

INCIDENTS OF THE WAR.

Balaklava, Nov. 15.

With the morning came a bright cold sky, and our men, though ankle deep in mud wherever they went, but they cheered up when they beheld the sun once more. The peaks of the hills and mountain sides are covered still with snow, as rumours of great disasters reached us from Balaklava. I rode into town, after breakfasting in my stable, and made my way there as well as I could. The roads were mere quagmires. Another day's rain would have rendered them impassable, and only fit for swimming or navigation. Dead horses and cattle lay all over the country, and here and there a sad little procession might be seen wending its way slowly towards the hospitable marquees, which had been again pitched, charged with the burden of some inanimate body. The 46th regiment suffered severely, and many of the men, being young and weak, had been obliged to come into hospital. Prudential motives compel me to abstain from mentioning the number of men returned as unfit for duty from this regiment.—The marines on the heights have also been temporarily weakened to some extent by the amount of sickness produced by the inclemency of the weather.

In coming along the ridge by the French lines I observed the whole of the troops were turned out and were moving about and wheeling in column to keep their blood warm. They had just been mustered, and it was gratifying to learn that the rumours which had been circulated respecting lost men were greatly exaggerated. Our men were also busily engaged in the labors of the camp—trenching, clearing away mud and preparing for duty. On every hillside parties of men were out discharging their fire-arms. About 5 out of twelve went off at the first pull of the trigger after fresh caps were put on. As our arms are better made by far than those of the Russians, it is probable that not near so many of theirs would have been effective in case of an attack, and when it comes to the bayonet the British soldier is peerless. A few days fine weather will restore the roads to their ordinary state of compromise—and it is to be hoped that the authorities will avail themselves of it to get up an accumulation of stores, food, and torage sufficient to meet emergencies like that which has just occurred.—The Russians in the valley were very active, and judging from the state of the ground and the number of loose horses, they must have been very miserable also.

The Russian huts on the mounds seemed much shaken by the storm. Their infantry were moving up and down on the hillside along the Komara-road, and numbers of them were in the village itself, to which no doubt they had fled for shelter. In reply to a question to one of the persons I met, I learnt that the Cossacks did not appear at all cold, but that the officers who came out from the lines looked anything but comfortable. The few tents they had were blown down, and it is not impossible they were in mortal fear lest we should attack them from the hills that night.

Passing by the heavy cavalry camp, I saw the officers and men wading through the mud from tent to tent, like cranes in a marsh. It would have been a strange sight for their friends. The draughts of the regiments which I met on their way out join looked with a curious air of disgust and horror at "this charming paradise of the Crimea," but they were stout young fellows, and would soon get accustomed to all the combinations of earth and water which it is possible for natural chymistry to effect.

Turning down by Captain Powell's battery, where the sailors were busy getting their arms in order, I worked down, through ammunition mules and straggling artillery waggons towards the town. Balaklava lay below us—its waters thronged with shipping—not a ruffle on their surface. It was almost impossible to believe that but 12 hours before ships were dragging their anchors, drifting, running aground, and smashing each other to pieces in that placid loch. The whitewashed houses in the distance were as clean-looking as ever, and the old ruined fortress on the crags above still frowned upon the sea, and reared its walls and towers aloft, uninjured by the storm.

On approaching the town, however, the signs of the tempest of yesterday grew on one, and increased at every step. At the narrow neck of the harbour two or three large boats were lying, driven inland several yards from the water; the shores were lined with trusses of compressed hay which had floated out of the wrecks outside the harbour, and pieces of timber, large beams of wood, masts and spars of all sizes formed large natural rafts, which lay stranded by the beach or floated about among the shipping. The old tree which stood at the guard house at the entrance to the town was torn up, and in its fall it had crushed the house so as to make it a mass of ruins. The soldiers of the guard were doing their best to make themselves comfortable within the walls.

The fall of this tree, which had seen many winters, coupled with the fact that the verandahs and balconies of the houses and a row of very fine trees on the beach were blown down corroborates the statement so generally made by the inhabitants that they had never seen or heard of such a hurricane in their lifetime, al-

though there is a tradition among some of them that once in 30 or 40 years such visitations occur along this coast. In its present condition Balaklava is utterly indescribable. If the main sewers of London were uncovered and their houses placed on the brink, the hardy men who walked down the streets thus formed would be able to realise the condition of the thoroughfares in this delightful spot. The narrow main street is a channel of mud, through which horses, waggons, camels, mules, soldiers and sailors, and men of all nations—English, French, Turks, Arabs, Egyptians, Italians, Maltese, Tartars, Greeks, Bulgarians, and Spaniards—scramble and plunge, and squatter along; while "strange oaths" yells, and unearthly cries of warning or expostulation fill the air, combined with the noise of the busy crowds around the sutlers, stores, and with the clamorous invitations of the vendors to their customers. Many of the houses are unroofed, several have been destroyed altogether, and it is quite impossible to find quarters in the place, the preference being given apparently to sutlers and storekeepers, who swarm on shore from every ship, and who are generally Levantines, with the most enlarged notions of the theory and practice of buying in the cheapest and selling in the dearest market. Some few of the widows of the soldiers who fell at the Alma have been sent away from this place by the Commandant, and, if report speaks truly, their lives were not very reputable lately nor are they entitled to public compassion and assistance.

This afternoon there was a considerable movement of Russian troops towards our right along the valley of the Tcherhaya, and General Esteourt, who was in Balaklava, ordered all the soldiers in the town to return at once to the camp. The Highland brigade and Marines were turned out, and the Guards and Second and Light Divisions got under arms, eager for an encounter with the Russians in honest daylight but there was no attack made on the positions. The Russians seemed to be marching off towards Maskenzie's farm.

English Camp, Nov. 21.

Last night we had a smart little skirmishing affair, in which some of the enemy's riflemen were driven into Sebastopol with loss.—For some days past between 300 and 400 sharpshooters have been posted under cover of the loose stones which lie about the ground between our Green-mound Battery and the Reopen wall. Though the battery was some 300 yards distant, such a watchful eye was kept upon it, that hardly a man could show but at the risk of getting a bullet through his brains. As we now seldom fire from our trenches, it was not of great consequence, but from the way in which the enemy reinforced the riflemen toward night-fall, an attack upon the Green-mound Battery was anticipated. Accordingly, last night it was determined to dislodge these skirmishers, and two parties from the 1st brigade of Rifles and 68th Regiment, making together a little over 400 men, were told off for this purpose. They remained in the Green-mound Battery till after 1 o'clock, when all being quiet, and the night sufficiently dark and rainy, the party started, cautiously creeping along among the broken ground and loose stones, intending to take the enemy by surprise. The wind and rain, both of which now every night are extremely violent favoured our design, so that we were enabled to approach the enemy's hiding-place within 50 yards without being discovered. At that distance, unfortunately, one of our fellows made a slight stumble. The noise was slight, but it was sufficient. Instantly eight or ten Russian sentries started up, almost among our men, and firing their pieces to alarm, ran in. Of course concealment was now useless, and the attacking party, with a loud cheer, dashed after the sentries. As they came up to the place where the enemy were posted among the stones, they received a tremendous volley from about 50 rifles. Had the shots been properly aimed not a man of ours would have returned, but the "surprise" had been effectual, and 90 per cent. of the balls whistled over the heads of our men harmless. With a loud cheer the 68th and Rifles dashed in with the bayonet. In charging the enemy our officers in command showed consummate tact. Had they returned the Russian fire while their enemies still remained under cover, they would have disarmed themselves, pointed out their own position, and done no injury to the enemy. As it was, fortunately, they cheered and rushed on with the bayonet. The enemy were dismayed and rising from their concealment tried to form. The instant they showed, our men halted, and within 20 yards, poured in a deadly volley, which killed and wounded nearly 100 of the enemy. The Russians saw their fault, and attempted to break up in skirmishing order, but the manoeuvre was too late and before they could effect it our men were among them with the bayonet, and pursued the Russians up to the very houses which are round the dockyard on the north of the harbour.

In this affair we lost an officer (of the Rifles) and 10 men killed, with about 30 wounded. The Russians lost about 140 killed and wounded. The officer lost on our side was Captain Tryon, of the 1st battalion. He was much liked in his regiment, and had the reputation of being one of the most deadly rifle shots in the British army. It is said that no less than seven of the enemy were shot dead through the skirmish by

Captain Tryon. He was speaking to a brother officer, pointing out a Russian rifleman, who was firing with extreme rapidity, and Captain Tryon knelt to take aim at him. While in the very act of pulling the trigger, a bullet passed through his brain, and killed him on the spot.

It was found when our fellows closed with the enemy that the latter were nearly 800 strong. Yet, though the ground was formidably strong, they never once attempted to rally before our charge. They were completely taken by surprise, and even had it not been so, when there is no great disparity of numbers, the Russians have no change against us.

November 22.

Still nothing doing at the camp—nothing but all day trying to keep oneself dry. The weather is miserable to the last degree. The cold is bitter, the wind and rain incessant. The whole camp ground is a mere marsh. Our formidable expedition had been deferred till too late in the season, and now our poor soldiers must pay the penalty for a fault not their own. The enemy still hang about the heights to the north of Inkermann, and occasionally make such dispositions as induce our commanders to turn out the camp under arms. But these harassing alarms always end in smoke, as the Russians never advance. From a variety of sources it is well known now that they do not intend another attack, but will remain a kind of army of observation to take advantage of any circumstances that the varying fortunes of war may throw in their way. Nearly 300 of those killed at Inkermann remain still unburied at the bottom of the valley near Tchernaya, with about 100 horses. The horrid stench from this place is enough to breed a fever. Flocks of vultures hover over the spot and gorge themselves upon the human and animal remains all day.

Fatigue parties were twice sent out to bury these corpses, but were fired upon by the Russians. Intimation of this was sent by Lord Raglan stating that the parties employed in interring the dead carried a black flag, and were fired on by many of his troops, and Lord Raglan would only state from what portions of his line the shots came, he, Prince Menchikoff sent an answer to the letter of the allied commanders, in which the latter pointed out how our wounded was butchered and demanded if Prince Menchikoff sanctioned such a mode of warfare?—The Prince replied that it required the utmost rancour of hostilities to justify Generals Canrobert and Raglan in putting such a question to him, and he coincided and sympathised with the abhorrence which the allied Commanders expressed at such barbarity. It was a barbarity however, of which he could not believe the Russian soldiers had been guilty, unless the most convincing proofs were furnished. When the fact was proved, any individual who had committed such cruelty pointed out, he would show by the severest punishment in his power to inflict, that such conduct was opposed both to his own feelings, and his instructions to the Russian soldiers.

Of course no one ever thought that Prince Menchikoff issued such orders to his soldiers but, for all that, the facts which the allied commanders alleged remain unaltered, and that the Russians do bayonet all the wounded who fall into their hands cannot be denied. There are thousands of English and French out here who have seen such butchery perpetrated at Alma, Balaklava, the Inkermann; and Prince Menchikoff may rely upon it that at the next battle the Russians will find no quarter at our hands. I am sorry to say this, yet I am certain that it will be the case, as our men are quite infuriated and bent on doing to the Russians as they know they have done, and will do again, to them, if they ever get another chance. At Balaklava a corps d'armee, about 18,000 strong, still remains in front of our batteries on the plains. Their long neighborhood to have recoiled them to us, as the outposts and picquets now never fire at each other; though so close that they might easily converse. A great part of the village on the hills to the south of Balaklava has been taken down by them and the timber used in constructing the roofs of mud houses for winter quarters. These hovels are being erected on the same site as their present camp, so it is evident they intend to remain *vis a vis* for the winter, deserters who came over say that this force is on quarter rations, but are waiting on, from day to day to be reinforced by Duenburg's corps. Should it come up in a few days, it is said they will chance some attack on our rear before retiring to their quarters for the winter; but the arrival of General Dannenberg's corps is now extremely improbable owing to the severity of the weather.—Correspondent Morning Herald.

Sebastopol, December, 3.

We have had rain, perpetual heavy rain, ever since the date of my last letter. Nothing enlivens our dulness but an occasional sortie of the enemy, and in the intervals we have to endure, as we best can, the severities of the weather. Occasionally we get a few hours dry weather, about once a week; but for the remaining six days and three-quarters the air is close and "muggy," the wind in gales, and the rain in torrents.

If the weather keeps on as it is at present, and we get no supplies of mules and horses, the whole camp will be on half rations, and brigades must be employed even to carry up these.—

When troops in winter quarters have double work and half food, it requires no prophet to say what will become of them; and the position of the allies will be really hazardous in the extreme, unless we receive immediate reinforcements. We want large and quick supplies of everything which an army can want, and cannot do without men, horses, ammunition, warm clothing, carts, &c. Don't for a moment let your readers imagine that I am purposely drawing a disheartening picture. I have always striven to avoid such a charge; but now the truth must be told. It is better that the people should learn the true state of the case through the press, then suddenly discover it by some terrible reverse to our arms out here. With the allied generals to command, and a proper amount of troops, we could sweep the Crimea in three months; but while the nation and governments at home are besotted and drunk with the vain notion that we have only to show ourselves in order to overcome immense forts and armies we shall do nothing—not even hold our own. Depend upon it, the English people never made a greater mistake than in undervaluing the enmity of the Russians. That the Russian soldiers will ever compete with ours, either in courage or discipline, is ridiculous to suppose; but still they do possess both courage and discipline in a high degree. Their numbers are formidable, and made even more so by being treated lightly. No one doubts but that we shall capture Sebastopol and conquer the Crimea but at the same time no one that knows anything about it imagines we shall do either without a tremendous struggle, the very episodes of which will be "Alma" and "Inkermann." The English must make up their minds for a determined encounter if they wish it to be a glorious one.

I am extremely sorry to say that, in addition to our other hardships, the cholera is again showing itself with considerable virulence, at present it is almost wholly confined to the naval brigades and the newly arrived drafts and regiments, such as the men for the Guards and light division, the 46th, 97th and 9th regiments. Under these circumstances it is hoped and supposed that the scourge will not extend itself to those troops which have been out here some time, and who may, therefore be regarded as acclimated. But among the troops I have mentioned, it unfortunately prevails to a very considerable extent.

The return of the disease has surprised our medical officers a great deal, for up to the 25th of November not a case had occurred among the English or French for three weeks, though among the Turks it was awfully prevalent. On the 26th we lost 5 or 6 men from the naval brigade, and on the 27th it appeared among the new regiments. On the night of the 29th we lost 49 men, and eight of these cases occurred among the mounted staff corps, which had not been ashore more than 24 hours. Since the 29th we had an average loss of 30 or 35 men per diem. By the Majority of the medical officers it is looked on as a merely temporary outbreak of the disease caused among the newly arrived troops by the total and sudden change in their mode of life, and in this light it ought certainly to be received.

Any way, another month will witness the commencement of cold weather, when we may fairly look forward to be free from this dreadful pest. In the mean time a few sanitary precautions, such as the most ordinary prudence would suggest to any one, would not be out of place.

While the whole surface of our camp ground even among the tents, is strewn with the carcasses of some 400 or 500 horses in every stage of decomposition, we can hardly expect our troops to be free from disease. I have always advocated the necessity for appointing some sanitary officers to each camp, in order that these and other disgusting nuisances might be abated. The duties of such surveillance could be easily discharged, and we should speedily find the importance of the post in the diminution of sickness among our troops. Heaven knows they have to endure enough without being wantonly exposed to necessary and certain dangers. Sooner or later the subject will press itself on the attention of the authorities out here.

On the night of the 29th, when it was dark and stormy—blowing a gale, with heavy rain—the dulness of the time was considerably enlivened by a desperate sortie against the French trenches. The object of this attack was to destroy, if possible, the centre battery of the most advanced parallel. The battery only mounts 10 guns, and being within 120 yards of the Russian Flag-Staff Battery and mud fort, is in a position to do considerable mischief.

For the last week or 10 days, however, it has been seldom fired, and the enemy, doubtless calculated it happened, none were so, and it had merely ceased to fire from the extreme difficulty experienced in getting up supplies of ammunition through the thick mud—a difficulty which increased each day. The picquets in front of the works used to remain each night within ten yards of the Russian picquets thrown out to guard the Flag-staff Battery. A little before midnight of the 29th, the French picquet who have lately had considerable experience in these sorties, had an unusual amount of noise and bustle going on in the flag-staff Battery.—A little before midnight on the 29th, the French picquet, who have lately had considerable experience in these sorties, heard an unusual