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DIARY OF THE SIEGE.

(From Correspondents of London Journals.)

CAMP BEFORE SEBASTOPOL, July 10.—I have to report little more than the continuance of the same stand-still state of things that disgusted and discouraged every one when I last wrote. To be sure, the same resultless and fitful snatches of cannonading are kept up by day, with variations of musketry by night; and, having stated this, I have left little untold. We hammer away, spasmodically at the everlasting Redan, which returns quite as good as it gets; or help our neighbors, the French, by practising on the equally retributive Malakoff—in either case without making the smallest measure of headway towards the Russian Troy beyond. As the moon, however, has now reached her last quarter, the garrison takes increasing advantage of the darkness to attempt nightly mischief against both our own and the French lines. On the night before last, rather a brisk affair took place between the latter and a strong party of the enemy, who sallied from the Malakoff to essay the destruction of the French approaches towards that redoubt. It will be remembered that our allies, soon after their own and our defeat on the memorable 18th, commenced a sap from the Mamelon to its *vis-a-vis* the Malakoff.—As this work has been prosecuted with more or less success every night, it has at present penetrated over half the distance between the two redoubts, and at its further extremity is within some three hundred and fifty yards of the Russian embrasures. To stop its further advance, therefore, the enemy made a strong sortie on Sunday night, but after a sharp fight were driven back into their own works with considerable loss; the attempt was repeated soon after, but was again repulsed after another determined struggle. During this second scuffle occurred another grand illustration of what an untravelled Milesian would call that "most beautiful" system of blundering, in which there seems to be an understood rivalry between our allies and ourselves. After the affair of the 18th, I may remark, our artillerymen in the 21-gun and other neighboring batteries had received orders to train their guns at night on the approaches to the Quarries on the one hand and on the space between the Mamelon and Malakoff on the other—in this last case without the smallest arrangement for signals with the French. Accordingly, on Sunday night, when a strong force of French deployed out from the Mamelon to support those who were already engaged in repelling the enemy, our 21-gun battery opened fire upon them, and kept it up most effectively till a breathless messenger arrived to give notice of the murderous mistake. The well-timed blunder, I learn, afforded the enemy most valuable aid, and had it been much longer continued would have resulted in the repulse of our allies and the destruction of their hard-worked sap. That such an error could arise is about equally the fault of ourselves and the sufferers; for the arrangement of some system of signals to distinguish a friendly from a hostile party on ground on which it was mutually understood that our guns should be prepared to play at night seems so much a matter of course, that the rawest recruit that ever joined a marching regiment would have thought of it as a first step in the plan. With such generalship what armies could succeed? A powerful fire was opened against the Redan at three a.m. this morning, from both the left and right British attacks, and was continued about nine hours. The Redan answered quickly and vigorously. Our practice was most excellent.—Three of the most powerful mortars in the Green-hill attack were constantly discharged together, and the effect produced by the shells falling within the Redan at short distances from each other was strongly marked. They reached the ground almost at the same instant, and clouds of dust rose after their explosion. Frequently the shot from the Frenchman's-bill batteries were noticed to pass right through the embrasures of the Redan, ploughing up the cheeks of the openings as they done to the enemy's guns.—Often when our artillerymen had supposed that certain guns, from their continued silence, had been knocked over, these guns would suddenly appear in their embrasures, and open fire. Even late in the evening, after the fire had been renewed in the afternoon against the Redan, the guns appeared able to reply whenever it suited the purpose of the enemy that they should do so. It is fully evident that the enemy possesses some means of speedily drawing the guns away from the embrasures and placing them safe under cover, where they can be replacing them in the embrasures. What kind of blindage is used cannot be distinguished. After a gun from the Redan had been fired, the space in the embrasure was often observed to become vacant, and only re-occupied just before another discharge took place. But though the guns may have remained for the most part uninjured, it was seen that the artillerymen suf-

fered severely. Behind the hollow between the Redan and Malakoff hills part of a broad road is visible.—This road emerges from behind the Redan hill, passes in front of the barrack and part of the dockyard wall, and is lost to view behind the Malakoff-hill.—Along this way men bearing stretchers and ambulance waggons were observed to pass and repass in unusual numbers. Nor could it be understood how the requisite number of men for working the guns could remain within the Redan and great loss not occur among them from the discharge of such an overpowering weight of metal. The fire from our batteries against the Redan ceased about noon. It was resumed between three and four o'clock p.m., and prolonged till sunset. The object appeared to be to silence, if possible, the fire which for some nights past the Redan had kept up against our working parties. The guns of the enemy failed to do any execution against our batteries. In the course of the morning a ten-inch gun in the right attack burst, killing one sailor and wounding two others. It is remarkable that the Malakoff batteries did not fire.

A HEAVY SHELLING FROM THE REDAN.

July 11.—To-day heavy shelling from the Redan. Lieutenant Monsell, 39th Regiment, was killed in the trenches. The French are fast completing their battery at the Ouvrages Blancs. I have to relate the melancholy death of two gentlemen connected with the Commander-in-Chief. One is Colonel Vico, French Commissioner at the head-quarters of the British army, and holding the same situation which General Rose holds with General Pelissier. The death of Colonel Vico was caused by cholera. Mr. Calvert, a gentleman well acquainted with the Russian language, and employed as interpreter and confidential agent to the Commander-in-Chief, is also dead. One result of the fire opened against the Redan yesterday appears to have been a considerable diminution in the degree of opposition made by its guns against our advanced works, and the supposed site of operations in progress by our working parties. The fire was less vigorous than it had been for many nights previously. The enemy made frequent use of fireballs, as if there were some suspicion that the fire of the daytime was intended to be preliminary to an attack at night. About ten p.m. a fire broke out in the town, which threw a bright glare for a wide distance round. It appeared to be near the ravine, at the head of the south harbor, and was very probably an intentional destruction of some of the houses of the suburbs which were in the way of the Russian works. The fire in the batteries has been very slack all day. The weather has continued oppressively hot. It appears strange that at this advanced period of the hot season, the issue of summer clothing to the troops is not yet completed. In the Light Division the issue was only commenced within a week past, and as yet summer trousers only have been given out to the men. It is stated that the suits will be completed within a short time, but two months ago they might have been distributed with advantage. The soldiers who have lately joined have brought their canvass dress with them, and all the men who are wearing it describe it to be an easy and cool attire, especially when on fatigue duty.

July 12.—There was again a very sharp fire in the quarries last night; but for every shot or shell of the enemy our guns sent two back; and this practice, if continued, considering our superiority in weight of metal, must in the end, it is presumed, cause the Russians to think twice before they fire.—The French works are advancing considerably, both those destined to act against the shipping, and those more directly against the Malakoff itself. The works above the Careening Bay ravine are approaching completion. The new battery in advance of the spur, on which was the small five-battery deserted by the enemy after their loss of the other redoubts in this situation, is progressing, notwithstanding the difficulties connected with its position, very favorably. But it will require some time for its completion. In consequence of the vertical fire brought upon it by the enemy from some of the batteries on the north side, it is necessary that the guns should be protected by a bomb-proof blindage, and this is a work of much labor. The French have completed another approach across the Malakoff-hill. It is connected with the large ambuscade which they threw up a few nights ago, and the site of an old Russian trench has been taken advantage of in its formation. The duties of each attack are in future to be performed by the regiments of one division;—the numbers not being taken as heretofore from all the divisions collectively. The Third and Fourth Divisions will continue to guard the works of the left attack; on the right attack, where the duties are more severe, and the number employed greater, the duties will be given by the First, Second, and Light Divisions. For this latter attack each division will be employed in the trenches only every third

day. Lieutenant Robert Clayton, of the 34th Regiment, who was dangerously wounded in the attack of the 18th of June, died to-day. His injuries were caused by grapeshot, and were of a most serious nature. Major-General Barnard is appointed chief of the staff under Lieutenant-Gen. Simpson, commanding-in-chief.

July 13.—The fire from the batteries was exceedingly heavy on both sides last night, but our casualties have been very few in number. Thunder clouds, accompanied by heavy showers of rain, have been passing over the camp, but the oppressive heat of the atmosphere has been scarcely diminished.—Fort Paul fired a salute of nineteen guns to-day. Some of the guns on the roof, as well as others facing the harbor, were used. The object of the salute is only a matter of surmise. A communication was observed to take place between Fort Constantine and one of our blockading vessels. The French, toward sunset and for about an hour afterwards, fired a number of incendiary rockets against the town. They were discharged from one of the redoubts on the east side of Careening Bay ravine.

July 14.—The events of the past week have not been marked by any striking features. The French works destined to act against the shipping in the roadstead and the approaches against the Malakoff have been steadily advancing. The new batteries in our position have also been making favorable progress. The general health of the troops engaged in the siege operations continues excellent. Dysentery and fever are the prevailing diseases. Cholera appears almost to have entirely quitted the front of our position, although it still clings to some particular situations. The temperature has continued very high.

EXECUTION OF A FRENCH SOLDIER.

The execution of a French soldier took place this afternoon, says a letter of the 12th, in the plain of Balaklava. The unhappy criminal belonged to the 73rd Regiment of the line. He had stabbed the captain of his company, and caused his death. The law of retaliation was executed with the characteristic promptness which exists in the French army.—He was conveyed in an artillery waggon to the spot where his life was to pay forfeit for the act he had committed, and was attended by a priest. Three sides of a hollow square were formed; the whole of the 73rd Regiment, and one company from every other regiment in the plain, being present. The fourth side was occupied by the culprit. He knelt down, and his eyes were bandaged. His hands had been previously secured behind him. After a few words from the priest, a crucifix was presented to him, and he kissed it. The priest then kissed the soldier on the forehead and left him. Only a few moments of suspense followed. A firing party of twelve men had been drawn up in front of the prisoner. Ten of these men were to fire; the shots of two were reserved in case of the execution being incomplete. This proved to be a prudent precaution. The order to fire was made in silence—signalled by a movement of the sword of the officer in command of the firing party. At the first wave of the blade the arms were "carried," and at the second they were brought to the "present," at the third the shots were discharged. There were a few quivering movements, and the soldier fell forward. A surgeon advanced and found life not quite extinct, but one of the two men left in reserve being ordered forward, speedily concluded the tragedy.

SPIES IN THE CAMP.

Precaution with reference to spies is, says a letter, of course very necessary; but it is remarked that the French gendarmes have become of late very troublesome to English visitors to the camp. The day before yesterday the chaplain of the 1st division was arrested by gendarmes as a Russian spy, whilst he was quietly contemplating the burial ground at Inkermann. His appearance at once denoted the Englishman and the clergyman, but that did not suffice. He was brought to a French general, who strictly examined him, and who did not allow him to depart before a merchant in the so-called village of Woronzow—a collector of wooden stores and traders' tents—had become security for him, that is to say, had in his capacity of interpreter, pledged his word that the party in question was an English clergyman. There can be no longer any doubt that in a variety of ways the French gendarmes are becoming very officious. In Kamiesch, moreover, there are—so it is generally believed—so many French police spies about, that the traders are almost afraid to open their mouths. Not a newspaper is to be seen—not a word of politics is to be heard. Even the passing events of the war, when referred to, are narrated in a whisper, and only amongst friends. As for the late attempt on Louis Napoleon's life, it only became generally known in Kamiesch about seven weeks after it was made, and then it was never the

topic of public conversation. In fact, many persons in authority denied, up to the last moment, that there had been any attempt of the kind. As for the French soldiers, they are kept in the most profound ignorance of all that is going on in their native country.

OUR BLUNDERS AND DISASTERS.

We extract the following from a letter lately received from the Crimea:—

"You don't know, in England, because all the correspondents or amateurs that ever put pen to paper cannot give you an idea of the disgust, weariness, and despair of those who have passed the last year of their lives before Sebastopol, trotting from the camp to the trenches and back again, and lying twenty-four hours at the time in the former, assailed by shot and shell, and flies, bad odors, and dust, without shelter or power of resistance, and their number day by day so diminished that day by day each survivor feels more strongly that his chances of ever coming out of it safe are small indeed; and all this because two, or three, or four generals, with 'long experience,' with their professional education, with their stars and crosses, sabres and uniform, rank and commissions, with 150,000 men waiting but their nod to rush on death, though they know they are doing no good, do not know how to do anything better. If there be one truth more than another impressing itself upon men's minds here, it is that although experience and education may make good officers, good generals—like poets—are born, and can never be made. I believe nothing pleases the Russians better than that the allies should go breaking their heads against Sebastopol; it is in the open field they dread us; it is in the open field they can be destroyed. But no one here, at least of the chiefs, knows how to take the open field; they would all like to be informed by an early post how they are to scale the heights that surround Mackenzie's Farm, so as to attack the Russians that are encamped on the plateau. This is the very thing which it is their business to find out. From Sebastopol there is no retreat. The armies cannot be re-embarked here, even if they would.—There are not sufficient transports for this enormous force and its material; and if there were, the operation would be impossible in the face of a large Russian army. The only movement practicable is forward; there are very few now who are not convinced that by the means at present used the place will never be taken. Talking yesterday with a distinguished Piedmontese officer, whose opinions on military matters possess more real value than those of any man I know, he said he would, were he in chief command, put on board the ships as much of the stores as possible, the rest he would destroy; he would spike the siege guns, raise the siege, pack eight days' provisions on the men's backs, on the mules, and in waggons, issue a general order informing the army that there was nothing for it but to conquer or die, and march straight on Baktchi-Serai.—There or thereabouts the Russians would doubtless give battle, would certainly be beaten—fall back towards Perekop, leaving the communication with the sea open to the allies once more. Sebastopol might then be really beleaguered on every side, and would soon be reduced by mere lapse of time to the last extremity. Any general who does this will certainly reap a harvest of glory. But for this there must be only one general-in-chief. Operations in the field on a grand scale, with four independent commanders, are impossible. 'Too many cooks spoil the broth,' says an old, vulgar, and excellent proverb, and certainly our goose out here has been cooked in a curious manner. As things stand at present, suppose a large body of Russians takes up a position so as to threaten the English, General Simpson, instead of taking immediate measures to attack them with the whole available force of the allies, sits down, and writes a despatch, of which four copies are made; each of which is sent by an aide-de-camp to one of the other generals, who may not be at home. In this at least three or four hours are consumed. At last answers come in from all sides, suggesting a conference; aides-de-camp again fly about to arrange the hour. Early in the morning most likely won't do; somebody would like to breakfast first. The others are too polite to object, and by the time the conference is over, the Russians have been reinforced or have fortified themselves; or have attacked some small body in force, and caused enormous loss of life."

HEALTHY STATE OF THE CAMP.

The camp is healthy enough, and it is probable that the summer will pass away without any of that sickness to which the nation has looked forward with such forebodings. If a low and sultry village like Balaklava be free from disease in the middle of July, there is little cause for melancholy forebodings as to the health of troops encamped on a lofty plateau, exposed to every breeze that blows, and far removed