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DIARY OF THE SIEGE.

(From the Morning Post's Correspondent.)

March 23.—Our batteries are quite ready. The number of guns that we (the allies) shall bring into play at the general opening will be about 404—that within one or two. The French batteries are armed with English pieces in a large degree. I hear the reason we don't open fire generally is, that we are waiting for the advance of the French works towards the Malakoff Tower, which, it seems, they are very slow in getting on with. It is evident that the reduction of the tower and works about it is to be our first touch on opening the siege; all our strength is mainly on that point and the shipping.

March 30.—A council of war has been held at which all the admirals and generals were present.—Several Russian sorties have been repulsed. The bombardment of the quarantine and Malakoff batteries continues. The Russians are fortifying the banks of the Tchernaya and are arming new batteries.

March 31.—The Russians have constructed two new batteries, and have converted the ambuscades into an advanced parallel. The allies have also constructed two new batteries. The firing has been slack. It was said positively that the bombardment would commence on the 3rd of April. The weather was not so fine, it was very cold. Of seven Russian Admirals at Sebastopol at the commencement of the siege two only now remain. A third stockade had been formed in the harbor of Sebastopol, by sinking vessels in front of the careenage.

April 1.—The allied armies were quite ready to open their fire on Sebastopol. The Generals probably only awaited the arrival of despatches from home before beginning the bombardment, which might be expected to take place during the ensuing week;—they wished to spare the town and public buildings. The Russians still shelled the allied camp and batteries, but the guns of the allies were nearly silent.—The fire of musketry on both sides was active every night. The weather was fine and dry. Advices from Balaklava and Kamiesch of the 6th, via Bucharest, state that nothing important had taken place before Sebastopol to that date. Alerts and skirmishes were frequent. Both sides were pushing on their works, with great vigor. The general fire had not commenced.

FURTHER DETAILS OF THE LATE CONFLICT.—When the Mortar Battery was carried by an enormous force of the enemy on Thursday night, or more properly speaking Friday morning, they held it for about 15 minutes, and were dislodged by a handful of men, who, according to the statements made to me, displayed the utmost gallantry and daring. Our men do not relish night fighting. They would sooner meet 10,000 Russians by day than 2,000 in the dark, but the circumstances attending this act evince the greatest coolness and bravery on the part of the men and officers engaged in it. At the time the heavy fire between the French and Russians was going on a portion of the 90th Regiment were employed on, fatigue duty on the right of the new advanced works on our right attack. They were in the act of returning to their posts on the Gordon Battery just at the moment the heavy firing on the right hand had ceased, when a scattered irregular fusillade commenced in the dark on the left of their position close to the Mortar Battery. Captain Vaughton, who commanded the party of the 90th ordered his men to advance along the covered way to the works. They moved up in double time, and found the Russians in complete possession of the Mortar Battery. The 90th at once opened, as heavy a fire of musketry as they could upon the enemy, who returned it, but the coolness and steadiness of our men were giving us the advantage; when an alarm was given that our men were being on the French; but the mistake was speedily discovered by the enemy's fire being poured in with more deadly effect, and the small party of the 90th were thrown into great confusion. Captain Vaughton at this moment shouted, "Men of the 90th, follow me!" and Sergeant Henry Clarke, Sergeant Brittle, a sergeant of the 7th Fusiliers, about 14 men of the 90th and a few of the 7th dashed out of the confused ranks, and rushed right into the Mortar Battery. In a few moments these brave fellows drove the enemy beyond the first traverse, and at the narrow way leading into the second traverse they made a stand opened a heavy flanking fire on the parapet, over which the Russians were making determined efforts to come upon them. The narrow pass was meantime defended by the sergeants and a few men, who delivered fire as fast as they could load right into the Russians, who gradually began to give way. With a loud "hurrah," the gallant little band sprang with the bayonet upon the enemy, who at once precipitately retired over the parapet, followed by our rifle balls, which were poured in upon them incessantly, till every round in the men's pouches was expended. In order to keep up the fire, the men groped

about among the dead Russians, and exhausted all the cartridges they could find in the enemy's pouches. At the first charge at the Mortar Battery the Russian leader, who wore an Albanian costume, and whose gallantry was most conspicuous, fell dead.—As an act of justice, the names of the officers and men of the 90th whose conduct was distinguished in this affair should be recorded. They are—Clarke, Brittle, and Essex (sergeants). Caruthers, severely wounded (corporal), Fare, Walsh, Nicholson (wounded), and Nash. Captain Vaughton received a severe contusion in the affair. The courage displayed by Captain Cavindish Brown, of the 7th, in another part of the works was most conspicuous. He was severely wounded at the commencement of the attack, but he refused to go to the rear, though nearly fainting from loss of blood. He led on his men, encouraging them by voice and gesture, to the front.—When his body was found, it lay far in advance of our line, with three balls in the chest. The 77th Regiment behaved admirably, and Major-General Codrington has communicated to the 88th (and I believe to the other regiments of the brigade of the Light Division engaged) the satisfaction of Sir Geo. Browne at their gallant conduct. It is not known how many Albanian chiefs there were with the Russians, but certainly the two who were killed led them on with intrepidity and ferocious courage. One of them, who struggled into the battery in spite of a severe wound, while his life blood was ebbing fast, rushed at a powder barrel and fired his pistol into it before he fell. Fortunately the powder did not explode, as the fire did not go through the wood. Another charged with a cimeter in one hand and a formidable curved blade, which he used as a dagger, in the other, right into our ranks twice, and he fell dead the second time, perforated with balls and bayonets. They were magnificently dressed, and it is supposed they were men of rank.

In my last letter, I stated that the 1st Battalion Rifle Brigade and the 46th Regiment were turned out at twelve o'clock on Friday night, and were ordered to the Quarry Pits over our left attack. A part of the Light Division was also ordered out, and marched to the ground over the lines of the right attack. At the same period Sir George Brown was informed that masses of Russian infantry had assembled in our front at nine o'clock, and he directed Sir John Campbell to occupy the position indicated with the regiments of the Fourth Division which I have named, while he advanced with his own men of the Light Division to support the party in the trenches. The men remained out till two o'clock in the morning, when, as all was quiet, they returned to their tents. No attack took place on our lines, but the French on the right attack in the advanced parallels and the Russians had severe contests with musketry from dusk till early in the morning. The French lost a few men; beat back the Russians, and killed a great many of them. Still the enemy kept possession of the rifle pits, covered by the Mamelon and the Round Tower works, and they actually dug four more during the night, and began connecting the pits with each other by some other works.

Early on Saturday morning a flag of truce was sent in by the allies with a proposition to the Russians for an armistice to bury the dead, which were lying in numbers—five or six Russians to every Frenchman and Englishman—in front of the Round Tower and Mamelon, and, after some delay, an answer in the affirmative was returned, and it was arranged that two hours should be granted for collecting and carrying away the dead on both sides. The day was beautifully bright and warm. While flags waved gently in the faint spring breeze above the embrasures of our batteries, and from the Round Tower and Mamelon. Not a soul had been visible in front of the lines an instant before the emblems of peace were run up to the flagstaffs, and a sullen gun from the Mamelon and a burst of smoke from Gordon's batteries had but a short time previously heralded the armistice. The instant the flags were hoisted friend and foe swarmed out of the embrasures. The Rifle-men of the allies and of the enemy rose from their haunts in the rifle pits, and sauntered towards each other to behold their grim handiwork. The whole of the space between the Russian lines and our own was filled with groups of unarmed soldiery. Passing down by the Middle Picket Ravine, which is now occupied by the French, and which runs down in front of the Light Division camp, I came out upon the advanced French trench, within a few hundred yards of the Mamelon. The sight was strange, beyond description. French, English, and Russian officers were walking about saluting each other courteously as they passed, and occasionally entering into conversation, and a constant interchange of little civilities, such as offering and receiving cigar-lights, was going on in each little group. Some of the Russian officers were evidently men of high rank and

breeding. Their polished manners contrasted remarkably with their plain, and rather coarse clothing. They wore, with few exceptions, the invariable long gray coat over their uniform. The French officers were all *en grande tenue*, and offered a striking contrast to many of our own officers, who were dressed *a la Balaklava*, and wore uncouth head-dresses, cat-skin coats, and nondescript paletots. Many of the Russians looked remarkably like English gentlemen in "style" of face and bearing. One tall, fine-looking old man, with a long gray beard and strangely-shaped cap, was pointed out to us as Hetman of the Cossacks in the Crimea, but it did not appear as if there were many men of very high military rank present. The Russians were rather grave and reserved, but they seemed to fraternize with the French better than with ourselves, and the men certainly got on better with our allies than with the few privates of our own regiments who were down towards the front. But while all this civility was going on we were walking among the dead, over blood-stained ground, covered with evidences of recent fight. Broken muskets, bayonets, cartouch-boxes, caps, fragments of clothing, straps and belts, pieces of shell, little pools of clotted blood, shot—round and grape—shattered gabions and sandbags, were visible around us on every side, and through the midst of the crowd stalked a solemn procession of soldiers bearing departed comrades to their long home. I counted 77 litters borne past me in 15 minutes—each filled with a dead enemy. The contortions of the slain were horrible, and recalled the memories of the fields of Alma and Inkermann. Some few French were lying far in advance towards the Mamelon and Round Tower among the gabions belonging to the French advanced trenches which the Russians had broken down. They had evidently been slain in pursuit of the enemy.—The Russians appeared to treat their dead with great respect. The soldiers I saw were white-faced and seemed ill-fed, though many had powerful frames, square shoulders, and broad chests. All their dead who fell within and near our lines were stripped of boots and stockings. The cleanliness of their feet and, in most cases, of their coarse linen shirts was remarkable. Several sailors of the "equipages" of the fleet of Sebastopol were killed in the attack.—They were generally muscular, fine, stout fellows, with rough soldierly faces. The Russians carried off all the dead which lay outside our lines to the town, passing between the Mamelon and the Round Tower. In the midst of all this stern evidence of war a certain amount of lively conversation began to spring up, in which the Russian officers indulged in a little badinage. Some of them asked our officers "when we were coming in to take the place," others "when we thought of going away?" Some congratulated us upon the excellent opportunity we had of getting a good look at Sebastopol, as the chance of a nearer view, except on similar occasions, was not in their opinion very probable. One officer asked a private confidentially in English how many men we sent into the trenches? "Bogorin, only 7000 a-night, and a wake covering party of 10,000," was the ready reply. The officer laughed, and turned away.

The following is an extract from a letter written by an officer in the Royal Artillery:—
"Camp before Sebastopol, March 23.
"The action of last night—I might almost dignify it by the name of 'battle'—has been a glorious and decisive victory. It was Inkermann on a small scale—an attack in very great force, and on all points; and everywhere they were beaten back with vigor and heavy loss. I saw at least 300 Russian bodies lying on the field. We calculated that their loss must have exceeded 1,200 men. The French lost 500, and the English four officers and about 50 men. Captain Vicers, of the 97th, was in the advanced parallel of our right attack, with a picket of his regiment. The enemy attacked the French lines close alongside where he lay; a ravine only separated them. They at first drove back the French, and part of them then turned to their right, crossed the ravine, and took our trench in flank. We were unprepared, and at first thought the advancing body was one of the French. But Vicers found out they were the Russians, and ordered his men to lie down, and wait till they came within 20 paces; and they did so. When the enemy was close enough, Vicers shouted, 'Now, 97th, on your pins, and charge!' They poured in a volley, charged, and drove the Russians quite out of the trench! Vicers himself struck down two Russians, and was in the act of cutting down a third with his sword, when another man, who was quite close (for the coat was singed), fired, and the ball entered his uplifted right arm close to where it joins the shoulder, and he fell. The arteries were divided, and he must have bled to death in a few minutes.
(From the Times Special Correspondent of March 23.)
The enemy have either become desperate or have been inspirited and encouraged by their recent en-

counters with the French on our right. Their guns are nearly silent day and night, but they have not been retired. Every embrasure is armed; the muzzle of the gun is visible under the screen of cloth which is hung across from gabion to gabion. Their sorties are made night after night, in greater force and with more confidence on each occasion. Last night, indeed, they received a severe check, but it was not till they had got up to our second parallel on the left, or Green-hill attack, had got into our mortar battery on the right attack, and had inflicted a severe loss on our allies on the right towards Inkermann. In the affair of last night, the particulars of which will be found below, we had seven officers killed, wounded, and taken prisoners, and about 100 men put *hors de combat* or carried into Sebastopol. The French, it is believed, lost between 300 and 400 men and 15 officers killed, wounded, and missing. On the other hand, the enemy must have suffered a loss of 600 or 700 men, although they succeeded in concealing the severity of their loss by carrying off their dead and wounded, as usual. Still, the number of dead bodies lying along the front of our trenches proves that they received a heavy loss. The bodies of 12 men and of one officer remain in the trenches of our left attack. The hill sides below the Round Tower and the Mamelon are covered with their dead, mingled with the bodies of the French. The corpse of a Zouave officer is distinguishable on the slope, close up to the abattis of the Round Tower, where the gallant soldier fell as he led on his men in pursuit of the Russians. No flag of truce has been sent in from either side to demand permission to bury the dead. They are lying about among the gabions which have been knocked down in front of the French sap towards the rifle pits in great number. Looking at any of the inaccurate maps which have been published of the position, there will still be, nevertheless, two mounds indicated to the east of the Round Tower. The first of these is "The Mamelon." On the second the Russians have erected a work on the spot from which the French were repulsed in their attempt to dislodge the enemy. The rifle pits which have been so hardly contested are in front of the Mamelon. Three of them are still occupied by the Russians, and three of them now belong to the French; but the latter were obliged to abandon them for a time last night during the first rush of the enemy. The enemy have already opened guns from the Mamelon, which they direct against the French approaches towards the pits, and we may expect that the work east of it will soon be armed also. Its fire will enfilade a portion of our lines, and the Mamelon will be able to direct from one flank an awkward fire on the flank of our right attack. The Russian engineers have displayed consummate ability in their works, and it is well for us that their artillerymen are not as expert as those who place them in the batteries. Conscious of the strength they have gained by the possession of those positions, and of the advantages they have secured in defending the town, the Russians appear determined to make the most of their new attack. The Mamelon is exposed to the fire of the guns in the right of our right attack and to the fire of the second French redoubt over Inkermann, and every two or three minutes a shot or shell is thrown into the work, but the enemy maintain their ground; though the deserters inform us that they lose 100 men every 24 hours within the parapets of the Mamelon. The practice of our artillerymen is splendid. Scarcely a shot fails in striking the top of the parapet just at the right place, and a black pillar of loose earth shoots up into the air from the work after every discharge from our guns; but the Russians hold it still, and they are determined to keep their hold as long as they can. The defence of the place is conducted on a new principle, and we shall be severely tried, with our present numbers, in doing the work cut out for us.

In an ordinary siege, in which the garrison of the town is numerically weaker than the besieging army, the loss of men sustained by the Russians in these repeated sallies would be a serious injury to the defence of the place; but throughout these operations before Sebastopol the Russians have conducted their defence as if both their men and their stores of war were inexhaustible, which indeed they are so long as they can be replenished from the depots of the army in the interior of the Crimea. Hence, although we have no doubt that the losses of the enemy in all these contests have been far greater than those of the allies, it is nevertheless thought expedient to continue them for the purpose of harassing and weakening the assailants. Here, again, the ordinary conditions of a siege are inverted, for it is more common for the besiegers to harass and exhaust the garrison than for the garrison to inflict that sort of annoyance on the besiegers. But the Russians go still further; although they have in no instance succeeded in wresting from us or destroying any fortified portion of our