

as it will cease to be tenable. The new battery which I mentioned last night as being formed in the advanced trench, was completed and opened this morning. The tremendous volley with which it commenced, quite took the Russians by surprise. Each day they have been accustomed to see our 10-inch mortars fire from the same part of our works, and doubtless, from that very reason never anticipated further molestation (which, indeed, may be considered almost unnecessary, so well were our mortars manned) from the same quarter. The sudden and continued fire, therefore, of eight enormous guns, in addition to their old assailants, the mortars, was a complete and unpleasant surprise. At the first discharge one of their guns was dismounted and another injured, and their artillery-men either ran away or concealed themselves, as they were not to be seen. Only one gun was fired in reply, so that for five or ten minutes our battery had nothing to do but blaze away without fear of opposition. After that time the enemy appeared to take heart, and several guns were fired, but it was fully half an hour before they made anything like a vigorous defence. Then, indeed, the fire maintained showed that very many of the embrasures which were supposed to be silenced had merely had their guns withdrawn, and these they brought forward and well manned. For about an hour the enemy fought with great determination, but from the first they had no chance of being able to maintain it long. Directly it was seen that the Malakoff works were determined to engage our advanced battery, one face of Gordon's Battery, mounting ten guns and two mortars, was directed upon it, and the three 12-inch mortar battery at the picket house also threw its missiles against the Round Tower. With these, and with the assistance of the four 10-inch mortars near the advanced work, and several cohorts throwing 32lb. shell, a perfect hail was poured into our old enemy. As I have said, for a time it was well fought, but our immense shot dismounted the guns or cut up the earthworks, while the shell dropping over burst continually among its defenders. Towards eight o'clock its fire had slackened considerably, and before nine the enemy for that time gave up the contest as hopeless, and such guns as could still be used were withdrawn from the embrasures and batteries left to do their worst upon the earthworks. During this battery fight the Mamelon, as usual, revived from its state of inaction, and, to the astonishment of every one, put forward five guns and fired them continually. The demonstration, however, did little good beyond drawing on it, when the Malakoff was quiet, the fire of the mortar battery at the picket-house, and under these tremendous bombs it was soon reduced to its former inaction. Our advanced work then continued to fire at the Malakoff, which never offered any serious resistance for the remainder of the day. Every 20 minutes or so two or three of its guns were run forward and fired, but beyond this it was quiet, and seemed to have no more than 20 or 30 men in it. The result of this day's bombardment has again been most favourable to the allies. The Flagstaff battery still makes a heroic defence, but is evidently sinking fast. The Redan is still vigorous, but on the whole the enemy's fire is not half that of the allies. To-day our superiority has been much more marked than ever, the Russians not replying one gun to our three or four. Our casualties are, as usual, heaviest among the naval brigades, which, though less than a sixth of the force in the batteries, furnish rather over one-third of our total loss. The average each day has been about 60 killed and wounded, and about 100 French. To-day Lieut. Death, R.N., and Lieut. Steele, of the R. M. A., were wounded, but neither very severely. The wounded are now infinitely better taken care of than at the former bombardment. The ambulances remain sheltered in ravines behind the batteries, in which the wounded are conveyed to head-quarters, and there placed upon the railway tracks and sent down easily to Balaklava. The cases of amputation and severe wounds remain there in hospital; the others are immediately embarked on board ship.

FIFTH DAY.—SLACKENING OF THE ENEMY'S FIRE.

April 14.—I have only time to add a line or two before the mail starts. Our bombardment continued the whole of last night, with much effect, and this morning the guns again recommenced. The fire of the enemy slackens more and more each day. There was a slight sortie last night upon the French, who are sapping up towards the Flagstaff. It was instantly repulsed, with a loss of 10 or 12 killed of the Russians. There is no new feature in the cannonade of to-day, beyond that our advanced 84-pounder battery is doing considerable havoc to the works of the Malakoff. The weather still continues most unseasonable. We have nothing but dull skies, strong north-easterly winds, and heavy rains.

PREPARATIONS FOR A GENERAL ASSAULT.

Preparations are evidently making for a general assault. Our shells, on which we entirely rely for hindering the repair of the enemy's works during the night, are going fast, and will most likely be quite gone by to-morrow night. The tramway, to be sure, can bring up a day or two's supply, but it is wanted for other things, and besides it has been occupied all to-day in getting up 300 tons of powder from Balaklava to the front. When our supply of shell is exhausted we must storm, or quietly yield up the advantages our cannonade has given us, and sink back into the state in which we were after the attack of the 17th. Lord Raglan is busy everywhere riding and consulting with the engineers, generals, and the principal officers of the army. Canrobert seems never off his horse. To-day between 500 and 600 scaling ladders arrived at the camp, and

will be forwarded to the advanced trench, near the middle ravine. All the embrasures, gunways, and other preparations for the ordnance are completed; in fact, two of the pieces are already placed. The remaining six will go down to-night, and the battery opens fire with the rest to-morrow morning. It will attack only the Malakoff, and great things are expected from one of such strength, situated within 500 yards of the enemy's works. The allied troops now round Balaklava consists of the remains of the three regiments of Guards, the 79th 71st, 93d, and 42d Highlanders, with about 1,200 Marines, a force of Artillery, three regiments of Zouaves, one of Chasseurs, and three regiments of French Infantry of the line, in all about 15,000 men. The Zouaves, Highlanders, and Marines will be invaluable auxiliaries at the assault. After what they have done it is superfluous to say what the Guards would do now, but I believe they will not be at the storming in consequence of their sadly diminished numbers, and the majority of the men being still weakly after their winter suffering. The British Artillerymen, with the Guards, therefore, will remain with the Turks at Balaklava.

THE FIRING AT NIGHT.

It is something awful to stand upon the hills which overlook the town and watch the progress of the nightly bombardment. The Congro rockets rush from the French batteries with a deafening roar, leaving a light trail of fire behind, just sufficient to trace the course of the missile as it darts vaguely hither and thither through the air, settling down at last with a loud crash in the Flagstaff. This wild erratic course occasionally lands them outside the Russian lines, and now and then forces them clear over everything into the very centre of the town. From both right and left the mortars are discharged with a heavy painful explosion, and with a flash which, even at a distance, is almost blinding. As the dull boom shakes your very frame, you hear the shell with a kind of whistling roar mount higher and higher into the air, till having reached its zenith it descends with redoubled speed and force into the enemy's works. The shock with which it strikes the ground can be distinctly heard even in the allied camp, followed in a second after by the sharp ringing explosion, in the bright glare of which the earth is thrown up like a cloud. The enemy are replying to each shot with many guns, some mortars, but use no rockets at all; and whenever a pause occurs in the cannonade, the sharp, quick rattling of the musketry makes itself audible in the advanced trenches, till the recommencing roar of artillery drowns all other sounds. Such a contest is going on now, and will go on all night and each night, until the town surrenders or is taken. The casualties in the batteries to-day have been even slighter than those of yesterday. The left attack has sustained some injury in guns and works, but both will be repaired to-night. Captain Sinclair, of the Royal Artillery, was severely wounded with a splinter of a shell through the thigh, but is doing well. I believe no other officer was wounded. Omar Pasha and staff are dining to-night with Lord Raglan at head-quarters.

DOOM OF THE MALAKOFF AND THE MAMELON.

I surveyed the whole contest from different points for about four hours. During the whole of that time the Malakoff only fired five guns, the Mamelon only three. The other batteries fired more or less, according as the shots directed against them told well or ill; excepting always the Flagstaff, which was hard pressed, and seemed earnest in its defence. The French batteries engaged this latter so closely, that at least 25 per cent. of their shots were not returned. At this point our allies have a most decided superiority; so much so, that unless the enemy can repair their own, or in a sortie destroy the French works, the entire destruction of the Flagstaff Battery is now certain. Here, and when the French batteries at Inkerman were getting much the worst of it, the firing was hottest. At the centre, the part of the lines held by the English, it was rather slack on both sides, the Redan only now and then sending forth an awful volley in reply to our slow, steady, and continuous fire.

THE TOWN DURING THE BOMBARDMENT.—RUSSIAN BRAVADO.

This portion of the day was bright and clear. Every part of Sebastopol, even to the north side, could be most distinctly seen even with the naked eye. The works round the Malakoff were full of soldiers, who almost treated our fire with perfect contempt, lounging about in the embrasures, and scarcely moving when the shells dropped amongst them. Some of these fellows paid for their temerity with their lives, and the enemy then generally retaliated with one gun. Some of the houses in the town, which have hitherto escaped without damage, to-day showed distinct traces of where stray shell had fallen. Soldiers were in the streets apparently unconcerned, and a small steamer plied to and fro across the harbour. On the north side of the harbour, especially on the heights facing Inkerman, there were several

new and powerful batteries, which fired heavy volleys every quarter of an hour or so. Their range, however, was too long, and their shot, though they reached our batteries, effected nothing. Indeed, their works seemed more used as a bravado, and as if to show that that side commanded every part of the town. On the slopes below these batteries was a dummy camp of about a thousand clean white tents, but the most careful scrutiny failed at any time to discover soldiers either in or about them.

MOVEMENT OF THE ENEMY UPON BALAKLAVA.

About two o'clock, it was reported that a force of the enemy was advancing by Tchourgoum towards Bala Clava. I rode to a commanding position in rear of our lines, from which, it was said, the enemy could be seen, and found a number of French and English already assembled. From this point three columns of the enemy could be distinctly seen winding like snakes from Mackenzie's Farm down towards Tchourgoum. A closer examination showed it to be an exclusively cavalry force of about 2,000 men. At the same time it was noticed, that the camp which used to be on the heights near Mackenzie's Farm was broken up, though, as a blind, the two or three tents, which, I suppose, must have belonged to officers of rank, were left standing. This movement of the enemy on Bala Clava is, of course, what we have expected for some time, and what we knew must take place when the active operations of the siege recommenced. It has surprised me no one, though the enemy may be surprised to an extent which they do not anticipate, if an attempt be made to capture the harbour.

THE EMPEROR'S DEPARTURE FOR THE CRIMEA.

There appears to be no longer any reason to doubt that the Emperor of the French will proceed forthwith to the Crimea. In the *Constitutionnel* of Monday, it is stated that his camp equipage has already been sent off; and the 10th of May is confidently named in Paris as the day on which he will take his departure. The abilities of Napoleon III. are about to be tried in a new field. His victories have hitherto been gained in civil contests; it remains to be seen whether he has inherited the military talents of his house. Various considerations concur to recommend the step he is about to take. His presence in the Crimea seems desirable, as a means of giving unity to the operations of a campaign carried on by the armies of at least four independent nations. As victory will tend to consolidate his throne, he has every inducement to urge on the war with energy; and at the same time, from all we can learn, the Emperor is too profoundly impressed with the necessity of not overstraining the resources of France to be led astray by success. What course the Emperor will pursue remains perhaps to be decided by the state in which he will find affairs when he lands in the Crimea.

TOTAL LOSS BY FIRE OF THE CROCUSUS.

The *Crocus* was one of the fine fleet of iron screw steamers which were built for the General Screw and Steam Shipping Company, about two years since, by Messrs. Mare and Co., at Blackwall. She was upwards of 2,000 tons, was put on the Australian line, and returned from Melbourne about three months ago. She was then taken up by the English Government, and took out the Royal Wilt's Militia, from Portsmouth to Corfu. On disembarking the troops there, she was ordered to Malta, where she arrived on the 3d of April, and on being coaled, proceeded with other transports to Spezia, for the purpose of conveying the Sardinian troops for service in the Crimea. She was then ordered to Genoa, and in the course of Monday the first detachment of the army, comprising the staff, 37 officers, and 200 rank and file, embarked on board. She also shipped 25 mules, and a large quantity of stores and ammunition. On the following (Tuesday) morning she took her departure for Constantinople. The other vessels which the Government had placed at the disposal of the Sardinian authorities for the conveyance of the contingent, and it is reported took their departure for the East about the same period, were her Majesty's ship *Retribution*; *Jason*, No. 84 (sister ship of the *Crocus*); *Eumen*, No. 74; *Cleopatra*, No. 137; *Hydaspes*, No. 9, and *Harkaway*. According to the brief accounts that have been received of the loss, it appears that the fire broke out amongst the stores, shortly after the ill-fated ship had left Genoa, and so rapid was the work of destruction, that all attempts to stay the progress of the flames or save the vessel proved fruitless. Her condition being observed, the other transports sent their boats to her aid, and with those belonging to the *Crocus*, the whole of the soldiers and crew of the burning ship were preserved, with the exception of six of the troops and one sailor. This is the third steamer the company have lost within the last two months, two by fire, viz., the *Crocus* and the *Mauritius*, which was destroyed while lying in the dry-dock at Southampton, and one, the *Natal*, chartered by the French Government, by going ashore near Cadix. The company are severe sufferers by these deplorable disasters, as the ships, in ad-

dition to earning a considerable sum for month, were not insured to their value. The *Crocus* cost £290,000 and was only insured for £57,000. The Government paid the company £5,000 a month for her services.

From the European Times, April 28.

THE WAR.

It hardly required the assurance of Lord Palmerston, on Monday night, in the Lower House, or that of the Earl of Clarendon, the night following, in the Upper Chamber, that the Vienna Conference was at an end, and that Lord John Russell had left the Austrian capital, and was on his way back to London. What was really new in these explanations of the Premier and the Foreign Secretary was this,—that Russia had made no counter propositions, and that she had rejected the offer of the Allied Powers, either to diminish her naval supremacy in the Black Sea, or to make its waters neutral to vessels of all nations. Nothing can show more completely that the Conference from the first was a farce, and that Russia never entertained any serious notions of relaxing her hold on the Ottoman empire. It is now quite clear, that whatever were the views of the late Czar on this subject, his successor will not desert from that course of aggression which has led to this war—will only consent to peace on such conditions as the Allies may dictate, when his power has been crippled, his pride humbled, and his empire in the throes of a convulsion. We now know the worst, and every Englishman feels that until this has been done, there will be no peace in Europe, and that the demon of war requires myriads of victims before his thirst for blood will be satisfied. Hitherto, the war may be said to have been a phylaxing as compared with the dimensions to which it will now expand; and one of the most important incidents arising out of it will be the part which Louis Napoleon must now play in the great game of nations. He is about to depart for the Crimea, to return as a conqueror, to add to the glory of his house, and fulfil that destiny in which he has faith; or to fail in a character in which he is most anxious to succeed—the character of a successful warrior. Failure—which we must not contemplate, because our fortunes are bound up with his—would involve consequences, a bare allusion to which would appal the stoutest heart. We must wish him success, not less for his own sake than for our own; but it is evident that the career of this extraordinary man is only beginning; and if, as his admirers say, he has real greatness within him, no man, conscious of such powers, could desire a more favorable opportunity for putting them forth. And in truth he must believe that he has these powers. There was no absolute necessity for him to undertake the command himself; no motive stronger than that which might be supposed to influence Prince Albert, unless our French ally felt, that he could do the work better personally than by deputy. He has chosen his own course, and the country which he represents, whose people admire military glory beyond all human greatness, must see in the nephew of the great Napoleon a man who, having secured a throne without directing a battle, feels that the surest method to consolidate it is to win victories at the expense of Muscovite ignominy. There may be retributive justice in *agore* for Russia, for, as her snows and frosts were the instruments of sending the uncle into exile, it is within the compass of probability, that the nephew may return the compliment by shaking the dynasty of the Romanoffs, and avenging the wrongs of his inspired namesake. Unless there is less stuff in the Western Powers than we believe them to possess,—unless in the deadly conflict, civilization, bravery, hardihood, education, genius, and wealth combined, are inferior to the hordes of a semi-barbarous and despotic power, whose nobles are tyrants and whose people are slaves, this is a result which some unborn Gibbon may yet have to record in his most polished and passionless sentences.

The intelligence by the Overland Mail, which came to hand last evening, is not encouraging, if we are to credit the assurance that a rupture with Persia is imminent. Twelve months ago, when the war broke out, we were told the same story, namely, that Persia was about to join the Czar, and break with the Government of Great Britain. It is now declared that the Governor of Bessarabia is summoned to St. Petersburg, and that from the Russian capital he will proceed on an important mission to the Court of the Shah. This may be all true; but we greatly question whether the Shah of Persia will be entrapped into the alliance. No doubt the late Czar had tried the same game and failed; and if Nicholas, who was the terror of the East, and whose almost continuous success during thirty years caused him to be regarded as invincible, was unable to move the Persian ruler, the new Czar, who has to make a name, and whose position is critical, cannot be expected to succeed. We see it stated that the treaty between the Japanese and the Americans was ratified on the 21st of October.

COMPLETION OF THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.—A telegraphic despatch, dated Balaklava, Wednesday evening, was received at the War Office at half-past twelve o'clock on Thursday. The delay in the transmission of the message arises from the fact, that the electric wires between Cape Caliacra (where the wire dips into the Black Sea) and Varna, a distance of twenty miles, are not yet completed, nor we believe, is the wire carried into Balaklava from St. George's Monastery. When the telegraph is carried up to head quarters, from whence one of the trenches is already laid down, the field officer in command during the night will, at the same moment, announce a sortie to Lord Raglan and to the Prime Minister in Downing-street.

VARNA, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25.—Telegraphic communication from Varna to Crimea complete.—All well."

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