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THE SIEGE.

(From the London Times.)

OCT. 19.—The enemy scarcely fired a shot during the night of the 18th. Our batteries were equally silent. The French, on their side, opened a few guns on their right attack, which they had been working to get into position all night; but they did not succeed in firing many rounds before the great preponderance of the enemy's metal made itself felt and their works were damaged seriously; in fact, their lines, though nearer to the enemy's batteries than our own in some instances, were not sufficiently close for the light brass guns with which they were armed.—At day-break the firing continued as usual from both sides. The Russians, having spent the night in repairing the batteries, were nearly in the same position as ourselves, and, unaided or at least unassisted to the full extent we had reason to expect by the French, we were just able to hold our own during the day. Some smart affairs of skirmishers and sharpshooters took place in front. Our riflemen annoy the Russian gunners greatly, and prevent the tirailleurs from showing near the batteries. On one occasion the Russian riflemen and our own men came close upon each other in a quarry before the town.—Our men had exhausted all their ammunition; but as soon as they saw the Russians they seized the blocks of stone which were lying about, and opened a vigorous volley on the enemy. The latter either had empty pouches, or were so much surprised that they forgot to load, for they resorted to the same missiles. A short fight ensued, which ended in our favor, and the Russians retreated, pelted vigorously as long as the men could pursue them. The coolness of a young artillery officer, named Maxwell, who took some ammunition to the batteries through a tremendous fire along a road so exposed to the enemy's fire that it has been called "the Valley of Death," is highly spoken of on all sides. The blue jackets are delighted with Captain Peel, who animates the men by the exhibition of the best qualities of an officer, though his courage is sometimes marked by an excess that borders on rashness. When the Union Jack in the sailors' battery was shot away he seized the broken staff, and leaping up on the earthworks waved the old bit of bunting again and again in a storm of shot, which fortunately left him untouched.

OCT. 20.—Two 68-pounders were mounted last night in our batteries, and the firing, which nearly ceased after dark, was renewed by daybreak. We are all getting tired of this continual "pound-pounding," which makes a great deal of noise, wastes much powder, and does very little damage. It is very hard to batter down earthworks. Most people about London have seen the Artillery butt at Woolwich. How long has it lasted our "heavy fire" of artillery? Then, again, the Russians have plenty of laborers. They easily repair at night what we destroy and damage during the day. It is difficult for us to do the same. Our men are worn out with fatigue; the daily service exhausts them, and the artillerymen cannot have more than five hours' rest in the 24. They are relieved every eight hours, but it takes them three hours to get down to their work and return from it to the camp. Our amateurs are quite disappointed and tired out. I fear so are people in England, but they must have patience. Rome was not built in a day, nor will Sebastopol be taken in a week.

The hardest lot of all is reserved for our poor horses. All hay rations for baggagers are rigidly refused; they only receive a few pounds of indifferent barley. There is not a blade of grass to be had—the whole of these plateaux and hills are covered with thistles only, and where the other covering of the earth goes I know not. The hay ration for a charger is restricted to 6lb. daily. Under these circumstances horse-flesh is cheap, and friendly presents are being continually offered by one man to another of "a deuced good poney," which are seldom accepted.

We could have stormed with more chance of success when we first set down before the place. Yes, we could perhaps; but who was to know it? When we have reduced them to the state in which they were when we came up from Balaklava—i.e., left Sebastopol minus the batteries, if we can—we shall only have done, it is said, what we could have done then without going to all the labor of making our earthworks and trenches. However, I do not agree with this. No one could have calculated on the misfortunes of the French and on the weakness of their attacks. The very work of silencing these Russian earthworks is productive of the best results, for by the time we do so we shall have cowed the enemy, inflicted enormous loss on their troops, and have damaged the town, and rendered it unfit for defence. So far, indeed, our shots anticipate our mission. We have unfortunately burnt the hospital, which, the de-

serters say, was full of wounded men from the Alma and from the batteries. We have also destroyed a small war steamer.

OCT. 21.—Any day is like another, and the scenes of yesterday are scarcely distinguishable from those of to-day. The enemy seemed more afraid of our Lancasters this morning, and we are told they are drawing over towards the French. The latter become more vigorous in their fire, and are doing marked damage on the left of their line. Their energy in working the new parallels is rapidly producing its results, and their works are creeping up hour after hour towards the enemy's walls. Sandbags have been placed on the top of most of the exposed public buildings, to prevent their taking fire. It is evident we must advance our works a little nearer. A trunnion was knocked off one of our new 68-pounders, and the gun rendered unserviceable in the right attack, where it was doing good service. The firing lasted on both sides, with short intermission, from sunset to sunrise. One's head aches with the repeated bursts of artillery.

Lord Dunkellin, Captain Coldstream Guards, and eldest son of the Marquis of Clanricarde, was taken prisoner this morning. He was out with a working party of his regiment, which had got a little out of their way, when a number of men were observed through the dawning light in the ravine in front of them. "There are the Russians," exclaimed one of the men. "Nonsense, they're our fellows," said his lordship, and off he went towards them, asking in a high tone as he got near, "Who is in command of this party?" His men saw him no more. As they were unarmed, they retreated rapidly, but there is no fear of his lordship's safety, for the Russians fired no shot, and merely closed round and seized him ere he could get away. No doubt he will be well taken care of, and forwarded probably to St. Petersburg, for his father was Ambassador at the Court of the Czar, and is said to have once enjoyed his friendship.

The Russians opened a very heavy cannonade on us this morning; they have always done so on Sundays. Divine service was performed with a continued bass of cannon rolling through the responses and liturgy. The French are terribly cut up by the Garden Battery, more so, however, by their misfortune of last night. The Russians made a stealthy sortie towards morning, and advanced close to the French pickets. When challenged, they replied "Ingles, Ingles," which passed muster with our allies as *bona fide* English, they say; and before they knew where they were, the Russians had charged them, got into their batteries and spiked five mortars. They were speedily repulsed; but this misadventure has mortified our brave allies exceedingly. The night before they fired on a party of men who used the same *passé partout*, and they turned out to be Russians. They were too confiding the second time. We are all liable to mistakes. There was a great alarm the other evening. Eleven battalions of Russians crossed the Tchernaya, and deployed towards Balaklava, but we were quite satisfied to leave Sir Colin Campbell to dispose of them. However, at night musketry and cannon opened along the rear, and woke us all up. It turned out that the officer of marines on the heights had been told he always would have a clear space left for his guns to play upon in case of attack, and that some newly-arrived Turks, unaware of this arrangement, had entrenched on his space, with lanterns in their hands, whereupon, knowing the Russians were about, he blazed away at the poor "Bono Johnnies," all of whom he fortunately missed.

The French General sent over to-day to ask for assistance in silencing a new battery which tormented them excessively. We gladly rendered it, and silenced the battery ere sunset.

No incident of consequence occurred to-day. It was all filled up with volleys of artillery. A Pole and some Russians deserted last night. They tell us that the enemy have lost 3,000 killed and wounded, that the town is in a frightful state—the shops closed, the merchants fled, the goods placed underneath in the cellars, and that the "pointed" balls and shells (Lancasters) do frightful mischief. There are no longer volunteers to work the guns, as there were at first. The men have now to be forced to the batteries. Many poor women and children have lost their lives in this terrible cannonade. It seems incredible that the Russian authorities should have let them stay in the town when they could have easily have sent them across by the bridge of boats to the north side. Provisions still continue plenty and water is abundant in the town. Our armament for tomorrow will be, it is hoped, as follows:—Right attack, 24 guns—two 68s; four Lancaster guns in batteries between left and right; left attack, 42 guns—total 71: plus 10 mortars, 81. The French have 56 guns; total, 137 for the allies. The Turks guard the rear, and have about 18 guns in all.

There are now 18 deserters at head-quarters, in-

cluding a woman, who was taken as she was going down to visit a cousin (sweetheart) in the trenches. Two deserters leaped in through our embrasures.—They were Circassian prisoners. They reported that all the *forçats* were let loose, as the Russians required the prisons for hospitals.

OCT. 24.—About 500 men came to-day as fit for service, from Scutari. They were landed at Balaklava, and proceeded to march out to their camps, but I regret to say that before they had marched many miles—indeed there are not many to march—more of the poor fellows than it was pleasant to count fell out exhausted, proving that they had not quite recovered from their illness.

The diminution of our numbers every day is enough to cause serious anxiety. Out of 35,600 men borne on the strength of the army there are not more now than 16,500 rank and file fit for service. Since the 10th of this month upwards of 700 men have been sent as invalids to Balaklava. There is a steady drain of some 40 or 50 men a-day going out from us, which is not dried up by the numbers of the returned invalids. Even the 20 or 30 a-day wounded and disabled when multiplied by the number of the days we have been here, become a serious item in the aggregate. We are badly off for spare gun carriages and wheels, for ammunition and forage.

All the prisoners were sent in from head-quarters to the main guard at Balaklava, except two, who are employed with the Quarter-Master General's Staff to point out the sites of the magazines and public buildings which should be destroyed. Our prisoners contradict each other on many points, but all agree as to the damage done to the town and as to the multitudes of killed. *On dit*, that the Russian Governor sent in yesterday to Lord Raglan to ask for a day's truce to bury the dead on both sides. The same authority has it that Lord Raglan replied "He had no dead to bury." The Russians in revenge for this are leaving their dead where they fall outside the lines, and also bring them out from the town and place them in the valley frequented by our pickets, and skirmishers who are much annoyed by the stench.—This is a new engine of warfare. An ambulance corps under Capt. Grant is doing good service now that it has arrived. There are two carts attached to each division, and each cart generally goes into Balaklava twice in the day with sick and wounded.—Diarthæa is still prevalent. Full rations of fresh meat are issued whenever it is practicable, and double allowance of rum to the parties in the trenches. The weather continues to be beautifully mild.

THE CAVALRY ACTION AT BALAKLAVA.—OCT. 25.—It will be remembered that in a letter sent by last mail from this it was mentioned that 11 battalions of Russian infantry had crossed the Tchernaya, and that they threatened the rear of our position and our communication with Balaklava. Their bands could be heard playing at night by the travellers along the Balaklava road to the camp, but they "showed" but little during the day, and kept up among the gorges and mountain passes through which the roads to Inkermann, Simpheropol, and the south-east of the Crimea wind towards the interior. It will be recollected also that the position we occupied in reference to Balaklava was supposed by most people to be very strong—even impregnable. Our lines were formed by natural mountain slopes in the rear, along which the French had made very formidable intrenchments.—Below those intrenchments, and very nearly in a right line across the valley beneath, are four conical hillocks, one rising above the other as they recede from our lines; the furthest, which joins the chain of mountains opposite to our ridges, being named Canrobert's Hill, from the meeting there of that General with Lord Raglan, after the march to Balaklava. On the top of each of these hills the Turks had thrown up earthen redoubts, defended by 250 men each, and armed with two or three guns—some heavy ship guns—lent by us to them, with one artilleryman in each redoubt to look after them. These hills cross the valley of Balaklava at the distance of about two and a half miles from the town. Supposing the spectator, then, to take his stand on one of the heights forming the rear of our camp before Sebastopol, he would see the town of Balaklava, with its scanty shipping, its narrow strip of water, and its old forts on his right hand; immediately below he would behold the valley and plain of coarse meadow land, occupied by our cavalry tents, and stretching from the base of the ridge on which he stood to the foot of the formidable heights at the other side; he would see the French trenches lined with Zouaves a few feet beneath, and distant from him on the slope of the hill; a Turkish redoubt lower down, then another in the valley, then, in a line with it, some angular earthworks, then, in succession, the other two redoubts up to Canrobert's Hill. At the distance of two, or two and a half miles across the valley there is an abrupt rocky mountain range of most irregular and picturesque formation, covered

with scanty brushwood here and there, or rising into barren pinnacles and *plateaux* of rock. In outline and appearance, this portion of the landscape is wonderfully like the Trossachs. A patch of blue sea is caught in between the overhanging cliffs of Balaklava as they close in the entrance to the harbor on the right. The camp of the Marines, pitched on the hill sides more than 1,000 feet above the level of the sea, is opposite to you as your back is turned to Sebastopol and your right side towards Balaklava. On the road leading up the valley, close to the entrance of the town and beneath these hills, is the encampment of the 93rd Highlanders.

The cavalry lines are nearer to you below, and are some way in advance of the Highlanders, but nearer to the town than the Turkish redoubts. The valley is crossed here and there by small waves of land.—On your left the hills and rocky mountain ranges gradually close in toward the course of the Tchernaya, till, at three or four miles' distance from Balaklava, the valley is swallowed up in a mountain gorge and deep ravines, above which rise tiers after tiers of desolate whitish rock, garnished now and then by bits of scanty herbage, and spreading away towards the east and south, where they attain the Alpine dimensions of the Tschatur Dagh. It is very easy for an enemy at the Belbek, or in command of the road of Mackenzie's Farm, Inkermann, Simpheropol, or Bakshi-serai, to debouch through these gorges at any time upon this plain from the neck of the valley, or to march from Sebastopol by the Tchernaya, and to advance along it towards Balaklava, till checked by the Turkish redoubts on the southern side or by the fire from the French works on the northern side, i.e., the side which, in relation to the valley to Balaklava, forms the rear of our position. It was evident enough that Menschikoff and Gortschakoff had been feeling their way along this route for several days past, and very probably at night the Cossacks had crept up close to our pickets, which are not always as watchful as might be desired, and had observed the weakness of a position far too extended for our army to defend, and occupied by their despised enemy, the Turks. I say "despised," because we hear from prisoners and from other sources that, notwithstanding all the drubbings received on the Danube from the Osmanli, the Russians have the most ineffable contempt for the champions of the crescent.

At half-past 7 o'clock this morning an orderly came galloping in to the head-quarters camp from Balaklava, with the news that at dawn a strong corps of Russian horse, supported by guns and battalions of infantry, had marched into the valley, and had already nearly dispossessed the Turks of redoubt No. 1 (that on Canrobert's Hill, which is farthest from our lines), and that they were opening fire on the redoubts Nos. 2, 3, and 4, which would speedily be in their hands unless the Turks offered a stouter resistance than they had done already.

Orders were despatched to Sir George Cathcart and to H. R. H. the Duke of Cambridge to put their respective divisions, the 4th and the 1st, in motion for the scene of action, and intelligence of the advance of the Russians was also furnished to General Canrobert. Immediately on receipt of the news the General commanded General Bosquet to get the Third Division under arms, and sent a strong body of artillery and some 200 Chasseurs d'Afrique to assist us in holding the valley. Sir Colin Campbell, who was in command of Balaklava, had drawn up the 93d Highlanders a little in front of the road to the town at the first news of the advance of the enemy. The marines on the heights got under arms; the seamen's batteries and marines' batteries on the heights close to the town, were manned, and the French artillerymen and the Zouaves prepared for action along their lines. Lord Lucan's little camp was the scene of great excitement. The men had not had time to water their horses; they had not broken their fast from the evening of the day before, and had barely saddled at the first blast of the trumpet, when they were drawn up on the slope behind the redoubts in front of their camp to operate on the enemy's squadrons. It was soon evident that no reliance was to be placed on the Turkish infantry or artillerymen. All the stories we had heard about their bravery behind stone walls and earthworks proved how differently the same or similar people fight under different circumstances. When the Russians advanced the Turks fired a few rounds at them, got frightened at the distance of their supports in the rear, looked round received a few shots and shell, and then "bolted," and fled with an agility quite at variance with common-place notions of Oriental deportment on the battle-field. But Turks on the Danube are very different beings from Turks in the Crimea, as it appears that the Russians of Sebastopol are not at all like the Russians of Silistria.

Soon after 8, Lord Raglan and his staff turned out and cantered towards the rear of our position. The