



# CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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## DIARY OF THE SIEGE.

(From Correspondents of London Journals.)

**CAMP BEFORE SEBASTOPOL, JUNE 12.**—We have again relapsed into a state of comparative silence and repose, but it is not that kind of pause which proceeds from exhaustion, and which leaves it uncertain when operations can again be renewed; it is only the time necessary to turn to the best advantage the ground obtained by the successes of last week. Through the occupation and arming of the White Batteries, situated on the edge of the ridge of Mount Sapoune, at the head of the harbor is more or less in our power. The Russians themselves seem to acknowledge this by taking outside the boom the vessels which had hitherto been lying in that direction, and would have been commanded from the works which the French are constructing on the site of the White Batteries of the Russians. But this is not all. These new works will likewise be able to act against the two strand batteries which the Russians have behind the Mamelon, and which, not being much commanded by any of our works, could hitherto do a good deal of harm without being exposed to much danger. The construction of French works on the Mamelon brings us to about 500 yards from the Malakoff works; it gives us a footing on the plateau on which these works lie: it furnishes us with the means of approaching the rear of them, and at the same time of operating successfully on the annoying batteries in the rear of the Mamelon, which, taken thus in a cross fire, cannot long resist. The Quarry is scarcely more than 200 yards from the Redan. The battery which it contains already will work successfully on the 6-gun battery in the rear between the Redan and the Malakoff Tower works—and from the advanced posts our riflemen will be able to prevent a good number of the guns in the Redan from working. Several of them seem already abandoned; at least, no shot is fired from them. Besides, in the other embrasures the guns cannot be sufficiently depressed to do much in the Quarry. But, for all this, the keeping of the Quarry was, especially in the beginning, not at all an easy thing; not so much, perhaps, from the attempts of the Russians to retake a point of such vital importance to them, but rather on account of the fire to which it was exposed from other Russian batteries besides the Redan. The Garden Battery on our flank, the 6-gun battery in the rear, and the Malakoff works could touch it on nearly all sides. Moreover, the work when it was taken being directed against us, offered very little protection against the riflemen of the Redan, until its face could be converted. Now that this is done the danger has considerably decreased, and the casualties have very much diminished. As on our side the order has been given not to fire, except in answer to the Russian guns, they are not much molested in taking their aim, and one can easily see this from its accuracy. It is in general remarkable what a difference exists in the firing of the Russians when they are, and when they are not exposed to a heavy fire. It is as if there were other gunners. Possibly they possess only a certain number of experienced gunners, who are sufficient to serve the guns when there is no heavy firing required, while they must supply the places with less experienced gunners if they wish to work all their guns. The French in the Mamelon had to maintain themselves under a not less heavy fire than the English had in the Quarries. Some parts of the Malakoff works, the shipping, the strand batteries behind, and even some of the Inkermann batteries can bear upon them, and they suffered considerable loss in the first days after their instalment there.—But now, whether from the conviction that they can no longer harm them, on account of the advanced state of the works, or from some other reason which I don't know, the Russians have nearly ceased firing on the working and covering parties on the Mamelon, while they still continue their fire on the Quarry. Our position on the Tchernaya is still the same except that two regiments of French cavalry and some infantry have pushed forward in the direction of Baidar, which is occupied. Only a part of the Turkish troops is on the Tchernaya, the other part still remains in front on the extreme right, where they have been helping the French to construct their new works on Mount Sapoune. They were, however, chiefly employed as covering parties. I hear the battalions which have been there since the attack of the 7th are going to be exchanged to-morrow for others which have not yet had their share in the work.

**June 13.**—To-day a flag of truce came of the harbor to request the allied commanders not to fire on some of the vessels in the harbor, converted into hospitals. The impression is, that the Russians would not scruple to employ a little "ruse" to save their ships. Immediately after the affair of the 7th a great activity seized all the ships in the harbor. The steamers approached by night the Careening-creek,

and fired on the French working parties in the White Batteries. The line-of-battle ships have all moved, and are now distributed about the harbor with their broadsides looking towards us, so that it strikes one rather as if they were preparing to take an active part in the defences of the Redan and the Malakoff work, and to try to make them untenable in case we should take them, than as if they were offensive hospital ships, removed from a feeling of humanity out of reach of our guns. Several of the Lancaster guns in the right attack have been shelling them in their new position, but without being able to do them much harm, as they are about 4,500 yards off. There is a strong suspicion that several of the houses in the town on which the yellow flag has been hoisted during the bombardments are nothing less than powder magazines protected in this manner, so that any concession made in respect to supposed hospital ships would not be very palatable to our gunners, hitherto, however, no order has been given in this respect. I must not forget to tell you of the quantity of ammunition which fell into the hands of the French in the White Batteries. These works which had no communication with the other Russian works except by sea across the Careening-creek and the harbor, had to be provided with a large store in order not to be in want of it should the communication be interrupted. Consequently, large exceedingly well constructed powder magazines were found after the capture of these batteries, and about 500 rounds of shot and shell which still remained after a 24 hours' bombardment. But it is not the repair of the damages done to our works which necessitates the delay in the active operations. The Quarry does not admit of any extensive works; it is more a point offering advantages, in case of an assault on the Redan, than a place on which commanding works could be constructed. During the bombardment its character must be entirely of a defensive nature.—It is like the first step on the scaling ladder, applied to the Redan. The Mamelon and the White Batteries, on the contrary, are alike a new parallel; hence the construction of the new works there takes necessarily more time and a great deal of trouble.

**June 14.**—There is nothing new. The Russians are by no means behind us in strengthening their position. Our late successes seem not to have discouraged them, and everything shows their determination not to give way except step by step. They are very busy just now in strengthening the rear of the Malakoff works, which as long as the Mamelon was in their power was safe enough, but for which they must naturally entertain apprehensions now that this outwork is taken. Besides these new works they have entirely repaired all the old ones which look as if they had been constructed yesterday.—According to the account of the prisoners, there were two battalions of infantry in the Mamelon when it was first taken by the French, and when they were driven out two other battalions came to reinforce them; according, also, to the account of the prisoners, no French soldier had entered the Malakoff works. Of course it is difficult to decide now whether none were in, but I certainly saw French dead bodies on the other side of the ditch on the slope of the parapet, so that I have no doubt if they were not in, they were at any rate on, the Malakoff works. This afternoon, about 10,000 men were observed from the Mamelon going into the Redan. Precautions have been taken to receive them should they attempt anything. Most of the English and French troops have returned from Kertch.

**June 15.**—No change has taken place; the same stillness prevailed during the whole day. A council of war was held to-day at Lord Raglan's quarters, in which Omar Pasha took part. In consequence, the Turkish army received the order to be ready to march at a moment's notice. This looks like a movement in advance on the Tchernaya line.

**THE REPULSE AT SEBASTOPOL.**

We are happy to say that the repulse sustained by the Allies in the attack upon the Redan and the Malakoff tower, on the 18th of June, does not turn out to have been of so severe and formidable a character as was at first apprehended. The progress of our arms since the first commencement of the war, has heretofore been so uniformly successful, and the recent operations of the fleet in the Sea of Azoff, and of the army in the capture of the Quarries in front of the Redan, had been so brilliant and triumphant, that the public mind in this country was in no degree prepared to receive tidings of anything in the shape of a reverse. When the first intimation was given, therefore, that an assault upon the strongest defensive works of Sebastopol had not been attended with the same good fortune that had previously rewarded the bravery of our troops in all their engagements with the enemy, a feeling of the deepest gloom instantly penetrated the public heart,

and a sentiment half akin to panic was general throughout the land.

It is a circumstance remarkably illustrative of the characteristic difference between the people of this country and those of France, that the feeling of general depression produced here by the announcement of the intelligence from Sebastopol, was but very slightly participated in by our gallant neighbors on the other side of the channel. The French are a nation of soldiers; and they have at all times an infinitely quicker perception of the true nature and real bearing of military events than belong to the English people as a mass. Whilst, therefore, the announcement of the failure of the assault of the 18th of June produced so deep and painful a sensation in this country, in France it was received with greater coolness, was received only as a circumstance which must necessarily be numbered among the public contingencies of a siege urged against a place of unparalleled strength in itself, and defended by men hourly becoming more and more desperate from the straits to which the previously successful operations of the assailants had reduced them. The French estimate of the nature and consequence of the repulse of the 18th June, was the correct one. It has not endangered the position of the Allies, nor improved that of the besieged. Not an inch of ground has been wrested from the assailants—not a single point of advantage has been gained by the beleaguered enemy. Many valuable lives have, unquestionably, been lost; but even in that respect the catalogue of disasters falls far short of what was at first apprehended. The total loss in the British army—including killed, wounded, and missing—was 1,440 men—a heavy amount of casualties, no doubt; but still by no means so great as to warrant a feeling of uneasiness as to the numerical efficiency of the survivors to maintain and carry on the works in which they are embarked. We are glad to observe, however, that the English Government has, in this instance, been prompt to act upon the first hint of danger, and that as many as 19,000 fresh troops have already been ordered to join the British standard in the Crimea. We have said that the total loss sustained by the English was 1,440 men; but of these it is to be observed that only 19 officers and 144 men were killed; and 74 officers and 1,058 men wounded—the remainder are "missing," and it is to be presumed have become prisoners to the enemy. It will thus be seen that the exact total of killed and wounded does not exceed 1,295 officers and men. In the French ranks the loss was more serious—the gross amount of killed, wounded, and missing being 3,338.

General Pelissier's despatches addressed to the French Government on the 19th and 20th of June, afford the most satisfactory and convincing proof that the check thus sustained by the Allies has neither abated their confidence, nor materially raised the hopes of the enemy. In that night immediately following the unsuccessful attack a panic appears to have seized the Russians, who flew to their guns and opened a general fire on the whole line of their works, although no one was threatening them. An armistice took place on the following day for the burial of those who had fallen in that terrible conflict. On the 20th, the approaches of the besiegers on the side of the Central Ravine were driven so close that the enemy set fire to the little suburb at the bottom of the southern harbor; and in the meantime the Allies were placing heavy guns on the Selinghinsk and Volhynian Batteries, taken on the 7th of June, so as to command the great harbor. The tone of this brief but significant communication clearly shows that the failure of the assault on the Malakoff Tower and the Redan has in no degree lessened the vigor with which the siege is now carried on; and the destruction, by the Russians themselves, of one of the suburbs of Sebastopol within their lines, is a very strong proof of the increasing difficulty of the defence. So far, therefore, as regards the more material part of the question, there seems to be every ground for believing that we are already in a better position than we were in on the morning of the 18th. Our batteries are in better order and better placed, our guns are heavier, our knowledge of the position and of the obstacles before us are greatly increased, and our forces in front of the walls are, by the return of a portion of the troops detached upon the expedition to Kertch, materially augmented. Under these circumstances, we are not surprised to learn that the courage of the allied army is unabated; and that it awaits with impatience the signal for a fresh attack, by which it is sanguinely believed the failure of the first may be nobly redeemed.

**THE "TIMES" ON THE REPULSE OF THE 18TH.**

On more than one memorable occasion in his career in the Peninsula, the Duke of Wellington not only employed similar means, but staked the fate of his army on their success; and especially on the third siege of Badajoz, in 1812. Contrary to all calculation,

the Picurina, an outwork of the town somewhat resembling by its position the Mamelon, was forced without being battered, and Badajoz itself was carried by storm before the counterscarp was blown in or the fire of the place silenced. No man who has ever read it can have forgotten the language in which the historian of that great contest relates the most terrible action of the war. The ramparts, crowded with dark figures and glittering arms, just illuminated by the glare of flames from below; the red columns of the British, deep and broad, coming on like streams of burning lava; the sudden arrival of the Light Division and the Fourth Division on the brink of the yawning chasm, into which they dashed with incredible fury, some to be smothered in the wet ditch beneath, some to be dashed by the shot against the strong palisade, some to be torn upon the jagged range of sword-blades fixed in ponderous beams which defended the top of the breach. For two hours did our men persevere with indomitable courage in the attempt to force their way thro' this scene of slaughter, and it was not until hundreds of the boldest and bravest had perished that they were compelled to acknowledge that the breach of the Trinidad was impregnable. It was past midnight, and 2,000 men had already fallen, when the Duke of Wellington ordered the remainder to retire and to re-form for a second assault. Even that order was executed with difficulty, and the fate of Badajoz might have been undecided that night if other portions of the troops had not found means to scale the Castle and to carry a bastion, and enter the town at a different point. Out of the Anglo-Portuguese army of 22,000 men no less than 5,000 fell at the siege of Badajoz, and 3,750 at the assault alone. We trust that we shall not now have to lament as great a loss, but we are dealing with far more numerous armies and a place of infinitely greater extent. We refer to this example, not only because in some of its circumstances it will probably be found to present an imperfect analogy with the attack on the Malakoff and the Redan, but also as a proof that the Duke of Wellington in 1812, at the pinnacle of glory, and at the head of an invincible army, was stopped in one portion of his attack upon Badajoz by causes not very dissimilar from those which the allied troops have encountered at Sebastopol, although in the Duke's case the town was carried the same night by other means. There is, however, this material difference in the position of the two armies:—The fate of the campaign of 1812 turned upon the capture of Badajoz within a certain number of days, for both Soult and Marmont were hanging with superior forces in the rear of the British army. At Sebastopol, on the contrary, the superiority of force is now on the side of the besiegers, and, far from having anything to apprehend from the Russians in the field, nothing would more conduce to the triumph of our enterprise than to find an opportunity of meeting them there.—*Times.*

On every side the pressure to which the garrison is exposed has within the last few days greatly increased, and, although they succeeded on the 18th in repelling our attack, it is not alleged that they have ever regained one inch of the ground which had previously been wrested from them. The principal Russian outworks are now the advanced positions in the lines of the besiegers, and our confidence is unabated in the steady progress and ultimate success of this great enterprise of war.

**THE KERTCH EXPEDITION.**

**OFF YENIKALE, June 11.**—Had I been aware that this expedition would have been so barren in everything but considerable strategical and great political results I certainly would have hesitated before I abandoned the camp before Sebastopol. The mode of defence adopted by the Russians has left one nothing to write about. Cornricks blazing batteries and forts blown up, and stores and magazines gutted and burnt, offer but little variety of detail. We have inflicted great ruin on the enemy, but they have emulated our best efforts in destroying their own settlements. Our haste to attack has not exceeded their precipitation to retreat. The reduction of every place in the Sea of Azoff, except Arabat and Temrouk, without the loss of a single life, has been an extraordinary and gratifying success; but I should have much preferred witnessing the assault and capture of the Mamelon and the attack on the Quarry-pits and the Redan; to seeing any amount of corn and flour on fire, or the explosion of deserted magazines. The effect of this expedition on the garrison of Sebastopol will probably be more immediate and important than the possession of the Mamelon and Quarries, or the spiking of the guns of the Redan. They run the risk of starvation; they must know the precarious chance of supplies of materiel and provision from this time forward, and they will feel that our investment, however wide its circle, is becoming terribly complete.—The Crimea itself can