



CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

VOL. V.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, AUGUST 10, 1855.

NO. 52.

DIARY OF THE SIEGE.

(From Correspondents of London Journals.)

June 30.—Lieut. William Owen, 23rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers, was mortally wounded last night in the trenches of the right attack. He was in one of the covered approaches before the Quarry work, when a shell from a columbarium mortar fell a short distance in front of the parapet and bounded over among the troops. It exploded almost immediately afterwards. From some cause Lieut. Owen had not adopted the usual precaution of throwing himself on the ground, and a fragment struck him, as he was standing up, in the lower part of his body. A heavy fire was kept up all day in the batteries on both sides. The Redan has been particularly active, and also a small mortar battery in the hollow between the Redan and Malakoff hills. The Russian riflemen around the Malakoff works have omitted no opportunity of firing at any object that may become visible in the advanced trenches, although the range is very long. The 12-gun battery on the north side, nearly opposite to Mount Sapone; and the small batteries beyond, commonly spoken of as the Cossack batteries, have kept up a very active fire against the French. Inkermann, and other redoubts east of the Careening Bay ravine. The French have commenced a new work still nearer to the water of the south harbor than the small five-gun work which the Russians deserted the day after the capture of the Selinghinsk and Volhynia redoubts. Our allies appear also to be preparing the Russian five-gun work for use against the harbor, but there are no guns within yet. Lieut. Edmund Woodford, of the Second Battalion, Rifle Brigade, was wounded by a fragment of shell early in the afternoon, and died about three hours afterwards.

July 1.—It has been decided that one of our new batteries, intended to act against the Russian shipping with long guns, has been placed in an injudicious position. It will be available for use, however, as a mortar battery, and orders have been given that it should be converted into a work of that nature. We have lent two Lancaster guns to the French, for an advanced battery on the right of the Mamelon. The Russians made a demonstration in force to-day on the north side of the Tchernaya. They came out in several very strong columns, and had both cavalry and artillery with the force.

July 2.—A very active shelling fire was kept up last night by the Russians in the supposed direction of our working parties. Our casualties were very few. During the day the fire has been very slack. The corpse of the late Commander-in-Chief of the army is to be carried to England on board the Caradoc. The steamer is to leave Kamiesch early on the morning of the 4th instant. The officers of Lord Raglan's personal staff do not join their respective regiments, but also proceed to England.

July 3rd.—The wind has been blowing in heavy squalls from the north and north-east, and violent tropical-like showers of rain have been falling during the night. The water is now flowing in rapid streams down the ravines. On Saturday last, a chivalrous incident occurred on the part of the enemy, which deserves acknowledging mention. About noon, a flag of truce was hoisted from Fort Constantine, and a boat sent out under it to the Royal Albert, carrying the swords of Sir John Campbell and Colonel Yea, who were killed in the attack on the Redan. On the day of that affair, the bodies of both these officers were treated with considerable respect by the Russian soldiers during the process of rifling, nothing being taken from their persons but their money, papers, and arms—the last of which were now restored. The event of to-day has been the funeral procession of the late Field Marshal Lord Raglan, from the headquarters house to the Caradoc, which was waiting at Kazatch Bay, to convey the mortal remains to England. As a military spectacle the funeral cortege presented numerous features of striking magnificence. There has not been much fire from the batteries to-day. The French are strengthening their new works on the East of Careening Bay. The redoubt Blanche is becoming a formidable work. The Russian 12-gun battery on the opposite side of the harbor, has been keeping up a very constant fire, with a view to impede the progress of this work, which promises completely to prevent the Russian shipping again appearing near the Bay of Inkermann. The Russian batteries on the west side of Careening Bay have also been very constantly throwing shells in the direction of this and the other French works on the east side. Our new advanced batteries in the right attack are making rapid progress. It is anticipated by our engineers that their effect against the shipping lying off the Karabelnia suburb will be very destructive. The enemy has undertaken a work of great labor. During the last two nights his working parties have been actively engaged in filling up embasements of the Korniloff bastion in front of the Malakoff Tower, and also those of a considerable

part of the Redan near the salient angle. A large quantity of earth has already been thrown up on the top of the gabions employed to block up the embrasures, and also upon "merlons," the masses of solid earth between the embrasures. It is quite evident that greater elevation is about to be given to the whole line of battery, so that a more dominant fire may be obtained from the Malakoff against the Mamelon Fort and from the Redan against our Quarry and other works on the right attack. To complete this operation great labor will also be required within the work. There is probably an abundant supply of timber still in the shipping yards, which can be turned to good account in the undertaking. The Russians are also seen to be busily occupied in adding to the outworks of the North Fort on the opposite side of the harbor. A new 4-gun battery has just been completed, which, though connected with the North Fort, is placed on a commanding knoll about half way between it and the cliff overhanging the Great Harbor. Two or three shots were fired from this work to-day, as if to try the range. They fell near the French advanced works on the right of the Mamelon Vert. The Russian working parties can be seen in considerable numbers returning towards sunset from the direction of the Star Fort, and marching toward the more distant camps. Every appearance tends to confirm the suspicion that the nearer encampments on the high ground above the harbor, and stretching along the line of hill to the right of the Star Fort, are those of the Russian ambulances. Although the greater number of the tents composing these camps are completely under view, and with a good telescope an individual moving among them can be readily distinguished, there is never observed the movements, or constant ingress and egress, which characterize the ordinary encampments of troops. There can be but one other explanation of their remarkably deserted appearance; if they are not occupied by sick and wounded, they are in a great measure empty, and have been left standing for some purpose of deception. There has been a cessation of the arrival of the immense convoys which used to be seen of carts conveying sacks apparently of grain. The two huge pyramidal heaps which were collected below the Star Fort have disappeared; they have been removed, it is supposed, into some of the large storehouses which exist nearer to the water, but at no great distance from the spot where the heaps were first deposited. There are eight or nine stacks, but comparatively small in size, of bags placed in a row on a level piece of ground north of the twelve gun battery. These sacks are much darker in color than were those deposited in the pyramidal heaps, neither have they any cover or protection against the weather. It is presumed that these do not contain corn or other grain. Some of these have increased in size the last few days. Vast numbers of waggons conveying gabions come in daily. Part disappear as they turn to reach the entrance of the Star Fort, but the greater part are brought towards the harbor to be transported to the south side. They are brought over in barges, and are piled to a great height above their sides. The barges are usually towed across by small rowing boats. They can be watched from the time of leaving the wharf on the opposite side until they arrive at the usual landing place in the Admiralty harbor. Sometimes they are brought to the dockyard creek, for works going on in the Karabelnia suburb. But the quantities which arrive daily on the north side are so enormous that it is difficult to guess in what way they can be employed, unless some very extensive works are going on in the town or suburbs, which the outer line of fortifications conceals from view. The increase in the size of the graveyard in the rear of the 12-gun battery, on the verge of the opposite cliff, is becoming very remarkable. This cemetery is placed at no great distance from several of the large encampments of square tents, which have been supposed to be ambulance establishments. Every morning a fatigue party of soldiers arrives at this grave-field, the men pile their arms, take off their coats, and set to work in forming one large pit or excavation. The same party appears to remain all day. Burials are frequent, and occur at all hours. The new part is extending up a gentle incline, and stretching in an easterly direction. At the western end a road passes, so that the cemetery could not be prolonged in that direction without interfering with it. A severe casualty occurred this evening among some men belonging to the 2nd battalion of the rifle brigade. It was caused by the discharge of a single gun from the enemy, and, perhaps, this mistake affords an example of the greatest number of injuries inflicted by such means during the siege. A body of men of this regiment were returning from the Quarry, and had arrived at part of a trench which for a short distance is exposed to an infiltrating fire. The Russians must have observed them and fired. Some of the men said that only a round shot was discharged; others said that both a

round shot and shell was discharged at the same moment. The Russians also fired at a party of men belonging to one of the Highland regiments who imprudently showed themselves on the open ground above the 21-gun battery, as they were returning from the trenches. The Russians fired two or three shots against the party, all of which ricocheted, after striking the ground, but no casualty occurred.

July 4.—The enemy threw a great quantity of grape and shells in the supposed direction of our working parties last night. An active fire was kept up from the batteries, chiefly of shell, against the Redan and Malakoff works. The heightening of the parapets in front of the Malakoff is progressing fast. The French covered approach, which is being advanced in the direction of the Malakoff, also seems to have made a good start last night. A very sharp fire was maintained towards sunset from the batteries on both sides. The enemy does not exhibit any want of ammunition. The French works on the east of Careening Bay have been exposed to a frequent fire during the whole day from the guns on the north side, and from the Russian batteries on the west side of the port. Major General Codrington, who has been absent on account of ill health, has sufficiently recovered to return to camp, and resume the duties of the command of the light division. The day has been fine and dry.

July 5.—The usual firing against the working parties, and shelling on both sides, occurred during the night. The fire has been chiefly directed against the works of our allies in progress on the east side of Careening Bay. The 12-gun battery on the north side has kept up a persevering fire in this direction. Fort Constantine has also fired frequently from some mortars placed on the roof. The charge given must be very heavy, as the shells have to pass across the mouth of the harbor and over the Alexander Fort and other works, to reach the French approaches against which the missiles are directed. The transport of gabions, the arrival and departure of working parties near the outworks of the Star Fort, the frequent burials, and other movements on the north side, continue as previously noticed. A body of troops was observed to march from the entrenched camp on the heights north of Inkermann this morning: they moved in an easterly direction.

July 6.—A sharp musketry fire occurred on the left about half-past eleven o'clock last night, but was of brief duration. Captain Alexander Gordon, of the Royal Artillery, was killed yesterday evening in an advanced battery of the right attack. He came out from England in charge of troop horses, and after his arrival in the Crimea, asked permission to remain for a short time to do duty in the batteries. His request was acceded to; but his services being required at Woolwich, he was about to return in a few days. When his death occurred, he was just leaving the works. The enemy had been annoying one of our working parties, and a message was sent to Captain Gordon, to request him to open some guns upon the Russians, for the purpose of directing their fire towards his own battery. This was successfully accomplished. Suddenly Captain Gordon observed a large shell coming towards the spot where he and some of his men were, and he had barely time sufficient to warn the men to shelter themselves. He himself appears to have felt a momentary hesitation as to the side of the traverse on which the missile was falling, and thus lost the opportunity of obtaining protection. While he was still standing up, the shell struck the side of the head, and he was killed instantaneously. The shell lodged near him and burst. No one else was injured; the men had thrown themselves on the ground, and were safely under cover of the traverse, immediately after receiving warning of their danger. Captain Gordon was a valuable officer, and had acted as adjutant at Woolwich. The heat has been very intense, and the atmosphere close all day. Heavy masses of dark clouds have been hovering over the mountains, and the roll of thunder has been heard occasionally. One or two slight showers of rain have fallen in camp.

July 7.—The fire from the batteries was particularly active during the early part of last night. As usual, it consisted chiefly of mortar practice, excepting in front, where the working parties were employed, and against whom grape, as well as shell, is constantly used.

The following is the latest letters from the siege; it is from the *Illustrated London News* of the 21st ultimo:—

July 4.—Lord Raglan being no more, Sir George Brown having departed on sick leave and unlikely to return, and General Eyre having resigned, few of the chiefs in command who started with the expedition to Old Fort now remain in the Crimea. If the gossip of the Camp is to be listened to, a movement is to be contemplated shortly, and officers have been requested to be in readiness to start; there is no doubt that a few days ago the whole division of ca-

valry was under orders to march and join the 10th Hussars in the vale of Baldar. Motives of health were those assigned for the change, a few cases of cholera having appeared in the camp of Karanyi.—The horses, too, would, it was said, be invigorated by the fine new grass of which the vale is full. It became known, however, that, although Varnoutka and its neighborhood were favorable for the horses, the health of the men was not likely to be improved there. The 10th Hussars had suffered severely from cholera, and it was determined not only that the cavalry camp should remain at Karanyi, but that the 10th Hussars should fall back. In the meanwhile other circumstances have happened which rendered changes necessary. The Russians, who had, it is said, received numerous reinforcements of late, appeared in force in the neighborhood of Baidar, and Omer Pacha determined on raising his camp at Varnoutka. The 10th Hussars followed the movement, and returned to Karanyi yesterday. In the works of the siege there is nothing new to describe; and this is only to say that works are proceeding for the purpose of driving back the shipping, and, if possible, destroying it. The casualties are increasing daily as we approach nearer to the town. The Cemetery—which we occupy, after having already abandoned it—is one of the dangerous places on our side; the new batteries which the Russians are constructing along the shore opposite Sapoune, inflict daily losses upon our allies. They have lost, it is said, as many as fourteen killed and fifty or sixty wounded there in one night. Captain Fyer's company met with a sad accident a few evenings ago as it left the advanced works. The men were seen crowding along the parallel, and the enemy threw a shot, which skipped from man to man, killing or maiming no less than thirteen.

Respecting the difficulties which delay the assault, a correspondent writes from the camp:—

"Some little time must elapse before anything decisive can occur. Both French and English are working incessantly on the right; but the closeness of the enemy's works does not allow of our opening the trenches by day; it is only by night that our workmen can act. But at this season of the year the nights are very short, and then it has happened that the moon has been up. It is barely two hours and a half out of the twenty-four that the works can be actively carried on. Nevertheless, it is considered necessary that our parallels should be advanced so close to the enemy's fortifications, that our attacking columns may not have to pass over more than 60 or 70 yards under a fire of grape. We are still far from the works of the place, and the space that separates us from them being quite exposed and swept in every direction by the Russian projectiles, the approaches progress very slowly."

Letters from the Sardinian army in the Crimea have been received to the 30th of June. They resemble in tone very much the correspondence from the English army at Varna last year. They complain of the heat, the insects, the Commissariat, and the cholera; but, above all, of their inactivity.—The cholera had almost disappeared, but still there was a good deal of sickness in the camp; and it was calculated there were upwards of 2,000 men in hospital when the last accounts left.

The following dispatch from General Pelissier is dated July 16th:—

"The enemy, who had for some days in vain endeavored to stop our left approaches in front of the Malakoff Tower attempted last night to drive us back. They were repulsed by the First Division of the Second Corps.

"Three times the Russians threw themselves upon our trenches with their usual shouts, and after each attempt they were compelled to retreat by the steady fire and calm attitude of our soldiers, leaving behind them many of their slain upon the ground.

"The General of the Trenches, Vinoy, had made most excellent arrangements, which greatly contributed to this success."

A despatch received by Lord Panmure on Thursday, dated 18th of July, states that a sortie on the left attack was repulsed with only three casualties on our side.

The Russians do not seem to be in want of ammunition. The French works on the east of Careening Bay have recently been exposed to a frequent fire from the guns on the north side, and from the Russian batteries on the west side of the port. Their object is to interrupt the important works of our allies in progress on that point. The deserters and prisoners report that the Russian line-of-battle ships anchored in the roadstead opposite Fort St. Nicholas have suffered severely from the fire of the mortar battery on the side of the Quarantine Bay. On the 27th June a shell passed through the three decks of the Tchesmé, killing and wounding several men; and then, bursting in the hold, set fire to her for a short time. Some days before, a