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## DIARY OF THE SIEGE.

(From the *Cur. of the London Times.*)

### THE ASSAULT.

SEBASTOPOL, September 8.—The weather changed suddenly yesterday. This morning it became bitterly cold. A biting wind right from the north side of Sebastopol blew intolerable clouds of harsh dust into our faces. The sun was obscured—the sky was of a leaden wintry grey. Early in the morning a strong force of cavalry, under the command of Colonel Hodge, was moved up to the front, and formed a chain of sentries in front of Cathcart's hill and all along our lines. No person was allowed to pass this line unless he was a staff officer or provided with a pass. Another line of sentries in the rear of them was intended to stop stragglers and idlers from Balacklava, and the object in view was, probably, to prevent the Russians gathering any intimation of our attack from the unusual accumulation of people on the look out hills. If that were so, it would have been better to have kept the cavalry more to the rear, and not to display to the enemy a line of Hussars, Lancers, and Dragoons, along our front. At 11.30 the Highland Brigade, under Brigadier Cameron, marched up from Kamara, and took up its position in reserve at the right attack, and the Guards, also in reserve, were posted on the same side of the Woronzoff-road. The first brigade of the Fourth Division served the trenches of the left attack the night before, and remained in them. The second brigade of the Fourth Division was in reserve. The Guards, who served the trenches of the left attack, and only marched out that morning, were turned out again after arriving at their camp. The Third Division, massed on the hill-side before their camp, were also in reserve, in readiness to move down by the left attack in case their services were required. General Pelissier during the night collected about thirty thousand men in and about the Mamelon, to form the storming columns for the Malakoff and Little Redan, and to provide the necessary reserves. The French were reinforced by five thousand Sardinians, who marched up from the Tchernaya last night. It was arranged that the French were to attack the Malakoff at noon, and, as soon as their attack began, that we were to attack the Redan. At the same time a strong column of French was, I understand, to make a diversion on the left and menace the line of the Bastion du Mat, but I do not believe it was intended to operate seriously against this part of the town, the possession of which in a military point of view would be of minor importance. The cavalry sentries were posted at 8.30. At 10.30 the Second Division and the Light Division moved down to the trenches, and were placed in the advanced parallels as quietly and unostentatiously as possible. About the same hour General Simpson and staff moved down to the second parallel of the Green-hill Battery. Sir Harry Jones, too ill to move hand or foot, nevertheless insisted on being carried down to witness the assault, and was borne to the parallel on a litter, in which he remained till all was over. It was, as I have said, a bitter cold day, and a stranger would have been astonished at the aspect of the British generals as they viewed the assault. The Commander-in-Chief, General Simpson, sat in the trench, with his nose and eyes just facing the cold and dust, and his cloak drawn over his head to protect him against both.—General Jones wore a red nightcap, and reclined on his litter, and Sir Richard Airey, the Quartermaster General, had a white pocket handkerchief tied over his cap and ears, which detracted somewhat from a martial and belligerent aspect. The Duke of Newcastle was stationed at Cathcart's hill in the early part of the day, and afterwards moved off to the right to the Picket-house looking out over the Woronzoff-road. All the amateurs and travelling gentlemen, who rather abound here just now, were in a state of great excitement, and dotted the plan in eccentric attire, which recalled one's old memories of Cowes, and yachting and sea-bathing—were engaged in a series of subtle manœuvres to turn the flank of unwary sentries, and to get to the front, and their success was most creditable to their enterprise and ingenuity. The Tartars, Turks, and Eupatorians were singularly perturbed for such placid people, and thronged every knoll which commanded the smallest view of the place. At 10.45 General Pelissier and his staff went up to the French observatory on the right. The French trenches were crowded with men as close as they could pack, and we could see our men through the breaks in the clouds of dust, which were most irritating, all ready in their trenches. The cannonade languished purposely towards noon, but the Russians, catching sight of the cavalry and troops in front, began to shell Cathcart's hill and the heights, and disturbed the equanimity of some of the spectators by their shells bursting with loud "thuds" right over their heads. A

few minutes after twelve o'clock the French, like a swarm of bees, issued forth from their trenches close to the doomed Malakoff, swarmed up its face, and were through the embrasures in the twinkling of an eye. They crossed the seven metres of ground which separated them from the enemy at a few bounds—they drifted as lightly and quickly as autumn leaves before the wind, battalion after battalion, into the embrasures, and in a minute or two after the head of their column issued from the ditch, the tricolor was floating over the Korniloff Bastion. The musketry was very feeble at first—indeed, our allies took the Russians quite by surprise, and a very few of the latter were in the Malakoff; but they soon recovered themselves, and from twelve o'clock till past seven in the evening the French had to meet and defeat the repeated attempts of the enemy to regain the work and the Little Redan, when, weary of the fearful slaughter of his men, who lay in thousands over the exterior of the works, the Muscovite General, despairing of success, withdrew his exhausted legions, and prepared with admirable skill to evacuate the place. Of the French attack on the left I know nothing, but that, if intended in earnest, it was not successful, and was followed by some loss to our allies. As soon as the tricolor was observed waving over the parapet of the Malakoff through the smoke and dust, four rockets were sent up from Chapman's attack one after another as a signal for our assault on the Redan. They were borne back by the violence of the wind; silvery jets of sparks they threw out on exploding were nearly invisible against the raw grey sky. It was a few minutes after twelve when our men left the fifth parallel. The musketry commenced at once, and in less than five minutes, during which the troops had to pass over about thirty yards from the nearest approach to the parapet of the Redan, they had lost a large proportion of their officers and were deprived of the aid of their leaders. The riflemen advanced admirably, but from their position they could not do much to reduce the fire of the guns on the flanks and below the re-entering angles. As they came nearer the enemy's fire became less fatal. They crossed the abattis without difficulty; it was torn to pieces and destroyed by our shot, and the men stepped over and through it with ease. The light division made straight for the salient and projecting angle of the Redan, and came to the ditch, which is here about 15 feet deep. The party detailed for the purpose placed the ladders, but they were found to be too short. However, had there been enough of them that would not have mattered much, but some had been left behind in the hands of dead or wounded men, and others had been broken, so that if one can credit the statements of those who were present there were not more than six or seven ladders at the salient. The men, led by their officers, leaped into the ditch, and scrambled up the other side, whence they got up the parapet almost without opposition, for the few Russians who were in front ran back and got behind their traverses and breastworks as soon as they saw our men on the top, and opened fire upon them. To show what different impressions the same object can make on different people, let me remark that one officer of rank told me that the Russians in the Redan did not exceed 150 men when he got into it, and that the men could have carried the breastwork with the greatest ease if they had made a rush for it, and he expressed an opinion that they had no field pieces inside the breastwork. A regimental officer, on the other hand, positively assured me that when he got on the top of the parapet of the salient he saw at about 100 yards in advance of him a breastwork with gaps in it, through which were run the muzzles of field-pieces, and that in the rear of it were compact masses of Russian infantry, the front rank kneeling with fixed bayonets as if prepared to receive a charge of cavalry, while the two rear ranks over them kept up a sharp and destructive fire on our men. The only way to reconcile these discrepancies is to suppose that the first spoke of the earliest stage of the assault, and that the latter referred to a later period when the Russians may have opened embrasures in the breastwork and had been reinforced by the fugitives from the Malakoff, and by the troops behind the barracks in its rear. Lamentable as it no doubt is, and incredible almost to those who know how the British soldier generally behaves before the enemy, the men when they got on the parapet were seized by some strange infatuation, and began firing, instead of following their officers, who now began to fall fast as they rushed on in front and tried to stimulate their soldiers by their example.—Notwithstanding the popular prejudice to the contrary, most men stand fire much better than closing with the enemy. As the Light Division rushed out in the front they were swept by the guns of the Barrack Battery, and by several pieces on the proper right of the Redan, loaded heavily with grape, which caused them considerable loss ere they reached the

salient, or apex of the work at which they were to assault. The storming columns of the Second Division, issuing out of the fifth parallel rushed up immediately after the Light Division, but when they came up close to the apex, Brigadier Wyndham very judiciously brought them by a slight detour on the right flank of the Light Division, so as to come a little down on the slope of the proper left face of the Redan. The first embrasure to which they came was in flames, but, moving on to the next, the men leaped into the ditch, and with the aid of ladders and each other's hands, scrambled up on the other side, climbed the parapet, or poured in through the embrasure which was undefended. Colonel Wyndham was the first or one of the very first men in on this side, and with him entered Daniel Mahoney, a great grenadier of the 41st, Killeany, and Cornelis of the 8th sappers regiment. As Mahoney entered with a cheer, he was shot through the head by a Russian rifleman and fell dead across Colonel Wyndham; and at the same moment Killeany and Cornelis were both wounded. The latter claims the reward of £5, offered by Colonel Herbert to the first man of his division who entered the Redan. Running parallel to the faces of the Redan there is, as I have described, an inner parapet, intended to shield the gunners at the embrasures from the effects of any shell which might fall into the body of the work and strike them down if this high bank were not there to protect them from the splinters. Several cuts in the rear of the embrasures permitted the men to retire in case of need inside, and very strong and high traverses ran all along the sides of the work itself to afford additional shelter. At the base of the Redan, before the re-entering angles, is a breastwork, or rather a parapet with an irregular curve, up to a man's neck, which runs in front of the body of the place. As our men entered through the embrasures, the few Russians who were between the salient and this breastwork retreated behind the latter, and got from the traverses to its protection. From it they poured a quick fire on the parapet of the salient which was crowded by the men of the Light Division, and on the gaps through the inner parapet of the Redan, and our men, with an infatuation which all officers deplore, but cannot always remedy on such occasions, began to return the fire of the enemy without advancing or crossing behind the traverses, and loaded and fired as quickly as they could, with but little execution as the Russians were well covered by the breastwork. There were also groups of Russian riflemen behind the lower traverse near the base of the Redan, who kept up a galling fire on our men. As the alarm of an assault was spread, the enemy came rushing up from the barracks in rear of the Redan, and increased the force and intensity of their fire, while our soldiers dropped fast and encouraged the Russians by their immobility and the weakness of their fusillade, from which the enemy were well protected. In vain the officers, by voice and act, by example and daring, tried to urge our soldiers on. They had an impression that the Redan was mined, and that if they advanced they would all be blown up, but many of them acted as became the men of Alma and Inkermann, and rushing to the front, were swept down by the enemy's fire. The officers fell on all sides, singled out for the enemy's fire by their courage. The men of the different regiments became mingled together in inextricable confusion. The 19th men did not care for the orders of the officers of the 88th, nor did the soldiers of the 23rd heed the commands of an officer who did not belong to his regiment. The officers could not find their men—the men had lost sight of their own officers. All the Brigadiers, save Colonel Wyndham, were wounded or rendered unfit for the guidance of the attack. That gallant officer did all that man could do to form his men for the attack, and to lead them against the enemy. Proceeding from traverse to traverse, he coaxed the men to come out, and succeeded several times in forming a few of them, but they melted away as fast as he laid hold of them, and either fell in their little ranks or retired to cover to keep up their fusillade. Many of them crowded to lower parts of the inner parapet and kept up a smart fire on the enemy, but nothing would induce them to come out into the open space and charge the breastwork. This was all going on at the proper left space of the Redan, while nearly the same scene was being repeated at the salient.—Every moment our men were diminishing in numbers while the Russians came up in swarms from the town, and rushed down from the Malakoff, which had now been occupied by the French. Thrice did Colonel Wyndham send officers to Sir E. Codrington, who was in the fifth parallel, begging of him to send up supports in some order of formation; but all these three officers were wounded as they passed from the ditch of the Redan to the rear, and the colonel's own aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Swire, of the 17th, a gallant young officer was hit dangerously in the hip,

as he went on his perilous errand. Supports were, indeed, sent up, but they came up in disorder from the fire to which they were exposed on their way and arrived in dribbles, only to increase the confusion and the carnage. Finding that he could not collect any men on the left face, Colonel Wyndham passed through one of the cuts of the inner parapet, and walked over to the right face at the distance of thirty yards from the Russian breastwork, to which he moved in a parallel line, exposed to a close fire, but, wonderful to say, without being touched. When he got behind the inner parapet to the right face, he found the same state of things as that which existed to the left. The men were behind the traverses firing away at the Russians, or blazing at them from the broken parts of the front, and the soldiers who came down from the salient in front only got behind these works for cover while they loaded and fired at the enemy. The colonel got some riflemen and a few men of the 88th together, but no sooner had he brought them out than they were killed, wounded, or dispersed by a concentrated fire. The officers, with the noblest devotion, aided by Colonel Wyndham and became the special marks of the enemy's riflemen. The narrow neck of the salient was too close to allow of any kind of formation, and the more the men crowded into it, the more they got into disorder, and the more they suffered from the enemy's fire. This miserable work lasted for an hour. The Russians were now in dense masses behind the breastwork, and Col. Wyndham walked back again across the open space to the left, to make one more attempt to retrieve the day. The men on the parapet of the salient, who were firing at the Russians, sent their shot about him, and the latter, who were pouring volley after volley on all points of the head of the work, likewise directed their muskets against him, but he passed through this crossfire in safety, and got within the inner parapet on the left, where the men were becoming thinner and thinner. A Russian officer now slipped down the breastwork and tore down a gabion with his own hands; it was to make room for a field piece. Col. Wyndham exclaimed to several soldiers who were firing over the parapet, "well, as you are so fond of firing, why don't you shoot the Russian?" They fired a volley and missed him, and soon after, the field piece began to play on the head of the salient with grape. Col. Wyndham saw there was no time to be lost. He had sent three officers for reinforcements, and, above all, for men in formation, and he now resolved to go to Gen. Codrington himself. Seeing Capt. Crealock of the 90th near him, busy encouraging his men, and exerting himself with great courage and energy, to get them into order, he said—"I must go to the generals for support. Now mind, let it be known, in case I am killed, why I went away." He crossed the parapet and ditch, and succeeded in reaching the fifth parallel through a storm of grape and rifle bullets in safety. Sir Edward Codrington asked him if he thought he really could do anything with such supports as he could afford, and said he might take the Royals, which were then in the parallel.—"Let the officers come out in front—let us advance in order, and if the men keep their formation the Redan is ours," was the Colonel's reply; but he spoke too late—for at that very moment our men were seen leaping down into the ditch, or running down the parapet of the salient, and through the embrasures of the work into the ditch, while the Russians followed them with the bayonet and with heavy musketry, and even threw stones and grapeshot at them as they lay in the ditch. The fact was that the Russians having accumulated several thousands of men behind the breastwork, and seeing our men all scattered up behind the inner parapet of the traverse, crossed the breastwork, through which several field pieces were now playing with grape on the inner face of the Redan, and charged our broken troops with the bayonet, at the same time that the rear ranks getting on the breastwork, poured a heavy hail of bullets on them over the heads of the advancing column. The struggle that took place was short, desperate, and bloody. Our soldiers, taken at every disadvantage, met the enemy with the bayonet too, and isolated combats took place in which the brave fellows who stood their ground had to defend themselves against three or four adversaries at once. In the melee the officers, armed only with their swords, had little chance; nor had those who carried pistols much opportunity of using them in such a rapid contest. They fell like heroes, and many a gallant soldier with them. The bodies of English and Russians inside the Redan, locked in an embrace, which death could not relax, but had rather cemented all the closer, lay next day inside the Redan as evidences of the terrible animosity of the struggle. But the solid weight of the advancing mass urged on, and led each moment from the rear, by company after company, and battalion after battalion, prevailed at last against the isolated and disjointed band, who had abandoned the protection of