

often slew some one further back. The Malakoff presented to our 21-gun battery a frontage of two hundred yards, but it was four hundred yards deep from south to north, and thus few of our shells failed to burst somewhere inside the work.

Moreover, it never occurred to our enemy any more than it did to us that all our labor and losses were to be incurred for an immediate result, and thus besides the nightly losses incurred in repairing the daily damage, troops were necessarily kept close at hand to repel the expected assault, and in spite of strenuous efforts to shelter them by bomb-proof cover, the Russian losses were terrible. The French had about fifteen hundred, and the English under three hundred casualties, but our foes lost over six thousand men in those ten days of fire. Those Russians who were killed outright were buried near where they fell, and these, by the end of the war, amounted to over fifty thousand.

I have shown that neither at Balaklava nor at Inkerman was the courage of the Russian soldiers sufficiently aggressive to reap victories within their grasp, but their enduring patience under fire has never been surpassed, if indeed ever equalled.

By the 18th April, the allies had beaten down the fire of the opposing batteries, and Todleben has recorded he momentarily expected the works opposite to the French would be successfully assaulted. Then it was we were told the French had run out of ammunition, and on the 19th April we practically ceased to bombard the works, for reasons now known to be connected with the proposed visit of the French emperor to the Crimea.

On the 20th April, we agreed to forget our work for a time, and organized a large picnic, spending the day at St. George's Monastery, which is beautifully situated on the sea cliffs near Balaklava, with gardens going down to the beach. There, with a cricket match and other games, we enjoyed our peaceful amusements, and to a greater degree from the contrasts of the scenes of the previous ten days.

On the 25th April, our battery had a fortunate escape, for the Russians managed to drop a 13-inch mortar shell right through the roof of a magazine. It broke the magazine man's neck, but did not explode. Although the regular bombardment had ceased, there was at this time always sufficient fire of some sort to prevent perfect repose, and the following day Captain Peel had a narrow escape. I was following close behind him through the covered way to the advance trenches, when a bullet passed between his legs, and cut a groove in my left gaiter, but such incidents were so common that I should not have recorded it had I not been so anxious for his safety.

During this week I saw one evening, an hour before sunset, a curious scene. A Zouave, so drunk that he could not walk straight, left the French advanced trenches under the Mamelon, and passing near the Russian rifle pits, reeled along till he reached where the French lines joined our advanced works. With his rifle on his shoulder he staggered about, singing at the top of his voice the "Marseillaise." No one fired, and we watched him till, re-entering the French trenches, he was made a prisoner by soldiers of his own nation.

Next month the Russians showed a like generous consideration. A man was lying wounded on the right of the 2nd parallel, left attack, and a comrade who went out to carry him in was at once knocked down. The Russians were shooting well, and our men might have

bled to death, but that the enemy holding the Quarries hoisted a white flag, to show the men might be removed, and this was done without further loss.

Although our hopes of an immediate assault had been checked on the 19th, yet they were revived a week later. There was a growing feeling that with a parallel opened by the French within one hundred yards of the Flagstaff Battery, and the greatly reduced strength of the Russian batteries, we ought to put an end to the struggle; and on the 23rd General Canrobert proposed to Lord Raglan an assault for the 28th or 29th to which he agreed, although our storming parties would have to cross over half a mile of open ground from the advanced trench to reach the Redan. On the 25th, however, Canrobert informed Lord Raglan that he and his generals had come to the conclusion it was "desirable to postpone the offensive operations against Sevastopol," the assigned reason being that the reserve French army then forming at Constantinople would not be ready till the 10th of May. The space at my disposal does not admit of my attempting to explain the causes of the vacillating orders issued at the time, but both armies were certainly, if not discontented, amazed, when an expedition which started on the 3rd of May to Kerich to destroy stores, was recalled three days later on the receipt of a telegram from Paris.

During the second week in May the Sardinian contingent of fifteen thousand men, under General Della Marmora, landed at Balaklava, to act under Lord Raglan's directions, and a week later occupied the left bank of the Tchernaya from the aqueduct opposite to Tchorgoum to the Tractir Bridge, which the French had held for some weeks. The little army of Sardinia, in their bright uniforms, perfect equipment, and generally well-organized system, formed a strange contrast to the British troops. The best feeling towards the British troops was evident in all ranks from their first arrival, and this increased as our acquaintance ripened.

On the 16th May Canrobert resigned the command, resuming the charge of a division, and recommending Pélissier as his successor. This was approved and carried out on the 19th May. His successor inspired great confidence amongst the British troops. Canrobert was very pleasant, and invariably complimentary to our army, but the rank and file, following the opinion of their officers, believed we should get more effective aid from the short, stout Norman, who, in manner and bearing, greatly resembled one of our rough North countrymen, though, in fact, he had a cultivated intellect. He had none of his predecessor's personal advantages, who was a handsome, well-preserved man, and who looked well on horseback; while, either because he was a poor rider, or that his corpulent body made riding beyond a foot's pace inconvenient, General Pélissier generally went about in a carriage, in spite of the absence of roads. Notwithstanding an unwieldy body, and his threescore years, his active mind and iron resolution put fresh vigor into the siege operations, and the successful though costly attacks on the Cemetery near the Quarantine harbor, which was taken on the night of the 23rd May, with a loss of twenty-three hundred men, showed the French army it had a chief who would shrink from no sacrifice in order to attain a mastery over our enemy.

On the 20th there was a tragedy in the Middle Ravine on our right. A French non-commissioned officer having some grievance against an officer

waited for him until, on being relieved, he was returning at the head of his company from the trenches. There the soldier rushed at his captain, and striking him with a knife the officer fell dead. We were all impressed with the promptitude of our allies' justice, for the man was seized, and shot almost immediately.

During the second week in May, cholera reappeared in the army, and the Naval Brigade moved its camp from the sheltered ravine in which we had lived since November, to the top of the hill near the 3rd Division. We did not, however, escape entirely, and in passing a divisional hospital on the 21st, I counted twenty-one bodies sewn up in their blankets ready for the burial parties.

I have stated that concurrent with the appointment of a general to command in the trenches there was more harmonious work, but we had still something to learn, for on the 23rd May, a working party employed in throwing up an advance battery on the left attack, having finished their task early, was withdrawn by the field officer, who left no one to guard the work, and the Russians entering it carried off unmolested a number of gabions.

It is curious how unprepared we were for siege operations even at the end of eight months' experience. During the night of the 20th May, the Engineer officers wished to light up the glacis of the Redan on which they could hear a number of the enemy at work, and they applied to the general officer in command of the trenches to give the order. It transpired, however, the Royal Artillery had but two light balls in the batteries, and the general decided they must be kept for use in the event of the Russians making a sortie.

A fortnight later, June 3rd, we find in the official record: "Left attack—The Artillery fired carcasses at the town in the early part of the night but the greater part of them burst almost immediately after leaving the piece, and I did not observe any effect from them." The left attack was more fortunate than the right attack, for our official report runs: "Almost every one burst at the muzzle, causing great consternation, and injury to the troops in the advanced trenches."

I see by my journal I looked at some of these missiles next day, and observed they were made in the last century! This was unsatisfactory after eight months of a siege which cost England over half a million sterling a week.

During the forenoon of the 3rd June, several of the relief for the gun detachments were passing into the battery from the Woronzow Road. There was but little firing at the time, and the men, disregarding the orders which prescribed that they should enter by the covered way, came up straight across the open. Just as the last of the party approached the 21-gun battery, there was a shout of "Look out, Whistling Dick!" This induced all the men to hurry, for the appalling size of Whistling Dick struck terror even in the firmest heart. Although a bullet no thicker than a French bean is as capable of killing a man as is the largest shell in the world, yet most of us are so constituted as to fear the heavier missile to a degree entirely out of proportion to its relative destructive power.

All of the party except John Blewitt, ordinary seaman of her Majesty's ship Queen, safely reached the trench, and were crouching in it awaiting the explosion. Blewitt, as he bent forward to start running, was struck by the enormous mass of iron, thirteen inches in diameter immediately at the back of the knees, and fell to the ground crushed under its weight in sight of his horror-stricken messmates. He called out to his chum