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DIARY OF THE SIEGE.

(From the London Times' Correspondent.)

CAMP BEFORE SEBASTOPOL, September 24.—If there is any intention on the part of the commanders-in-chief to make any use of the short autumnal, or second summer, or whatever else the few weeks of fine weather which precede the Crimean winter may be called, it is so close a secret that its execution will cause lively dissatisfaction and great discomfort, especially among the "butters" and "the great butting interest." Men have made up their minds not only to rest, but to peace, and a real bon mot of the Duke of Newcastle, to the effect that there will be peace before Christmas, is in every one's mouth. There are rumors in camp further that there is a short and simple letter from headquarters in Downing street, via electric telegraph, to spare the docks of Sebastopol, and to leave the public buildings untouched. The cannon ball and shell have flown faster than the lightning, and these stately objects of solicitude are all in ruins—7 p.m. The old sounds of the siege are renewed. There is a gun every minute from the north side or from the south, and fair promise that the duel will last for months to come at the present rate of exchange. Judging from other sounds in the camp, it does not seem as if the discipline of the army is improved by the cessation of trench duties, or by the addition of 6d a-day to the soldiers' pay. The sutlers will, I fear, absorb a good deal of this new "boon" to the army. It is a fine, clear, moonlight night, and the air would be silent enough were it not for the monotonous drumming of the guns and their rolling echoes along the ravines, and the more varied and discordant sounds issuing from sundry guard tents, which convey the expression of very passionate sentiments, mingled with snatches of Bacchanalian pathos, melancholy remonstrance, or tender affection, from numerous incarcerated privates, and the provosts and their staff have a busy time of it. Indeed, the drunkenness of Scutari, Bulgaria, of Varna, or of Gallipoli will be emulated if the men have so much time and money to dispose of. The evil will cure itself, and the colonels have the power of stopping the 6d for seven days after the commission of an act of drunkenness, in addition to the usual military punishments for such offences. The canteens should be put under more stringent regulations. There are no such scenes of rioting and confusion at the French canteens as may be seen at our own, and no one will say that the discipline of the French is as strict as that of the English army—7 30: The Russian telegraphic lights are very active on the heights over Inkermann, and have never ceased flitting in and out all over the dark ridge between us and the Belbek for the last three hours.

September 25.—There is no change in the position of the army. The fleet which sailed round towards Balaklava on Friday turned back and passed by Sebastopol, and thence proceeded to Eupatoria on Saturday, returned to Kamiesch on Sunday with immense consumption of coal and production of black smoke, and with utter want of success as far as regards the supposed object of their curious manoeuvres, which was to draw the enemy off from their present position to meet some imaginary demonstration in their rear. Yesterday, Sir Edmund Lyons and Admiral Stuart, together with several post-captains, attended at headquarters, and it is understood that they, in common with the whole fleet, are most anxious "to do something" ere the season is too far advanced for naval operations. At Eupatoria, they found no less than 31,000 Turkish infantry in a fine state of discipline, and in perfect readiness, as far as the *physique* and *personnel* of the troops are concerned, for any military service. These soldiers were all reviewed and inspected on the occasion, and officers of rank, English and French, were alike gratified by the disciplined alertness and efficiency of these neglected and almost useless infantry. It is difficult to imagine that these Turks could not aid us materially in driving the enemy from Sebastopol if they were strengthened by an English division and two French divisions, which could well be spared from this army at present, aided by all our cavalry, which are now in very excellent condition, and are, nevertheless, of no earthly service at Kadekoi or Baidar. Between French, English, and Sardinians, we could send a force of at least 5,500 sabres to the north side of the Alma, which certainly would have nothing to fear from any Russian cavalry in the Crimea. Colonel M'Murdo has got more than 10,000 horses and mules for the service of the Land Transport Corps, and it would be very strange indeed if he could not spare enough of them to supply and carry food for an expeditionary column during a week or ten days, and even if he was not able to aid the French "intendance" in the field, should they require our assistance. The allied fleet could embark and land the whole force in 48 hours, or at all events in 60 hours, at any point between Balaklava or Ka-

miesch and Eupatoria. All our gallant sailors, from the admirals downwards, feel acutely the difficulties and ingloriousness of the position in which they have been placed. They had hoped, indeed, to co-operate with the land forces in the fortunate attack upon Sebastopol on the 8th September; but the violent wind and high sea which sprang up early on the morning of that day forbade them to raise an anchor; nor could such a large fleet have been set in motion in the bad weather that prevailed, and directed against the narrow entrance of Sebastopol, without the certainty of collision and the risk of fatal confusion.—Orders were given the night before to have steam up early and to give the crews dinner at eleven o'clock, and it was fondly hoped the men would have been engaged soon after noon. They were destined, however, to be again spectators, "auditores tantum," of the struggle. In the recent short cruise to and from Eupatoria the fleet could not discern any traces of the Russians north of the Alma. They could not make out a convoy, or even a single tent, all along the coast and the adjacent country, which can be swept by the telescope for several miles inland. It would seem, indeed, as if the Russians did not use the Perekop road to any great extent, or that their convoys made a detour towards the east in order to avoid any flying column from Eupatoria. Possibly they send most of their supplies down by the Tchongar-road, and there is every reason to believe that the Russians have established another route between Perekop and Tchongar for the purpose of advance or retreat. I have heard that some time back Captain Sherard Osborne with one man in a punt passed up the Straits of Genitcei, and pushed along through the rushes in the pestiferous salt marshes up to Tchongar bridge, which he observed minutely, and that he saw enough to satisfy him that an immense proportion of the Russian supplies were carried into the Crimea by that route. Perekop is quite safe from the sea side. The Spitfire was not able to get very near to the land, but, to make assurance doubly sure, the enemy take the road south between the Staroe and Crasnoe lakes, instead of going between the sea coast and Staroe. The route becomes, however, matter of indifference if we are not to make any offensive movement; and, although some people bug the hope that the Czar will not be able to feed his army during the winter, the quantity of stores piled up on the north side is, to my mind, a guarantee for their disappointment. There is no sign of any present intention on the part of the enemy to abandon their position on the north side. The celerity with which they throw up and finish the most formidable-looking redoubts on the land and sea sides is astonishing. They are admirable diggers, and Marshal Turenne, I believe it was, who was wont to say that as many battles were won by the spade as by the musket. The fire across the roads increases in frequency and severity every day, and we have to record the loss of two men in the Buffs and a few trifling casualties from the enemy's guns, but the mortars of the French must have caused serious injury and impediment to the Russian workmen, and have greatly damaged their magazines. The Anglo-French commission sits daily, and is busy apportioning the spoils of war found in the town. The number of guns of all kinds captured exceeds 4,000; immense quantities of small arms have been carried off by the soldiers and sold, but there are still piles of them remaining. As the Russians lost 18,000 men between the morning of the 5th and the evening of the 8th of Sept., it is likely that we captured at least 18,000 stand of arms, not to mention the muskets in store, &c., which belonged to men rendered "hors de combat" during the preceding part of the siege. Are we to invest the north side or not? If so, when do we begin? We may stay in our present position till the crack of doom and the Russians will remain in theirs, and the war may thus go on for half a century. The great road from Kadekoi to the camp gets on but slowly, but a really great work is in the course of execution in cutting a kind of canal for the waters of the streamlet which runs through the flat, marshy land close by the railway between Kadekoi and the top of the harbor. This work will materially tend to the strength and efficiency of the railway in winter, and will carry off the surface water which turned the whole of this marsh into a lake in winter. The Sardinians are at work on the railway from the Woronzoff Road to the main line at Kadekoi; but our engineers declare that they take such pains in elaborating, polishing, and finishing off trenches and cuttings as to lose valuable time. The French have not yet done anything towards the execution of the line laid down by Mr. Campbell from the Col de Balaklava to Kamiesch.

The writer goes on to complain that but little has been done towards preparing for the coming winter. "Not one twentieth of the men are huddled"—he says provisions are scarce; and unless the authorities exert themselves, the army will suffer as much

this season as it did last. As yet the health of the troops is good; he says:—

"The soldiers are exceedingly healthy, and we have escaped, thank God, the diseases of the Crimean September in a wonderful manner. In order to prevent ennui or listlessness after the great excitement of so many months in the trenches, the generals of division are taking pains to drill our veterans, and to renew the pleasures, long-forgotten, of parades, field-days, and inspections. In all the open ground about the camp, the visitors may see men with Crimean medals and Balaklava and Inkermann clasps, practising goose step or going through extension movements, learning, in fact, the A B C of their military education, though they have seen a good deal of fighting and soldiering. Still there must be periods when the most inveterate of martinet get tired, and now the soldier, having nothing else to do, avail himself of the time and the money to indulge in the delights of the canteens. Brigade and divisional field-days fill up the week with parades and regimental inspections. Road-making occupies some leisure hours, but the officers have very little to do, and it is difficult to kill time, riding about Sebastopol, visiting Balaklava, foraging at Kamiesch, or hunting about for quail, which are occasionally, after the north wind has blown, found in swarms all over the steppe, and form most grateful additions to the mess table. There is no excitement in front; the Russians are immovable in their position at Mackenzie's Farm. The principal streets of Sebastopol have lost the charm of novelty and possession. Even Cathcart's Hill is deserted, except by the 'look-out officer' for the day, or by a few wandering strangers and visitors. I regret to add that every day adds to the list of those who have died of their wounds.—Lieutenant-Colonel Gough, of the 33rd, a gallant soldier, who was wounded at the Alma through the chest, and who came out here in bad health, has expired of the severe wounds he received on the 8th; and Lieutenant Kerr, of the 30th, has also succumbed. The funeral processions, the strains of the 'Dead March,' remind us that war has not ceased, and that it is not long since we were engaged in a terrible struggle with an unflinching and desperate enemy. Many of the wounded are, I grieve to say, in a very precarious way, but as there are most extraordinary cases, where the surgeons utterly despaired, still going on favorably, let no one banish hope who has a friend or relative to care for. Sometimes, but rarely, a slight wound turns out fatal, and the most dangerous wounds heal, and the most extensive injuries are not always deadly. It is certain that Lieutenant-General Markham is going home; his health is much impaired, and he feels no longer equal to the duties of a divisional general. The extreme and unrelenting rapidity with which he hastened from India to the Crimea, laid the seeds of disease and suffering which the anxieties of command out here have developed, and he leaves amid the regrets of the army a stage on which it was expected he would have been no second-rate or inconsiderable actor. It is probable that Major-General Garrett, formerly of the 46th Regiment, will succeed him in the command of the second division, and that Brigadier-General Windham will remain in command of the English portion of Sebastopol.

September 29.—The contrast between the actual proceedings of the allied armies since the 9th of this month and the fevered dreams in which the public at home, as represented by the press, are indulging, is as striking as it is painful. The Russians, so far from flying in discomfort, over boundless wastes, are calmly strengthening their position on the north side. The face of the country bristles with their cannon and their batteries. As I write the roar of their guns is sounding through our camp, and occasionally equals the noise of the old cannonades, which we fondly hoped died into silence for ever. There is no trace of any intention on their part to abandon a position on which they have lavished so much care and labor. They retired from the south side when it became untenable, shaken to pieces by a bombardment which it is impracticable for us to renew. They have now between themselves and us a deep arm of the sea, a river, and the sides of a plateau as steep as a wall. We let them get off at their leisure, and looked on, much as we would have gazed on the mimic representation of such a scene at Astley's, while the Russian battalions filed in endless column over the narrow bridge, emerging in unbroken order out of that frightful sea of raging fire and smoke, which was tossed up into billows of flame by the frequent explosions of great fortresses and magazines. What time our generals woke up and knew what was going on I cannot tell, but it is certain that they did not as a body distress themselves by any violent efforts to get a near view of the enemy's movements early in the morning. It was late in the day when Fort Paul blew up. At about 5.30, as well as I can now recollect, that magnificent work was shaken violently,

heaved upwards, seemed to fly into pieces—the breaking masonry and embrasures emitting sheets of white smoke, lighted up fire—and then collapsed, as it were, into ruins. The mine missed in the first instance; but, so cool were the enemy, so perfectly satisfied of our inaction were they, and so convinced they had awed us by their tremendous energy in destruction, that they sent across a boat with a few men in her, about half-past four o'clock in the evening, who quietly landed and went into the fort, and were seen by several people in the act of entering, in order to prepare for the explosion which followed immediately after they had retired. Spies have, however, informed the authorities in the most positive manner that the Russians were prepared to retreat, and had all in readiness to cover a retrograde movement, in case the fleet succeeded in forcing a passage, and the allies evinced a determination of throwing their whole force against the north side. Their field guns and guns of position were all in readiness, and were strengthened by a very large corps of cavalry, which would hold our infantry in check, and our cavalry could not, of course, get over the water in less than several days, nor could it gain the heights of Mackenzie unless the infantry had previously established themselves there. Everything was foreseen and calculated, and the Russians were in hopes that they might catch us at a disadvantage amid some of their fortified positions in a difficult country, and retrieve their past disasters, or, at all events, make a masterly retreat. But when they saw that all was hesitation, if not confusion, in the army of the allies, they recovered their courage, stared the situation in the face for one moment, and the next were busily employed in making the best of it, and they have now erected such batteries as to shut up the harbor to our present navy, and to render any attempt to cross it as rash as it would be undesirable. Yesterday, they finished a new line of batteries, to-day we 'begin' to make some in reply. The papers which arrived yesterday must be amusing to the authorities, for they have assuredly falsified all those absurd anticipations of further victory, of utter routs, of vigorous pursuit, and of energetic action, in which these mere writers and readers—men who have read 'Thucydides' till they are stupefied, and have muddled their brains poring over histories of wars and lives of Generals, and who have musty traditions about your Cæsars, Alexanders, Bonapartes, and Wellingtons, involving disagreeable inferences and comparisons—have ridiculously and unjustifiably indulged. But could we have moved had our Generals been so minded? Is it the case that as steam has impeded the action of our fleet the Land Transport has stopped the march of our army? I am assured that Colonel M'Murdo will not permit any such assertion to be made, for with certain small help of men the army he professed to be ready to take the field and to carry provisions and ammunition for our available strength of bayonets detached on a short expedition. As to the French, they have certified their mobility by the rapid demonstration of four divisions on Baidar. Then, why did not the English move? There were orders and counter-orders day after day—requisitions on Captain This to know how many mules he had to carry ball cartridge, orders to Captain That to turn out his battery in order to take the field at daybreak next morning; counter-orders in the evening re-countered and retracted at night, till it was hard to say what was to be done; and if the men who gave the commands were in half as confused a state of mind as those who received them, they were indeed in a pitiable plight. Cato with his Plato could not have been at all puzzled like unto them. We did not move, and people say it is because we had no means of transport to carry the Land Transport Corps; but that I don't believe was the reason of our immobility. What that reason was far be it from me to pretend to say. It is quite evident that the expectations of the people at home have not been gratified to the full extent, and that we are not in undisputed possession of Sebastopol, that the Russians are not utterly defeated, and that the campaign will have to be renewed next year by doing what might have been done three weeks ago. How many men will Russia have in the Crimea by the time the country is fit for military operations, should she be determined to hold it, and be able to maintain the war? On the north side there are few houses, but there are very large magazines. First, on the western extremity of the northern shore stands Fort Constantine. The roof is covered in to a great depth with sandbags, and there are large guns mounted on it *en barbette*, but there are a large number of the embrasures empty, and do not show guns. A very heavy parapet with traverses—in fact, a line of batteries—strikes out from the north side of the fort, and crests the seaward face of the cliff, communicating with the Wasp Fort, Star Fort, and the works of the sea defences towards the mouth of the Belbek. Next to Constantine, on the harbor, there is