

Norfolk, to transport the troops over on that side for them to attack the new fort and lines in the rear of which the Constellation frigate was anchored, I directed the troops under Sir Sydney Beckwith to be landed upon the continent within the nearest point to that place, and a reinforcement of seamen and marines from the ships; but upon approaching the island, from the extreme shoalness of the water on the sea side, and the difficulty of getting across from the land, as well as the island itself being fortified with a number of guns and men from the frigate and militia, and flanked by fifteen gun-boats, I considered, in consequence of the representation of the officer commanding the troops, of the difficulty of their passing over from the land, that the persevering in the attempt would cost more men than the number with us would permit, as the other forts must have been stormed before the frigate and dock-yard could have been destroyed; I therefore ordered the troops to be re-embarked.

I am happy to say, the loss in the above affair, (returns of which are enclosed) has not been considerable, and only two boats sunk.

I have to regret, that Captain Hanshett, of His Majesty's ship *Diadem*, who volunteered his services, and led the division of boats with great gallantry, was severely wounded by a ball in the thigh.

The officers and men behaved with much bravery, and if it had been possible to have got at the enemy, I am persuaded would have soon gained the place.

I have the honor to be, &c.

J. B. WARREN.

J. W. Croker, Esq.

A return of officers, seamen, and marines, belonging to His Majesty's ships, killed, wounded, and missing, in the attack on Craney Island, June 22d.

Killed, none—wounded, eight—missing, ten.

Return of land forces killed, wounded, and missing, in same attack.

Killed, six—wounded, sixteen—missing, one hundred and four.

The policy of making this attack has been very much questioned, and some of James' objections appear to have a considerable show of reason. He says, "There can be only one opinion, surely, about the wisdom of

sending boats, in broad-day-light, to feel their way to the shore, over shoals and mud banks, and that in the teeth of a very formidable battery.—* But still had the veil of darkness been allowed to screen the boats from view, and an hour of the night chosen, when the tide had covered the shoals with deep water, the same little party might have carried the batteries, and a defeat as disgraceful to those that caused, as honorable to those that suffered in it, been converted into a victory. As it was the victory at Craney Island, dressed up to advantage in the American Official account, and properly commented on by the Government editors, was hailed throughout the Union as a glorious triumph fit for Americans to achieve."

We fully concede with many of James' objections, especially as to the injudicious selection of open daylight and an ebb tide. And although the particulars of the casualties are not given in Admiral Warren's despatch, yet other sources show that it was precisely to these causes that the failure was to be attributed.

In the first place there was an open parade of boats and an unwonted bustle round the British vessels; This was of course not unobserved by the enemy, who thus had time afforded to them to mature their plans of defence. In the second place the first part of the expedition of some seventeen or eighteen boats with about eight hundred men, under Sir Sydney Beckwith, was landed at a place called Peg's point, an untenable position, and from whence a movement, in support of the main body, could not be made. After remaining in this position for some time, the troops were re-embarked and returned to the fleet. The actual attack was made by a body about equally strong as the first division, and we would observe here, that it was made contrary to the opinion and advice of Captains Hanshett, Maude, and Romilly, however, overruled by the decision of Captain Perchell, the senior officer. It will thus be seen that the commanding officer had just half the force he calculated on for

*Here James indulges in a bit of the patriotic, about British basing their hopes of success on valour, not numbers, which we can afford to leave out. * * * * *