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## DIARY OF THE SIEGE.

(From Correspondents of our London Journals.)

### RENEWAL OF THE BOMBARDMENT.

SEBASTOPOL, APRIL 9.—This morning at day-break the allied batteries simultaneously opened fire on the defences of Sebastopol. Suddenly three guns were heard on the left towards the French lines, and the whole line of our batteries opened at once. The volume of sound was not heard so great or so deafening as that of the 17th of October, and the state of the weather rendered it quite out of the question to form a notion of the gradual effect of our fire, so that the most interesting portion of the day's proceedings was lost. So thick is the atmosphere that even the flashes of the guns are invisible, and the gunners must be firing by guesswork at the flashes of the batteries, as it is impossible to see more than a few yards in advance. A driving sheet of rain and a Black Sea fog whirl over the whole camp, which has already resumed the miserable aspect so well known to us of yore. Tents have been blown down, the mud has already become several inches deep, and the ground so far as it is visible, looks like a black lake, studded with innumerable pools of dun-colored water. What effect this sudden change in the weather will produce on the fire of our batteries it is now beyond my power to say, nor am I in a position either to judge if we have suffered any disadvantage from it, or to form an opinion as to the relative force of our fire compared with that of the enemy. I am now seated in a hut, into which the storm and rain drive at every gust. Man or beast could not remain without some shelter on such a day as this. All around us there is a dense veil of gray vapor sweeping over the ground and concealing from sight the tents which are close to our camp. The firing has slackened considerably since twelve o'clock. It is not easy so murky is the sky and so strong the wind, to see the flashes or hear the report of the Russian guns or of the French cannon on either flank, though the hut is within a couple of hundred yards of the enemy's range; but we can tell that our batteries in front are thundering away continuously in irregular bursts, and are firing some 25 or 30 shots per minute. Early in the morning they were firing from 70 or 80 shots per minute, but, as it is no longer necessary to press our gunners, they have reduced the rate of fire. From the time our batteries opened till three o'clock, the wind blew from S. and W. and was right in the back of our artillerymen, so that the smoke from their guns was carried away towards the enemy, and the smoke from the Russian embrasures was driven back upon the men behind them; but the wind has now veered round more to the westward, and at times takes a little northing, so that the smoke is swept away pretty equally from both lines of batteries towards Inkermann. The enemy were taken completely by surprise when we opened fire. They replied, indeed, pretty briskly at once to the French fire on our left, and the Flagstaff Battery and works were manned immediately. The Garden Battery, and Redan Battery, came into play soon after we opened fire, but some time elapsed before the Round Tower works or the Mamelon answered, and for half an hour their guns were weakly handled. The Inkermann and Careening Bay batteries were almost silent for three quarters of an hour before they answered the French batteries on our right. The little details of ruin and destruction which must have taken place after to-day's fire could not be ascertained. The eye of the painter never rested on a more extraordinary effect; his hand alone could have rendered justice to the scene which shone out on us for a moment, as the sickly sun, flattened out, as it were, between bars of cloud and rain, seemed to have forced its way through the leaden sky to cast one straightened look on the conflict which raged below. The plateau beneath our standing place was lighted up by incessant flashes of light, and long trails of white smoke streamed across it, spiriting up in thick masses tinged with fire, for a moment till they were whirled away in broader volumes by the wind. In the deep glow of the parting gleam of sunset the only image suggested to me calculated to convey the actual effect of the fire of the batteries to our friends at home was a vision of the Potteries' district as it is seen at night, all fervid with fire and pillars of smoke out of the windows of an express train. This glimpse of the batteries, brief as it was, proved extremely satisfactory. On the extreme left the French batteries were firing with energy on the long line of batteries in front of the loopholed wall and on the Flagstaff and Garden Batteries which were replying very faintly and feebly by one or two scattered guns. Our left attack (Greenhill's or Chapman's Batteries) working with vigor and decision, was principally directing its fire against the Redan which only answered by five or six guns which did not appear to be remarkably well served or aimed. Our right attack (Gordon's Batteries) aided by the advanced battery

and by the French redoubts, had silenced the Mamelon and fired some three or four shots for every one from the Round Tower, and the Russian batteries to the right of the Mamelon were voiceless. So much could be seen, when rain and mist set in once more and shut out all from view, save one faint gleam of yellowish haze to the west.

April 10.—During the whole of this morning the firing continued on our side with little intermission, while that of the Russians was evidently slackening. At about 4 o'clock, however, all the enemy's lines and batteries suddenly sprung into life and vigor.—Volleys of from 100 to 150 guns were fired at once from the Redan, the Flagstaff, Barrack, Garden and Malakoff Batteries; even the Mamelon, which all thought destroyed and untenable, fired five or six guns in rapid succession. Their shot came in upon our works like hail. On every point along our lines balls were to be seen bounding and plunging, and shells bursting like fireworks in the air. Never, perhaps, was such a concentrated and destructive cannonade witnessed since the commencement of the siege.—All felt that if it continued two or three hours our works would be levelled with the dust, as, though both English and French kept up a terrific fire, the enemy, in spite of our utmost efforts, gave five guns in reply to our one. The rapidity and deafening uproar of the fire brought all who were at leisure to the front, and the oldest and most experienced artillery officers augured very unfavorably of our taking the fortress which could command such a fierce cannonade. Suddenly, and in the midst of such remarks, the enemy's batteries made a dead pause. For nearly a quarter of an hour not a gun was fired. The allies kept up their bombardment; the French battered the Flagstaff and works to the left; our shot ploughed into the Redan and Malakoff, and our 13-inch shells burst in regular succession in the centre of the Mamelon; but not five guns did the Russians give in reply. Nearly twenty minutes passed on their side in this state of unaccountable inactivity, when again suddenly the Redan and Flagstaff broke out in heavy volleys, and maintained them. This was at about five o'clock, and from this time until the fire of the long guns discontinued for the night, except by occasional guns, few and far between, no other Russian works but the Redan and Flagstaff took part in the contest. It was difficult to ascertain the cause of such extraordinary manœuvres. Beyond a couple of hours, at two o'clock, when the weather slightly cleared, it was almost impossible to ascertain, with anything like certainty, the mischief we had done to the enemy's works. From the advanced trench, where the Guards were within a few hundred yards, it was reported that the works of the Malakoff, though injured, were still perfectly defensible; that some guns, which were unserviceable, had been withdrawn on one side, and that some 25 or 30 still remained in the embrasures, quite ready and fit for use. The Mamelon also, which this morning was almost dismantled, had had several fresh guns placed, instead of those which had been injured, and that altogether the Russians were still strong in that point. The weather was still thick, and matters still uncertain, when night closed in. Our long guns ceased firing a little after seven, the enemy's about eight, and then both Russians and allies resorted to their mortars.—The fire of these latter was maintained all night.—Every five minutes one of our 13-inch shells was dropped into the Mamelon, and from the advanced work, at the same intervals, 10 inch were thrown into the Malakoff. The French directed their bombs into the Flagstaff, and our left attack threw them into the Redan. On the extreme left of all the French rocket battery sent their burning missiles in all directions except into the town; the orders to spare that being still in full force. The enemy replied with mortars from the rear of Malakoff, the Redan and Flagstaff works; but we were evidently two to one superior to them in such ordnance. This deficiency they occasionally compensated for by the use of their guns, which, when fired in volleys, are by no means to be trifled with. The advantage of the whole day's fire is evidently with the allies. Whatever is the reason, the enemy most certainly are not fighting with their usual vigor. We have not yet destroyed their works—their guns are still good and serviceable, yet they still continue silent under our cannonade during the greater part of the day. It is somewhat awful to stand upon the hills which overlook the town and watch the progress of the nightly bombardment. The Congreve rockets rush from the French batteries with a deafening roar, leaving a light trail of fire behind, just sufficient to trace the course of the missile as it darts vaguely hither and thither through the air, settling down at last with a loud crash in the Flagstaff. This wild erratic course occasionally lands them outside the Russian lines, and now and then forces them over everything into the very centre of the town. From both right and left the mortars are

discharged with a heavy painful explosion, and with a flash which, even at a distance, is almost blinding. As the dull boom shakes your very frame, you hear the shell with a kind of whistling roar, mount higher and higher into the air, till having reached its zenith it descends with redoubled speed and force into the enemy's works. The shock with which it strikes the ground can be distinctly heard even in the allied camp, followed in a second after by the sharp ringing explosion, in the bright glare of which the earth is thrown up like a cloud. The enemy are replying to each shot with many long guns, some mortars, but use no rockets at all; and whenever a pause occurs in the cannonade, the sharp, quick rattling of the musketry makes itself audible in the advanced trenches till the re-commencing roar of artillery drowns all other sounds. Such a contest is going on now, and will go on all night and each night until the town surrenders or is taken.

April 11.—At daybreak this morning the fire was resumed by the allies and Russians, and for some time with equal vigor on both sides. In spite of the fire of our mortars, the enemy during the past night have managed to repair much of the damage which the Mamelon sustained, and also the works of the Flagstaff Battery opposed to the French. For the first hour of hostilities this morning all the Russian works were fought with vigor and determination, but after that time (about half-past six) the guns round the Malakoff and Mamelon again ceased their cannonade, and from this period until late in the day seemed perfectly indifferent to our fire. As to-day the weather has been fine and clear, a perfect view of the whole fight could be obtained from the hills. I availed myself of the change to watch the progress of the siege for some hours, and as I had a powerful telescope, was able to see minutely everything which went forward in the batteries of our antagonists.—First, then, as to the real amount of mischief which our fire has inflicted. On the extreme left, where the French are attacking, much harm has undoubtedly been done. The Mud Fort has received some hard knocks, several of its guns have been dismounted, and are not yet replaced. Still, as a battery, it is perfectly defensible, and the Russians consider it so, as when I looked, and during the rest of the day, it was hotly engaged with the French, and appeared giving gun for gun with the battery attacking it. Next to this came the Flagstaff, one of the most formidable of the Russian defences, and the same which blew up all the French batteries on the 17th of October last. Since that attack its strength has been increased fourfold; then it mounted 45, now it mounts upwards of 160 heavy guns, at some parts in three tiers, and at others in two. This work has sustained much damage, more perhaps than all the other Russian batteries put together. Its lower and more advanced tier of guns are quite silenced. The guns themselves are overthrown, the embrasures destroyed, in some cases shot quite away, and in others so damaged as to be mere piles of black earth from which the remnants of white sandbags peep out here and there. The second tier is also much knocked about and one or two of the guns silent, and the slopes of the earthwork much damaged. Still this portion is good and serviceable, and some 30 or 40 pieces of ordnance in position in it maintained a hot cannonade. The upper tier of about 30 guns was almost uninjured, certainly none of its guns were touched. It was into this upper tier that the French last night threw their bomb-shells, which of course must have caused much damage inside the parapet but as yet there is no reduction of its fire. The two smaller batteries, which flank the lower tiers of the Flagstaff, are much out of the direct line of fire. They had suffered very little, and continued to inflict some mischief upon the French. One face of the Barrack Battery, which adjoins the Flagstaff, had been hit hard by the French, but was still firing. The other two sides of it were almost unscathed, and seemed even to be making head against a French battery on our left, and part of our left attack. Next to this came the Garden Battery. It suffered much yesterday, but, from its position in rear of the other works, the Russians have been able to repair it easily, and this morning it was again in active operation. The Redan, the enemy's *pièce de résistance*, I regret to say, shows but little tokens of injury. Its front face was considerably marked; and some three or four of its guns quieted, but this was all. It was still firing 30 or 40 guns a minute. The Malakoff Tower—the key of the whole position; the point on which formerly the enemy appeared to concentrate all the vigor of their defensive energies—was silent. It was undoubtedly much injured, and half the guns of the semi-circular battery gone; but still very far from being untenable or incapable of formidable opposition. Its two flanking batteries, mounting each some 10 or 12 guns, were untouched. The Mamelon was very much injured. Its parapets were mere

loose piles of earth and the fire of our mortars played so direct into its centre that the enemy can only retain it by an immense sacrifice of life. It was impossible to judge of the state of the enemy's works beyond the Mamelon except by their fire, which was incessant, and appeared far to overpower the French batteries opposed to them on the Inkermann heights. I surveyed the whole contest from different points for about four hours. During the whole of that time the Malakoff only fired five guns, the Mamelon only three. The other batteries fired more or less, according as the shots directed against them told well or ill; excepting always the Flagstaff, which was hard pressed and seemed earnest in its defence. The French batteries engaged this latter so closely that at least 25 per cent of their shots was not returned. At this point our allies have a most decided superiority; so much so, that unless the enemy can repair their own, or in a sortie destroy the French works, the entire destruction of the Flagstaff Battery is now certain. Here, and where the French batteries at Inkermann were getting much the worst of it, the firing was hottest. At the centre, the part of the lines held by them, it was rather slack on both sides, the Redan only now and then sending forth an awful volley in reply to our slow, steady, continuous fire. This portion of the day, as I have said, was bright and clear. Every part of Sebastopol, even to the north side, could be most distinctly seen even with the naked eye. The works round the Malakoff were full of soldiers, who almost treated our fire with perfect contempt, lounging about in the embrasures, and scarcely moving when the shells dropped amongst them. Some of these fellows paid for their temerity with their lives, and the enemy then generally retaliated with one gun. Some of the houses in the town, which have hitherto escaped without damage, to-day showed distinct traces of where stray shells had fallen. Soldiers were in the streets apparently unconcerned; and a small steamer plied to and fro across the harbor. On the north side of the harbor, especially on the heights facing Inkermann, there were several new and powerful batteries, which fired heavy volleys every quarter of an hour or so. Their range, however, was too long, and their shot, though they reached our batteries, effected nothing. The enemy, between five and six o'clock this evening, again entertained us with tremendous volleys from all parts of their defences. It is done, I presume, as a bravado, and as a gentle hint that their works are by no means in that state of delapidation when a general assault on them would be either sure or safe.

April 12.—During the whole of last night the fire of our mortars was incessant, and this morning the long guns recommenced with renewed energy; but, in spite of our bombardment, the enemy had evidently been again busy during the night, and part of the Flagstaff and nearly all the Mamelon embrasures were repaired. In the former, apparently no new guns had been mounted, but in the latter were two. The fire to-day has been much the same as during yesterday—viz., a well-sustained cannonade from the allies throughout, and the enemy replying very slackly, except from the Flagstaff and Redan. Occasionally, as since we first opened, nearly all their works gave forth tremendous volleys, almost simultaneously; but their spirits though terrific, never lasted above half an hour, after which two-thirds of their lines relapsed into comparative silence. One of our batteries on the slopes at Inkermann, mounting eight sixty-eight-pounders, and which has hitherto been masked, was opened this morning on the flank of the Malakoff. But the position of this work has been most unfortunately chosen. As it commenced its fire it was discovered, not only that the Malakoff could and would reply but that two other of the enemy's works bore full upon the spot. The result was, that it had to maintain a most unequal contest, and before twelve in the day three of its guns were so injured as to be unserviceable, and the rest of the work seriously damaged and the men exposed. Accordingly, the artillerymen were withdrawn, and the battery remained silent. Still, before this step was taken its fire had wrought considerable mischief in the Malakoff, shattering the chevaux-de-frise and abatis, and almost destroying one part of the parapet. During the rest of the day the fighting was principally between the Flagstaff and French Batteries, and the Redan and our right and left attacks. The Flagstaff each hour seemed to suffer more and more under the incessant cannonade of the French, and towards evening its fire was most considerably slackened. Its fire is certainly not now more than one-half of that which it maintained on the morning of the 9th. Owing to the much greater distance of the Redan from our works it has sustained less damage, but still our heavy guns are evidently telling upon it. The other Russian batteries took little part in the contest. Our own mortars have been active all day, and in spite of last night's repairs the Mame-