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DIARY OF THE SIEGE.

The following account of the state of affairs before Sebastopol (by the correspondent of the *Daily News*) prior to the assault, will be read with interest:—

"If any faith is to be placed in the statement of spies the enemy, nothing daunted by their experience on the Tchernaya, are about to act on the offensive again and anticipate the allied attack by a grand coup upon our own and the French trenches. That the report is not without support in probability may be inferred from the attention which it has received at head-quarters, where every preparation has been made to give the assailants a warm reception when they make the attempt. It is unnecessary and inexpedient to detail the particulars of our own preparative measures; but I may remark that they are such as leave small ground for fear that the enemy's attempt, if it be made, will turn out a 'surprise' to any but themselves; if grape, canister, musket-balls, and bayonets can repel them, their advance will be short and their retreat rapid.

A VIEW OF THE HARBOR.

"Yesterday I went down into our advanced trenches, and from the fifth parallel, the most forward of them, a good view could be had of this latest of the enemy's 'improvements.' Without the aid of a glass, I could see crowds of people passing and repassing from the north and south sides of the harbor, whilst workmen were busily engaged about the middle of the bridge in completing it. Some fifty or sixty yards off the corner of the dockyard lay the huge 'twelve Apostles'; and, about midway between her and the broken line of the mast heads of the sunken ships, runs the bridge—apparently some twenty feet in breadth, and protected on either side by a low handrail. Sail boats and barges, laden with various kinds of stores, were plying between the two sides of the harbor; and altogether, as looked at through the rifle loophole from which I viewed it, the whole scene appeared as undisturbed and industriously busy as if not a French or English soldier had foothold within the realms of the Czar.

DEFENCES OF THE REDAN AND MALAKOFF.

"From within revolver-shot of the Redan, a very prolonged or complete survey was, of course, not convenient; but even with such glimpses of the place as could be had from the parapet, I saw enough to show me that, whatever may be the state of the besieged's commissariat, they are as active as they could be if fed upon the best. In the open, some fifty yards from the parapet which sheltered me, poor Yea received his death wound on the disastrous 13th of June, and all round were strewn the sacrificed hundreds who fell on the same memorable morning. Fifteen or twenty perches beyond runs the low broken hedge of stakes forming the 'abattis' stretching down the slope towards the similar defensive barrier in front of the adjacent Malakoff. As seen at a distance of about a hundred and fifty yards, this obstructive line appears, at first sight, as if it could offer little hindrance to an attacking force; but a closer scrutiny of it shows it to be just low, intricate, and strong enough to check assailants, whilst an extra discharge or two of grape could be poured into them from the black muzzles bristling in terrible array some seventy or eighty yards beyond. On the 18th, however, very few of our poor fellows reached even thus far; the desolating storm of the enemy's fire having swept them down before they could cross the intervening space. Beyond this hedgerow of stakes runs the line of earthworks which connects the Redan with the Malakoff hill; and, a short way higher up, as the eye traces the ascent of the slope, are seen the mixed gabions and sandbags which form the inner face of the parapets of the new French trenches in front of the Mamelon. At first glance the distance between the most advanced of these saps and the Round Tower seems not more than fifty yards, but it is in reality above a hundred, and that a space, too, of the most broken and difficult ground over which attacking troops could have to move.—Narrow also as is this belt of ground between the besieged and their assailants, the former have very boldly occupied a portion of it with their sharpshooters, and from these deadly marksmen the French suffer heavily. The Mamelon plays upon their hiding-places with grape and shell; but under cover of the inequalities of the ground, and the additional shelter which they have managed to throw up for themselves, they hold out, and daily and nightly play havoc amongst our ally's gunners, both within the Mamelon itself and the battery in advance. This fifth parallel being the limit of our approach towards the town, one's optics can only be exercised from it through the confined and rather unsafe outlet of a rifle-loophole; and even through this inconvenient opening the survey taken must be rapid and spasmodic enough if one would avoid courting Miné's compliments from the sharp-eyed and watchful sportsmen

some hundred and fifty yards a head. These loopholes are small portholes, so to speak, through the upper portion of the parapet of about four inches square, and so distributed as to be rendered as far as possible indistinguishable from the accidental openings and inequalities between the sand-bags along the top. Narrow and concealed as they are, however, many a death-wound has been received through them; and along the sides of not a few are to be seen traces of the leaden missiles from the enemy's pieces. Still, from these our men keep up a pretty constant fire into the embrasures of the Redan, and upon the lurking places of the riflemen in its front—protected as the former are by the thick network curtain of rope which hangs over each gun, it is rare, however, that a bullet can penetrate, unless it happens to enter through the very limited opening left for aiming the gun.

"A WRECK THROUGH THE PARALLELS.

"A walk through these parallels and their connecting zigzags is much more exciting than easy, since, in the first place, the average lowness of the parapets compels a constant stooping, which, as an Irish soldier remarked as I passed along yesterday—'bedad, sir, is mighty sore upon the small of the back.' To be sure 'there's fine shootin'' as the same lively observer added, by way of apology for the same situation; but for those who, like myself, have a constitutional dislike for gunpowder in all its combinations, the 'sport' has but few attractions, and one feeble chance of knocking over a Russian could hardly ever reconcile me to the fifty set-offs of being myself knocked over before I could accomplish that praiseworthy and patriotic act. Eels, however, are said to become reconciled in time to skinning—though I could never believe it—and custom appears in like manner to render one insensible to the exciting chances and contingencies attending a twenty-four hours' turn in these trenches before Sebastopol. With rifle bullets without number 'pinging' over their heads—and, not seldom, into them—round shot bowling through them, and shell bursting on every side, our men lie stretched out along the bottom of the trenches, some sleeping, others spinning home yarns or cracking lively jokes; whilst others again, attentive to the suggestions of a well-sharpened appetite, are clustered round small fires making coffee or superintending extemporised stews or roasts—all with as much sang froid as if they were picknicking at Chobham or Aldershot, instead of doing duty within fifty perches of the Round Tower and the Redan."

FALL OF SEBASTOPOL.

To enable our readers to form as clear a conception of the process by which this important issue has been obtained, as the curt telegraphic despatches admit of, we submit to them a *résumé* of the operations from the moment of re-opening the bombardment. The French and English batteries opened their fire at daybreak on the 5th ult. The bombardment was continued all that day and the next without slackening. On the night between the 5th and 6th, a Russian two-decker was set on fire by a shell, and burnt to the water's edge. On the afternoon of the 7th, another Russian frigate was set on fire and destroyed. A great explosion was heard from the Russian works about midnight—supposed to have been a magazine on the north side. On the morning of the 8th a great fire was observed to be burning about the middle of the town of Sebastopol.

At noon on the same day, within a few hours of the anniversary of the landing of the allied forces in the Crimea, and 316 days after the opening of the besieging batteries against Sebastopol on the 17th of October, 1854, a final and victorious assault was made on the Malakoff, the Careening-bay Redan, and the Central bastion by the French; on the Redan by the English. Then ensued what is historically known to be the most fearful scene in the hideous progress of war. Thousands of gallant men rushed to an almost certain destruction—the more terrible in appearance that it was concentrated in so small a space.

The attack on the Malakoff was alone successful from causes which our readers will at once appreciate, and which we are most happy in being able to state, as such elucidation at once clears away the apparent disparity of success between ourselves and our noble allies.

The Malakoff tower is, as is well known, the highest point of the fortifications which defended Sebastopol. It is flanked on either side by the grand Redan, the object of the English attack, and the Redan of Careening-bay. Now, behind these forts the Russians had constructed a formidable second line of earthworks, heavily armed, which commanded all the works in front, with the exception of the Malakoff tower, and this exception was due to the ever-careful of the Russians, who, in their anxiety to strengthen

the Malakoff, had built its works in three tiers, the one rising above the other, whereas the Redans were constructed with only one tier of guns.

The consequence of this was, that when the French swarmed on to the first tier of the Malakoff, the second tier saved them from being hurt by the fire of the works in the rear of the tower; and, in like manner, when they attained the second tier, the third saved them in its turn. Consequently thousands of men thronged its ramparts, protected from the Russian fire. The combat raged on the flanks, where the enemy could only attack them with his musketry, and their own rifles and brilliant impetuosity were too much for him. Under the protection of a galling fire from the French, their sappers slipped round the works, threw up an entrenchment, and thus, effectually covered on all points, the whole works were theirs.

Here, then, to brave men success was as natural as their own enthusiastic courage; but alas! upon other points courage availed not. The gallant assailants of the Redan and of the Central bastion no sooner had carried these works, as they did triumphantly, than they found themselves exposed to a terrific fire of grape, which rendered life impossible. The forts, built in one exposed tier, were open to the full range of the second line of earthworks, and in vain our gallant men, in vain our chivalrous allies, tried to hold their position. They would not retreat, but were swept away as corpses by the pitiless storm of grape. The tenacity of our struggle may be easily conceived when it is known that in carrying, and endeavoring to hold, that one Redan, our loss amounted to two thousand men.

Our allies, and we ourselves had, therefore, to retire from these points; but the Malakoff was in the hands of the French, and that was everything.

The Russians on their side unquestionably defended the place with the utmost determination, and on more than one point they had the advantage over the besiegers. But it was the courage of desperation, for this effort was their last. No sooner were the outer works taken, which laid the town and the port at the mercy of the allied forces, than the men-of-war and steamers in the harbour were all set on fire, blown up, sunk, or destroyed, either by the fire of the allied batteries or by the orders of the Russian authorities.

The Russians then escaped *en masse*, to the north side. Means of retreat had been secured by a long bridge of rafts across the great harbour, and for many hours large masses of troops were removed by this passage to the northern side; but at eight o'clock in the morning of the 9th this communication was stopped, the whole of the works and town being then evacuated. If, as is probable, any of the Russians remained on the south bank after that hour, they must either have perished in the fire or fallen into the hands of the besiegers. About 500 of the wounded, we know, remained in the fort St. Paul, and for them an armistice was asked; but, with their accustomed indifference to the preservation of life and property, the Russians were determined to destroy the city rather than capitulate, and they executed their design.

The shades of night were lit up by the lucid glare of a burning town and a burning fleet. The broad waters of the gulf were interposed between the combatants of the preceding day, and their surface was only dotted at rare intervals by a few small steamers, the fragments of a broken bridge, and the top-masts of sunken ships. The silence of exhaustion settled down on the scene of strife, where for four continuous days the roar of artillery, the crash of explosions, and the shouts of men preternaturally excited by the awful contest, had reverberated through the hollow ravines with deafening effect.

We are unable to form an adequate conception of the magnitude of the loss which the Russians have sustained, in consequence of their being compelled to evacuate the south side of the Sebastopol inlet.—General Pelissier, after having made a tour of inspection through the town and its defences, intimates, on the night of the 10th, that nothing but ocular observations can convey an adequate idea of the multiplicity of the works of defence and the accumulation of warlike stores that the enemy have left behind them. The allied armies were to occupy Karabelnaia and the town of Sebastopol on the 11th, and as soon as this had been effected a mixed commission of French and English officers was to be appointed to take an account of the *matériel* abandoned by the Russians.

Yet the enemy must have removed no inconsiderable portion of his stores previous to the evacuation. General Simpson writes on the 1st instant, "Great activity prevails on the part of the garrison in making use of the new raft bridge across the harbour, and stores of all kinds are daily transported to the north side." This preparatory retrograde movement on the part of the Russians, adds to the probability of the reports alluded to by General Simpson, that

"great discontent prevails in the ranks of the enemy." General Pelissier's account of the state of the defences shows that a longer stand might have been made but for the discouragement of the defenders; and the withdrawal of stores to the north side so early as the end of August, shows that Prince Gortschakoff felt he could not rely upon his men. The actual evacuation of the south side cannot but have added to the demoralisation of the Russian army, while our troops are confident and flushed with victory—as General Pelissier expresses himself, "full of joy."

General Simpson's despatch of the 1st ult., contains a passage which seems to throw light on the intentions of Prince Gortschakoff:—"Large working parties are employed in throwing up works on the north side, but as yet they are in too unfinished a state to judge of their exact nature. From the information we continue to receive, it appears that the enemy is concentrating his force between the Mackenzie height and fort Constantine." These indications would seem to imply that it was in the contemplation of the Russian general to make obstinate a stand on the north side as he has done on the south. But it is extremely doubtful whether, with the discouragement that pervades his army, and the incomplete state of his new defensive works, he will be able to carry out his intentions.

POSITION OF GORTSCHAKOFF'S ARMY.

The position of Prince Gortschakoff's army, after the main body had effected its retreat across the harbor (says the *Times*), was as follows:—His extreme right, consisting of the corps most actively engaged in the defence of the place, rests upon the Severnaia work, or Star fort, and holds the strongly entrenched positions on the north shore, where, no doubt, considerable preparations have been made for this emergency. His centre covers the Belbek, and is protected in front by the fieldworks thrown up along the ridge of Inkermann. His left wing consists of Liprandi's corps, occupying the ground from Mackenzie's farm to the heights of Artodei on the Bakshi-Serai road. No attempt was made by the relieving army under Liprandi to effect a diversion during the assault of the 8th, and the severe defeat of the 16th of August appears to have satisfied the enemy that the lines of the Tchernaya were not to be carried. But the result of the general assault and the occupation of the southern side by the allies entirely changes the strategical positions of the combatants, and also the objects of the campaign. The struggle for the possession of Sebastopol is now at an end. That prize is in our hands, and, as the defence of the fortress and the harbor was the grand object of the Russians, they have nothing left on that spot to contend for. The mere occupation of the north side of the port is a barren advantage, for, though it might hold a garrison, it cannot shelter a defeated army; and it is obvious that, after the failure of the main object, all the ability and generalship of the Russians will be required to save the whole body of their forces in the Crimea from destruction. We therefore infer that the northern forts will either be held for a time by a limited garrison, or more probably, altogether abandoned, in the hope of saving the army. Never was an army in a more critical position. They are confined within a peninsula which affords them no other fortified position, no sustenance for the troops, and no water beyond a certain line. The sea, covered with hostile vessels, surrounds three sides of this theatre of war, and the fourth is separated from the Russian base of operations by steppes and marshes. The allied armies already occupy strong positions at Eupatoria and Yenikale, which can be reinforced in a few hours by sea, so as to threaten the Russians in their flank and rear; and while it is impossible for the enemy to hold his ground in the south of the Crimea—for which, indeed, there is now no further object—to retreat in this season across the country is a formidable undertaking, while the loss of a battle in the open field would be absolute destruction. The Russians are in a trap, from which the Tchongar road and the Isthmus of Perekop are the only means of escape, and even there their communications may possibly be intercepted.

No doubt all these contingencies have been foreseen; Prince Gortschakoff's plan of campaign has long since been made; judging, therefore, from the accustomed tactics of the Russian army, as well as from the extreme difficulty of his present position, we incline to the opinion that he will adopt the course of a general and immediate retreat. To hold the Crimea without Sebastopol, and even after the harbor of Sebastopol itself has been transformed by conquest into the base of operations of the invading armies, would be a bootless and unprofitable task, and the danger is greatly aggravated by the fact that the whole body of the allies, with unlimited means of naval transport at their command, will shortly be at liberty to advance upon any part of the peninsula