

however, awoke me at midnight, and my brother aide-de-camp kindly came in to see if I was up. We had fully made up our minds that our chief would be killed in the assault, and had agreed to stand by him, or bring in his body. I had been taking large doses of laudanum and other sedative medicines the two preceding days, and on Mr. Daniels leaving me, feeling worn out, I turned over, and slept again till Michael Hardy, of the *Leander*, came into the tent, and shook me.

Hardy, on arousing me, said the ladder party had moved off; to which I replied I was too ill to go out. He answered, "Shure, you'll never forgive yourself if you miss this morning's fun;" and, somewhat against my will, proceeded to dress me. Having accomplished this, he propped me up against the tent-pole while he got my pony, on which he put me, being obliged at first to hold me on to the saddle, for I was too weak to grip with my legs. We hurried after the party which was now some way ahead, as fast as the darkness permitted, overtaking it soon after 1 a.m., as it reached the 21-gun battery, where I tied up my pony to a gun.

When I reported myself to Captain Peel, who was seeing the men told off into parties, six men to each ladder, and a petty officer pair of ladders, I asked my chief if he had thought to bring down a Union Jack, that we might have it up in the Redan before the regimental colors, which, however, as I found later, were not taken out. He regretted that it had been forgotten, but agreed it was then impossible to remedy the mistake.

Captain Peel now sent me with a message to the other end of the battery, and, having delivered it, I was obliged to sit down on a gabion and rest for a quarter an hour, for I was feeling so weak as to be almost incapable of exertion. The 21 gun battery was a curious scene of confusion. The night was still dark, and what with excited commanding officers looking for the engineers who were to guide us, and the number of men passing into the battery at the same time, meeting and crossing each other on their way, together with the attempts to enforce silence, which were not altogether successful, it appeared at first as if we should never get into our places.

When, after resting, I returned to the right of the battery, where I had left Captain Peel, the ladder party had moved off to pick up their loads, which had been placed by the Royal Engineers in a slight hollow to the north of the third parallel. I went a short distance towards this spot, and then realizing that the party must come back again towards the Quarries, I walked straight in that direction, and presently had the satisfaction of seeing my chief, who was then engaged in having the sections re-numbered to ensure that every man was in his proper place on either side of the ladders. This being done, a tot of rum was issued all round, and we all lay down under a breast-work about three feet high, to the north of the Quarries and a little further to the rear, waiting for the signal, which was to be a flag hoisted in the 8-gun battery. In the interval before the signal was made, Captain Peel sent me on five different messages, none of which were essential, so eager was he that I should be spared from the fire we were about to meet. This I only knew later from a letter written to his brother on the following day, and at the time I was greatly irritated, so much so, that on the last occasion, just at the false dawn, in spite of occasional bullets fired from the Redan, I walked straight across the open towards the rear, instead of going round by the zig-zag. Peel then called me back giving up the attempt to be rid of me.

Mr. Kinglake, in his history, says,

"The night of the 17th-18th was a beautiful midsummer night, and the stars in the heavens disclosed the marches of troops to a vigilant garrison;" while the Staff Officer, writing from headquarters, says, "At 2 a.m., when Lord Raglan left his house, it was so dark that the staff could only ride at a foot's pace." The latter statement is the more accurate, for between two and three o'clock no one could see more than a hundred yards. Possibly from being unwell I was specially susceptible to chills, for I noted in my diary, "there was a cold mist." I am sure, however, we should not accept Mr. Kinglake's statement of the garrison having observed these marches of our troops, and being "thus able to divine in some measure the special plan of attack." The Russians, of course, knew that an assault was impending, and, fortunately for them and unfortunately for us, Todleben began, at dusk on the 17th, mounting field guns en barbette on the Malakoff, and making every preparation to receive the attack.

At 2 a.m., on the 18th, Second-Lieutenant Khroustchow, Briansk Regiment, who was lying concealed close to the French advanced trenches, reported that masses of troops were collecting in the Careenage Ravine. We know from the French engineer journal that they had begun to concentrate there at 10 p.m. on the 17th. The Russian bugles sounded the assembly and afterwards their long-suffering troops manned the parapets, and a field battery came into action in the gorge of the Malakoff. The allies were getting into position about the same time.

The French, who had abandoned the idea of assaulting the works at and about the Bastion du Mat, put twenty-five thousand men under arms; their assaulting divisions, consisting of about six thousand men each, being led by General Mayran on the extreme right, by General Brunet in the centre, and by General d'Autemarre on the left. The columns were intended to carry all the Russian works extending from the harbor on the north, to the Gervais battery on the south. This last stood between the Malakoff and the Redan. The Imperial Guard was placed as a reserve behind the Victoria fort.

General Pelissier had arranged to give the signal for the advance from the site of the Lancaster battery, but he was late in leaving headquarters not mounting his horse till two o'clock. His unwieldy figure did not permit of his riding ordinarily beyond a foot's pace, and the darkness of the night would have prevented any but a bold horseman from travelling faster. He was still some distance from the position he had determined to take up, when the assaulting column on the extreme north went forward. General Mayran mistook the blazing fuse of an ordinary mortar shell fired from the Mamelon for the signal rocket, and at 3.50 a.m. led forward his division, marching himself in front of the leading brigade, against the batteries standing immediately over Carcenage Bay. He had nearly eight hundred yards to cross, and although his men were at first sheltered by the nature of the ground, they were soon met by a heavy fire, not only from land batteries, but six steamers anchored off the mouth of Carcenage Bay, and only a comparatively few men reached the obstacles in front of the batteries. Mayran was severely wounded almost immediately, and shortly afterwards mortally wounded. His troops were rallied by the brigadier, General Failly, and, taking cover, they fired into the embrasures.

General Pelissier had intended that the advance of all three divisions should be

simultaneous. General d'Autemarre's division had furnished the guard for the trenches the previous day, and the cooking places had been placed to the south of the Mamelon, on the ground where Brunet's division was to assemble prior to the assault. When this division arrived, the company cooks of D'Autemarre's division were preparing the morning soup, and Brunet's troops were halted to avoid upsetting the cooking pots. Thus the division was late in getting into its position of "concentration."

When General Mayran went out prematurely, the fact of the centre column not being ready, gave the Russians time to concentrate all their fire on Mayran's troops, marching on the little Redan which lay between the most northern battery and the Malakoff, the Russians relieved from the pressure of Mayran's column, mounted their parapets and assailed Brunet's two brigades with grape, case, and bullets. The heads of the columns were shattered by the terrible shower of missiles poured on to them. The general himself was killed, and the leading part of the column moved too far to its right, halting and taking cover when within one hundred yards of a battery. Several officers tried again and again to lead the men forward but were struck down, and no substantial advantage was there gained. The other brigade moved three hundred yards rather further south, and some few of the boldest approached the ditch of the entrenchment which joined the Malakoff and Little Redan, but those who actually reached the ditch were too few in numbers to penetrate the work, their comrades lying strewn, dead and dying behind them.

When Brunet's column went forward, General d'Autemarre moved down the Dockyard Ravine, and one of his leading battalions pushed on into the suburb, while a party of engineers got into the Gervais battery without serious resistance. Here they remained for about forty minutes, but not being supported, eventually fell back.

Before I attempt to describe what happened to the stormers sent forward against the Redan, I may state briefly the proceedings of General Eyre's column. On the extreme British left, a brigade under General Eyre was detailed to move down the ravine which separated the right of the French on their western attack, and the left of our left attack. He was directed to seize the works in the cemetery at the head of the Dockyard Creek. He moved off from his point of concentration about 2 a.m., and was approaching some Russian rifle-pits which lay between him and the cemetery, when he was anticipated by the 10th battalion of chasseurs, which carried the rifle-pits by a flank attack.

Eyre, himself a man of great courage, of which he had given many proofs when in command of the 73rd Perthshire Regiment during the Kaffir wars, had, before marching off from parade, stimulated the ardor of his men by a short, burning speech, addressing himself particularly to the premier Irish battalion. This doubtless was, in part, the cause of a mistake which cost us dear, for the troops carried not only the Russian works in the cemetery, but pushed on to some houses at the foot of the enemy's main line of works in the Garden batteries; these were seized, and held till sunset. This was our sole success during the day, and was achieved at the cost of five hundred and sixty men, of whom thirty were officers, out of a total strength of two thousand.

The Redan as its technical name implies, was formed of two faces, each about seventy yards in length, meeting in a salient, the line of parapet being continued to the works on either side.