

## Incidents of the War.

## THE STORMING OF SEBASTOPOL.

## EVACUATION OF THE TOWN.

Sunday, Sept. 9.—At eight o'clock last night the Russians began to withdraw quietly from the town, in the principal houses of which they had previously stored up combustibles in order to render Sebastopol a second Moscow. With great art the general kept up a fire of musketry from his advanced posts, as though he intended to renew the attempts to regain the Malakoff. Ere two o'clock this morning the fleet had been scuttled and sunk, with the exception of the steamers. About half-past twelve the men of the second division in the trenches observed a preternatural silence in the Redan, and some volunteers crept up into it. Nothing could they hear but the heavy breathing and groans of the wounded and dying, who, with the dead, were the sole occupants of the place. As the Redan was known to be mined, the men were withdrawn, and soon afterwards the Russian tactics began to envelope themselves. About two o'clock flames were observed to break out in different parts of the town. They spread gradually all over the principal buildings. At four o'clock a stupendous explosion behind the Redan shook the whole camp; it was followed by other explosions equally startling. The city was enveloped in fire and smoke, and torn asunder with tremendous shocks of these volcanoes. At 5 45 the Flagstaff and Garden batteries blew up. At 5 30 two of the southern forts went up into the air, and the effect of these explosions was immensely increased by a rush of a great number of live shell into the air, which exploded in all directions. All this time a steady current of infantry was passing in unbroken masses to the north side over the bridge, and at 6 45 the last battalions passed over, and the hill sides opposite were alive with their masses. Several small explosions took place inside the town at 7 10. Columns of black smoke began to rise from the neighbourhood of Fort Paul at 7 17. At 7 15 the connection of the floating bridge with the south side was severed. At 7 16 flames began to ascend from Fort Nicholas. At 8 7 the bridge was floated off in portions to the north side. At nine o'clock several violent explosions took place in the works on our left, opposite the French. The town was by this time in a mass of flames, and the pillar of black, grey, and velvety smoke from it seemed to support the very heavens. The French kept up firing guns on the left, probably to keep out stragglers, but ere the Russians left the place the zouaves and sailors were in it, and busily engaged in plundering. Not a shot was fired to the front and centre. The Valdimire and Grossomontez were very busy towing boats and stores across. Cavalry and sentries were sent up to prevent any one going into the town, but without much success. I visited a good portion of the place. Explosions occurred all through the day. The plunder was enormous.

## THE COMMANDER TO THE TROOPS

The following after-order of the day has been issued:—

Head Quarters, Sept. 9.—The commander of the forces congratulates the army on the result of the attack of yesterday. The brilliant assault and occupation of the Malakoff by our gallant allies obliged the enemy to abandon the works they have so long held with such bravery and determination.

"The commander of the forces return his thanks to the general officers and officers and men of the second and light divisions, who advanced and attacked with such gallantry the works of the Redan. He regrets, from the formidable nature of the flanking defences, that their devotion did not meet with that immediate success which it so well merited.

"He condoles and deeply sympathises with the many brave officers, non-commissioned officers, and men who are now suffering from the wounds they received in the course of their noble exertions of yesterday.

"He deeply deplores the death of the many gallant officers and men who have fallen in the final struggle of this long and memorable siege.

"Their loss will be severely felt, and their names long remembered in this army and by the British nation.

"General Simpson avails himself of this opportunity to congratulate and convey his warmest thanks to the general officers, officers and soldiers of the several divisions, to the royal engineers and artillery, for their cheerful endurance of almost unparalleled hardships and sufferings, and for the unflinching courage and determination which they on so many trying occasions have evinced.

"It is with equal satisfaction that the commander of the forces thanks the officers and men of the naval brigade for the long and uniform course of valuable service rendered from the commencement of the siege."

## THE LAST RUSSIAN IN SEBASTOPOL.

It is difficult, as I have had occasion to observe on similar occasions, to give with any pretensions to accuracy the details of a battle, but it becomes almost impossible to attain correctness in describing such an affair as the assault

on the Redan under the peculiar circumstances which attended it. In addition to the smoke of battle, there were flying clouds of dust mingled with sand, which blew right into the faces of the men and swept the hills in their rear, which were crowded with the spectators, or those who tried to be so, and the irregularity of the ground offered other impediments to their view; but greater than all these obstacles was this, that no one could from any conceivable position in front see what was going on inside the Redan, which seemed to engulf our soldiers within its huge dun coloured and ragged parapets, only to vomit them forth again in diminished numbers. It was all along but too plain to understand what was taking place with in from the external aspect of that ill fated work, the slopes of which have astonished the world with the sight of British troops in flight twice in two successive attacks on its formidable defence. The Redan has cost us more lives than the capture of Badajoz, not to speak of those who had fallen in the trenches and approached to it; and, although the enemy had evacuated it, we can scarcely claim the credit of having caused them such loss that they retired owing to their dread of a renewed assault. On the contrary, we must, in fairness, admit that the Russians maintained their grip of the place till the French were fairly established in the Malakoff, and the key of the position was torn from their grasp. They might, indeed, have remained in the place longer than they did, as the French were scarcely in a condition to molest them from the Malakoff with artillery, and could not be permitted to interfere with our attack had they been able to send reinforcements to us, but the Russian general is a man of too much genius and experience as a soldier to loose men in defending an untenable position, and his retreat was effected with masterly skill and with perfect ease in the face of a victorious enemy. Covering his rear by the flames of the burning city and by tremendous explosions, which spoke in tones of portentous warning to those who might have wished to cut off his retreat, he led his battalions in narrow files across a deep arm of the sea, commanded by our guns, and in the face of a most powerful fleet, paraded them in our sight as they crossed, and carried off all his most useful stores and munitions of war. He left us few trophies and many bitter memories. He sank his ships and blew up his forts without molestation, save some paltry efforts to break down the bridge by cannon shot, or to shell the troops as they marched over.

His steamers towed his boats across at their leisure, and when every man was across, and not till then, the Russians began to dislocate and float off the portions of their bridge, and to pull it over to the north side.

Sept. 10.—The town is still burning and in ruins. It is in possession of the French. The following order has been issued on the subject:—Five officers and several men injured by explosions to-day.

## A STORM IN THE CAMP.

Tuesday morning, 1 a.m.—For the last hour an exceedingly violent storm has been raging over the camp. The wind is from the southward and eastward, and blows with such fury as to make the hut in which I am writing rock to and fro, and to fill it with fine dust which flies in through every crevice. The Russians are very busy with their signals over the Tchernaya. The fires in Sebastopol, fanned by the wind, are spreading fast, and the glare of the burning city illuminates the whole arch of the sky towards the north-west.

Two o'clock a.m.—The storm has increased in strength, and rain is beginning to fall heavily. The most dazzling flames of lightning shoot over the plateau and light up the camp for an instant, the peals of thunder are so short and startling as to resemble, while far exceeding in noise, the report of cannon. The rain has somewhat lessened the intensity of the fire at Sebastopol, but its flames and those of the lightning seem at times to contend for the mastery. There is, indeed, a great battle raging in the skies, and its thunder mocks to scorn our heaviest cannonade. This supply of water will be very seasonable to the camp, where that article of consumption has been for a long time scanty and dirty.

4. 15 a.m.—In the whole course of my life I never heard or saw anything like the deluge of rain which is now falling over this portion of the camp. It beats on the roof with a noise like that of a cataract; it is a veritable water spout. The wind is shifting and changing all round the compass. The lightning is fainter and the gusts less violent. Sometimes for a minute there is a profound calm; again it blows a hurricane.

4. 23 a.m.—The water spout has passed away. Had it lasted ten minutes longer it threatened to drown the camp.

9. 45.—There is a tornado passing over the camp once more—hail, storm, and rain. The ground is a mass of mud.

The disappointment of the many persons who wished to spend a quiet snug day in Sebastopol is diminished by the knowledge that there is a positive order against going into the town, and that General Pelissier has declared his sentries will shoot any persons who may be found in the streets in disobedience of that injunction. Passes will be issued from the adjutant-general's department, without which all persons

will be stopped at the entrances to the works. The rain and hail quenched the fire, which the wind and previously fanned to exceeding fierceness, so that there was little left for the flames to devour. Sebastopol is now a mass of white ruins, streaked and barred with black smoke.

## THE ASSAULT ON THE REDAN.

The following report of the assault on the Redan, from the Daily News, will show the fearful uphill difficulties against which our 'raw levies' had to fight:—

Instead of having before them a work whose embrasures had been bunged up and its guns silenced, like the Malakoff, our men had to rush upon a line of battery nearly every piece in which was ready to receive them with grape and cannister. The French, too, started from a line of trench only some forty yards from the point to be attacked, whilst our own troops were compelled to cross an open space of full six times the extent, and that, too, under a direct and flanking fire from nearly a score of guns. It is needless to dilate upon the comparative difficulties of the two attacks; but, whilst awarding to the French a full meed of praise for their gallantry on the occasion, I cannot be betrayed by any mawkish generosity into a concealment of the infinitely greater dangers of that portion of the day's achievements which fell to the lot of the British. On the day following the assault I crossed over the space between our fifth parallel and the Redan, and was then able in some degree to realise the difficulty of making a run over such a distance and such ground under the desolating fire of some twenty 68 pounders loaded with grape and cannister. Let all this be borne in mind before any of your readers jump to the false conclusion that the French displayed a greater heroism than ourselves; for, raw and inexperienced as were many of our troops engaged, with some few exceptions they fought as became the conquerors of the Alma and Inkermann. As soon as the French had made good their footing in the Malakoff a tricolour was run up to announce the triumph, and immediately after a small white flag—the signal appointed for the advance of our own men—was waved from the parapet of the Mamelon. At the first glance of it the order was passed from General Codrington for the stormers to leave cover, and half a minute later Major Welsford and his party, carrying the scaling ladders, bounded over the parapet of the boysau. A volley of grape struck down nearly a third of them, poor Welsford included, but the remainder rushed gallantly on. In the meantime the rifles, under Captain Fyers kept up a vigorous and deadly fire on the embrasures; but the thick mottled mantlets with which these were curtained in a great measure counteracted this, and the grape continued to fly thick and fast over the death space to be crossed. The second body of stormers followed quickly on the heels of those who were already placing the ladders, and being well supported by those behind, were soon inside the Redan. Here a murderous but brief struggle ensued, and before many minutes had elapsed since the first of our men gained the parapet, none of the enemy but the dead and dying remained within it.

The Redan, like the Malakoff, was won.—And here I might have chaunted psalm in honor of our unqualified triumph, too, and not the blundering mismanagement which has so often borne fruit in the sacrifice of our troops once more turned up to deprive us of our full share of the glory of this memorable day. Instead of pouring in supports to the aid of those in possession of the redoubt, General Codrington—I believe I am only justly attributing the blame to him—for some mysterious strategic reasons known only to himself, kept back the troops who crowded the trenches in the rear till the enemy had time to bring up his overpowering reserves and clear the Redan of our men. The latter, bravely, but vainly, attempted to make a stand, anxiously expecting every minute the arrival of supports, but no supports came, and they were swept back into the open to retreat under fresh storms of grape—for by another marvellous piece of neglect no attempt at spiking the guns of the place had been made by those who had gained a footing inside. Orders for the withheld supports were then given, but in harmony with the blunder which had gone before, the intelligent aides-de-camp who had carried the commands, being about as ignorant of the topography of the trenches as of the interior of Sebastopol, stumbled on the wrong regiments, and ordered up the first brigade of the light division, which had been told off as the reserve. Evident, however, as was the blunder, the gallant "fighting 7th," led on by Major Turner, and the 23rd, under Colonel Lysons, advanced to the renewed attack. The other regiments, who should have preceded, followed in a beautiful state of pell-mell; and under a fire of grape and cannister before which the bravest columns of the old guard would have staggered, our young levies—for such were three-fourths of the troops were engaged—were led on to regain the ground which had been lost through mismanagement before. It was not, however, in human nature to make headway under such an iron storm; the men turned, and fled back under cover of the parapet, leaving very many of their own number, and more in proportion of their officers, dead or dying on this field of death. Two

young lieutenants, Wright and Colt, of the 7th were amongst the killed, and three of the same rank of the 22nd. Major Turner received a ball through his scalp—one of the narrowest escapes of the day; whilst Lieutenant Alma Jones, of fighting fame, was knocked over by a fragment of a shell. Colonel Lysons carried away a rifle bullet in his leg, and only three of the remaining officers of these two cracked regiments escaped untouched. From the failure of this second attempt, the attack became one of musketry fire over the parapet, aided by the guns of the Quarry and other batteries which bore upon the Redan. Brigadier Strubenze, commanding the 1st brigade of the light division, tried to induce his chief to storm again, offering to lead the assault with the still eager though shattered remnants of his own command; but Sir William declined repeating the attempt at that time. Thence on till dusk, we waged a futile war of musketry and artillery fire, which was vigorously replied to by the enemy, and night closed upon our men, discouraged and humbled that, through mismanagement on the part of those with whom lay the direction of the assault, they had failed while the French had triumphed. It seemed as if we were again to reap the bitter experience entailed on us by similar causes on the 18th of June, after having lost, in killed and wounded, nearly half the number of men, and much more than that proportion of officers, of the whole force engaged. The Russian apothegm of "an army of lions led on by donkeys," had once more been illustrated; and whilst our allies were jubilant with well-earned success, we were humbled by the consciousness of undeserved defeat.

## BURNING OF THE RUSSIAN FLEET.

Thursday, Sept. 13.—As the Russian steamers were still intact, notwithstanding the efforts of the French battery at the head of the roads near Inkermann to touch them up, it was resolved to construct a battery on the ruins of Fort Paul, within 700 yards of the northern shore, under which they had taken refuge.—The steamers lay in three irregular lines to the eastward of Fort Catherine, where the deep creeks in the high cliffs gave them some sort of shelter against the fire of the French.—There they were agents, of much mischief and injury to the allies since the battle of Inkermann down to this time. There was the famous Vladimar, with her two large funnels and elegant clipper hull; the Elbœuf, the steamer which made the celebrated dash into the Black Sea through all our fleet last year and burned some Turkish vessels near Heraclea, just as the Valdimar was seen in Odessa harbour in the month of July, 1854; there was the Grossomontez, which had caused such annoyance from the dockyard creek; and there were five others with hard, and to me, unknown names, as calmly floating on the waters as though no eager eyes were watching from every battery to lay a gun upon them. A number of very capacious dockyard lumps and row boats were also secured in these creeks or hung on the steamers.

In the course of the afternoon of the 11th (Tuesday), some of the Russian guns in the ruined battery below the Redan were turned on these steamers, and in a few rounds, not more than twelve I think, succeeded in hulling them eight times. The range was, however, rather great, and it became expedient to move a little nearer, in order to afford them the full advantage of our shot and shell.

On Tuesday evening, when Lieutenant Gough of the London, who commanded in the naval batteries on the left attack, came down with his men, he was ordered to take his relief over to the right attack, and to accompany Lieutenant Anderson, R. E., down to the town, in order to erect a battery for two 95 cwt. guns on the right of St. Paul's battery. The site of this battery was about 700 yards from Fort Catherine, on the opposite side. The men although deprived of the quiet night and undisturbed repose they anticipated, set to work with a will, and began throwing up the parapet, filling gabions, and as it was possible that some interruption of the work might take place from the other side, a covering party of 120 men was ordered down from the trenches. There were French sentries in charge of this portion of the place, and the little party found that their allies were on the qui vive, and were keeping a sharp look out on all sides. The men had been working some time when it was observed that one of the enemy's steamers had left the north side, and was slowly and noiselessly dropping down on the very spot where the sailors and the covering party were at their labours. The night was dark, but they could clearly make out the steamer edging down upon them, and coming closer and closer. Every moment they expected her guns to open on them with grape and cannister. The men therefore lay down on their faces, and kept as near to the ground as they could, and the steamer came over gently till she was within 100 yards of the very spot where they had been working. They heard her anchor splash into the water, and then the rattle of her cable as it ran through the hawse-hole. Now, certainly, they were going to catch it, but, no, the Russian opened no port and showed no light, but seemed to be making himself comfortable in his new quarters. Captain Villiers, of the 47th, who commanded all the covering party, ordered his men to observe the