).—At night, besides musketry fire, a heavy cannonade commenced, the guns used being 37-millimetre $3\frac{1}{4}$ -inch modern Krupps, but the enemy's aim was very bad, the shrapnel bursting either beyond or far short of the Legations, while the common shell fell into the

Chinese quarter. During the night the Chinese erected a strong barricade opposite the Dutch Legation right across the road, threatening us.

At 9 a.m., a sailor belonging to the "Sissoi Veliki" was killed, and shortly afterwards another was wounded.

17th June (30th).—Strengthened existing and erected fresh barricades.

19th June (2nd July).—The Chinese build barricades and trenches, drawing nearer to our bastion on the wall. They have approached now to within 35 paces and in two nights have erected a powerful bastion. It has been decided to attack this at night, and after we have taken it to entrench ourselves in it. To effect this, 15 Russians, 10 British, and 25 Americans proceeded at 12 o'clock at night to the wall.

20th June (3rd July).—At 2 o'clock in the morning, under the command of Captain Myers, an American, the Russians, English, and Americans delivered the attack and drove the Chinese out of their bastion. The Russians and Americans attacked from the front and came under a furious fire, but the English turned the enemy's flank and put them to rout. Two Americans were killed and their captain wounded, and two bluejackets, one from the "Sissoi Veliki" and the other from the "Navarin," were wounded. Staff Captain Vrublevsky led the Russians, and was the first to leap to the bastion. The Chinese made a desperate attempt to re-take the position, but were repulsed. More than 50 Chinese were killed, about 30 of them lying behind the wall of our barricade. Two sailors were wounded, one belonging to the "Sissoi Veliki," and the other to the "Navarin."

21st June (4th July).—Bombardment of all the Legations, the Chinese using 37-millimetre guns, but doing little harm. We greatly feel the want of guns, rifle fire being insufficient to prevent the building of barricades.

22nd June (5th July).—The enemy's guns do a little damage to the Legations.

25th June (8th July).—A vigorous attack was made by the enemy from the Mongol Square, who bombarded both the Russian and British Legations. The Chinese surround us now with a 5-deep ring of barricades. We have now learnt to fire remarkably accurately, some being especially good shots. During the day the Chinese do not dare show themselves over the barricades. We kill every day from 10 to 15 of them, so now they are making their barricades higher and stronger, but by so doing they deprive themselves of the possibility of attacking us; but for all that we are closely besieged.

In the English Legation an old M.L. Chinese gun has been found, and we have handed over our artillery ammunition, the shells fitting the calibre.

26th June (9th July).—Rifle and artillery fire all night. In the morning the wall was found to have been broken in the corner of the Legation opposite the stables. It was evident that the Chinese were collecting, either to make an attack at this point or to try and set fire to the Legation through the hole in the wall. We at once blocked up the

breach, and made a barricade facing the wall with two tiers of loop-holes (for firing standing and kneeling). We also loop-holed the stables and bath-house which command this danger corner, so that this weak spot is now exposed to a cross fire as well as to frontal fire. We also cleared the ground and laid bare the whole length of wall from end to end.

At 8 p.m. the German and French Legations were heavily bombarded. Shrapnel burst continuously but did no harm.

27th June (10th July).—Suffering from want of ammunition, we manage to manufacture cartridges and powder which are sufficiently effective at close ranges. The stench from dead bodies is awful. Firing all night; the enemy's bullets finding their way in through our loop-holes, which have to be stopped up.

28th June (11th July).—The German Legation considerably battered by artillery fire.

29th June (12th July).—The night passed wonderfully quietly; in the afternoon the artillery began to shell us, but we had no casualties. Our crews, consisting of 1899 or 1898 recruits, for the most part have developed into veterans and are making marvellous shooting. The Chinese stand in awe of us and daily lose some of their most daring soldiers.

30th June (13th July).—At night occasional artillery fire and a dropping fusillade. In the morning the cannonade becomes heavier and shells from the tower of the Tsing-Ming gates begin to burst over our Legation and drop in the houses. -One shell struck the roof of the bell-tower, shrapnel fell in the court, and a common shell pierced the roof of the building where the Cossacks are quartered and exploded inside, but no one was killed. In the British Legation the women and children are taking refuge in bomb-proof chambers underground. Three shells have fallen into the bell-tower and four into the Minister's house, breaking everything in the room.

At 6.35 in the evening a general attack was made on all the Legations. The enemy endeavoured to rush us from behind the stables, and were driven back, but they broke down part of the wall. At 6.40 p.m. a tremendous explosion was heard in the French Legation and one of the houses was blown up, two Frenchmen and twenty-two Chinese being killed. The Chinese rushed to the attack, but the French drove them back; their Legation however caught fire. At the same time the Germans were attacked, and in answer to their request we sent 10 men to their assistance. Both the Germans and French lose many men from not having constructed barricades and trenches. Our 10 men built in one night a barricade and showed the Germans how to make use of it. At 8 p.m. a desperate attack was made on our Legation, the Chinese crawling up; they were beaten back and commenced a terrific rifle fire.

1st July (14th).—They are using all kinds of shells, round and conical, apparently ammunition is failing them. Some of their shells are filled with lime and they are even firing copper money at us. At 12 o'clock the 10 men we lent to the Germans returned. The enemy

are firing very wide. The remainder of the day is comparatively quiet and we are enabled to strengthen our barricades and make good any damage done. The Russian ladies help the wounded, the wife of our Minister being especially active. In the evening the Chinese tried to erect a barricade still closer into us, but having lost three or four men have abandoned the effort.

2nd July (15th).—We made a sortie to level some burning houses close to our Legation, thereby increasing our field of fire and hindering the Chinese from creeping up to us under cover of night. The Chinese opened a heavy fire on us as we were performing this duty, but our operations were covered by some of the men of our detachment, who fired from the upper loop-holes and kept the fire of the Chinese under. Found the commencement of a Chinese sap, but now that the ground around is laid bare they will be unable to go on with it.

3rd July (16th).—The Austrians and Italians leave their Legations, the first go over to the French, the latter to the Japanese. Rockets are fired into our Legation at night and combustible materials are thrown over the wall, but we have long since cleared everything away that is likely to catch fire. Fearing that the enemy may push a sap under the stables, we dig a deep counter-sap.

4th July (17th).—Continued to dig the trench behind the stables. In view of bad weather, erected barracks at the barricade for the men, and also stone protection from ricochet bullets coming from the Japanese, French, and German Legations. The Chinese again continue to erect a barricade thirty paces from us, and dig trenches. Requested the English to lend us the old Chinese gun, and having made a breach in the wall near the barricade we fired six shots at the Chinese building the barricade. This was sufficient to make them stop work, but at night they managed to finish it. The reason that they are so persevering in such work is the fact that the work is done *not* by the soldiers but by coolies, who are forced to work under fire by the soldiers, who kill them in case of refusal. The Chinese approach the British Legation under a flag of truce and ask for a cessation of military operations. Firing ceases.

5th July (18th).—In the night the Chinese finished the new barricade, and we have to be now more careful how we show ourselves, and must build our barricade higher.

A letter is received in the British Legation from the Yamen to the effect that the Chinese have ordered all firing to be discontinued. We promise to do the same. At 10.30 the Chinese began to show themselves without fear on the barricades waving white flags. They even approach the Legations, but are not allowed to come too near. We display boards with the following notice in Chinese :—"Do not approach with arms, and build no new barricades, or we shall fire." The Chinese are allowed to collect their dead but not to take away the rifles and ammunition from their bodies.

I cannot speak too highly of our sailors, their conduct is splendid and wins the admiration of the foreigners.

In spite of the armistice the Chinese secretly work on their barricades, and in the evening we raise ours, laying bags filled with sand on the top, since stones made a noise and attract the attention of the enemy, and draw their fire.

7th July (20th).—The night passed quietly. In the morning the Chinese began to dig in front of our left flank. We fired in the air to stop them, but as they continued to go on with the work we fired ball cartridge at them, whereupon the workmen fled. Spent the remainder of the day in disinfecting and cleaning the place, throwing down lime and carbolic. In the evening the Chinese start making their barricade higher, so we are driven to do the same.

8th July (21st).—The day passed quietly, so we availed ourselves of the opportunity to finish our trench behind the stables and to strengthen our barricades.

9th and 10th July (22nd and 23rd).—Heavy firing to the N.W., the Catholic Mission Batán is evidently being attacked; its garrison consists of 30 French and 10 Italians.

12th July (25th).—At 2 o'clock in the night the Chinese attacked us on all sides, but after receiving several volleys, they retreated behind their barricades, whence they kept up a rifle fire all night and into the morning.

13th July (26th).—Our barricade in the Legation Street has now developed into a regular fort, capable of withstanding even small-calibre artillery fire. It is called "Fort Navarino-Sissoisky," and carries the national flag. In the evening the Chinese fire war-rockets at our barricade and Legation, but without doing any harm. The *façades* of the houses in Legation Street, facing the Chinese barricades, have been beaten by thousands of bullets, all the trees are also knocked about and are beginning to wither. At 2 o'clock at night an attack was made from the Mongol market, but was repulsed. Provisions are very scarce; we receive half a loaf of bread, rice of second quality, and very often bad horse-flesh. We have begun to make gruel of barley.

15th July (28th).—At night there was firing from all the Chinese positions.

16th July (29th).—Heavy firing, both musketry and artillery, from the N.W. At 4 a.m. the fire on our Legation grew in intensity. It is pleasant to note that under this fire we are losing fewer men than the others, owing, no doubt, to our incessant work in strengthening our line of defence.

17th July (30th).—Heavy firing was audible from the direction of Batán. In the morning we were fired at from the roofs of houses and from behind barricades. Finished erecting a barricade in the courtyard, built another in the Russo-Chinese Bank, fearing a surrounding movement at night. We keep three sentries in the Russo-Chinese Bank day and night; the Americans also help, they are our neighbours, and the wall of the bank bounds their Legation.

18th July (31st).—Firing on our Legation commenced at 8 o'clock in the morning and continued till the evening. Through spies we learn that 7,000 soldiers and Boxers have entered the city. The whole day we await an attack. In the evening the Chinese increase their fire and approach close enough to the Legation to throw stones over the wall, but on losing several men they retire. In the night 10 men are sent to the English at the request of the British Minister.

19th July (1st August).—Firing continued all night. Several of the crews are ill with dysentery and are excused guard, but sleep with loaded rifles. We continue to manufacture cartridges.

20th July (2nd August).—Firing at night from the Mongol market, but no attack took place and no artillery fire. Towards evening there was furious firing, but it quickly ceased, and after that there were only occasional shots. During the siege a great many of our Christian coolies were killed by the Chinese, about one hundred of those who had helped to build barricades for the Japanese and English being shot.

21st July (3rd August).—Occasional firing throughout the night; the day passed fairly quietly. Reported from our advanced post that behind the third barricade many Chinese soldiers were to be seen dragging along provisions, bags, and boxes, probably containing military stores. We at once opened fire on them, killed 10, the rest fled. The Chinese concentrated their fire from barricades and roofs. Our provisions are getting worse; the horses are ill and skinny, and the rice is damaged; there is no wine left; three pieces of sugar are portioned out to each man a day; there are no potatoes, etc. So far there is no suffering from thirst; the men are worn out, as they get no sleep, and their nerves are strained by continual alarms. Besides this the fleas, gnats, and midges torment dreadfully, and together with the heat, render it impossible to sleep, even when there do happen to be a few quiet moments. Despatches from the Chinese have been received by the Ministers, requesting us to leave Peking, but this proposal is, of course, made with the object of giving the Boxers an opportunity of cutting us to pieces directly we quit our strong positions. We refused, therefore, to go. During the day we killed several Chinese.

22nd July (4th August).—The night was comparatively quiet, excepting a few shots from the Mongol market and from the wall. We cannot pass through any messengers, as they fall into the hands of the Chinese; we let some down by means of a rope from the wall, but we saw one cut down in the Chinese city. While working on a barricade in the Russo-Chinese Bank a bluejacket belonging to the "Navarin" was mortally wounded, and one from the "Sissoi Veliki" was slightly wounded, but was able to remain on duty; the other one died. Heavy firing at night.

23rd July (5th August).—The day passed with a slight fusilade on both sides, in which the Chinese lost 15 men.

24th July (6th August).—At 3 o'clock in the morning the Chinese endeavoured to carry the Legations by storm, but were repulsed with loss. The men are becoming quite worn out, they fall asleep at their

posts and suffer from stomachic complaints. It is very hard work to keep constantly going the rounds; the Cossacks are very good, especially one, who fires almost continuously and has killed a great many of the Chinese soldiers. What with the killed, wounded, and sick, our effective strength is sadly diminished. In order to deceive the Chinese we post men in positions in the day-time where they can fire on the enemy, but withdraw them at night.

25th July (7th August).—Continuous fire from the barricades. The Chinese aim very high.

26th and 27th July (8th and 9th August).—Heavy rifle firing. We expect and prepare for an attack.

28th July (10th August).—The Chinese leaders try to persuade the soldiers to rush us, but only a few answer to the call, and they are instantly shot down as soon as they show themselves. Quiet towards evening.

29th July (11th August).—Attack on the Japanese, who repulsed it brilliantly. A sailor from the "Sissoi Veliki" died of dysentery. Cannonade at night from the Mongol square, the wall, and from the Xataminsky gates.

30th July (12th August).—A sailor from "Sissoi Veliki" wounded by fragment of a shell. Three more men sent to hospital for dysentery. Heavy firing all day. Provisions are giving out, only a few horses being left. The Chinese Christians have for a long time been eating dogs and grass. Bombardment from all sides at night.

31st July (13th August).—All night and day the Chinese continue the firing. At 8 o'clock in the evening the Chinese tried to deliver an assault from the street, but we drove them back with 11 volleys. Their loss should be heavy. The British also repulsed the enemy, as the attack came from the Mongol square, and we helped them by firing on the Chinese flank. The Chinese are said to have suffered heavily. We have only some cases of contusions from splinters.

1st August (14th).—A sailor from the "Sissoi Veliki" died, and another from the same ship was wounded and taken to hospital. During the night the firing was heavier than usual. The bullets came down like hail. At 2 o'clock at night Q.F. guns and musketry volleys were heard outside the city. We at once understood that the hour of our deliverance was at hand. It was our men threatening the Chinese from the east side. In the morning the bombardment of the gates commenced and the first to enter Peking were Russian troops. At the same moment our garrison and the American on the wall made a sortie under the command of Midshipman Den, and having captured all the Chinese fortifications penetrated to the Tsing-Ming gates, through which the Americans went while the Russian contingent proceeded further than Tsing-Ming and captured 5 Chinese guns and 10 standards.

At 3 o'clock the Manchu city was occupied by the European forces. The final losses of the Russian landing party were:—4 sailors killed, 2 died from dysentery, 18 wounded, 6 of whom remained in the ranks and

5 returned to duty during the siege, of the remainder 3 were seriously wounded.

On the 7th (20th) August, 7 wounded and 4 sick with dysentery were sent to the brigade hospital to be forwarded on to Tientsin.

The losses of the other landing parties were as follows:—

The total strength of all the landing parties was 21 officers and 429 men, of whom 78 were killed and 179 wounded.

Germans.—Landing party consisted of 1 officer and 50 men, of whom 13 were killed and 16 wounded; of the Volunteers, 1 was killed and 1 wounded.

British.—Landing party, 3 officers and 70 men; killed (with Volunteers), 6; wounded, 26; 3 Volunteers killed and 6 wounded.

French.—Landing party, 3 officers and 45 men; killed (with Volunteers), 13; and wounded, 12; 2 Volunteers killed and 6 wounded.

Japanese.—Landing party, 1 officer and 24 men and 36 Volunteers; killed (counting Volunteers), 10; wounded, 29 5 Volunteers killed and 8 wounded.

Americans.—Landing party, 3 officers and 53 men; 7 killed and 11 wounded.

Austrians.—Landing party, 5 officers and 30 men; 4 killed and 11 wounded.

Italians.—Landing party, 1 officer and 28 men; 7 killed and 13 wounded.

Besides these, in the Catholic Mission Pehtang there was a garrison of 30 French with an officer, and 11 Italians with an officer, of whom 5 French were killed and 8 wounded, while the Italians lost 6 killed and 4 wounded.

The loss in officers killed and wounded was:—

Americans—Wounded, 1 officer.

English—2 wounded, 1 killed.

French—2 killed:

Italians—1 wounded.

Austrians—3 wounded, 1 killed.

The losses of the Russian landing party of 2 officers and 72 men were as follows:—

Killed, 4 men; wounded, 1 officer and 18 men.

In conclusion, I consider it my duty to state that the successful defence of the Legation against such a host of enemies was only made possible by the co-operation of such able assistants as Midshipman Den and Staff Captain Vrublevsky. Their bravery, coolness, and devotion to duty were beyond all praise. The behaviour of the men was equally praiseworthy, and by their courage and endurance won the respect of the representatives of all the nations in Peking.

BARON VON RADEN,

Lieutenant, Imperial Russian Navy.