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THE CHATALJA LINES. BULGARIAN POSITION DESCRIBED.

The Chatalja position consists of a line of fortifications extending across the Thracian peninsula from Lake Buyuk Tchekmedche, on the Sea of Marmora, to Lake Derkos, by the Black Sea, at a point about twenty-five miles west of Constantinople. Along a land-front of some fifteen or sixteen miles are disposed a series of redoubts and field-works, thirty in number, which, from their commanding natural situation along a ridge 500 feet high, constitute a formidable defence of the capital. In the rainy season the swamps and marshes which extend almost parallel with the line of forts would render the approaches almost inaccessible. The railway from Adrianople to Constantinople treverses the lines at Chatalja and Baghchetch. The lines themselves were besieged by von Bluhm Pasha in 1877, at the beginning of the Russo-Turkish war, and in 1878 the Russians for a time lay in front of them. In recent years they have been considerably strengthened. It is known that many of the guns in them were taken to Adrianople, but these may have been replaced by heavy guns from the Bosphorus. Imagine two high roof ridges, and between them a stretch of flat roof; on each ridge an angry cat; and there is a vulgar picture of the battle position at Chatalja.

A correspondent of the "Morning Post," lately with the Bulgarian army, last month gave an interesting description of the Chatalja lines. He said:—

THE CHATALJA LINES.

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“I had the good fortune to see the whole extent of the Bulgarian position. Having won permission to join the Third Army, I rushed from Kirk Kilisse through Chorlu to Silviri towards Chatalja. I left Silviri on the morning of November 14, having been informed there that the Third Army was not at Chatalja, but at either Arjenli or Ermenikioi on the left flank. That was all the more reason to push on to Chatalja and see the right bank. An artillery officer gave me a friendly welcome there, and escorted me into the lines. Through a great gorge we passed into the little valley where Chatalja village rests. On our right was the sea of Marmora, stretching a marshy inlet quite close to the village. On this inlet the Bulgarian right flank rested. The position at this point, I could see, was intended purely to be a ‘holding’ one. But I was struck, even so, by the care with which the Bulgarians dug themselves in. Every gun, every limber had its pit or epaulment. All guns were in concealed positions, tucked away behind folds of the giant hills. The infantry trenches were the best I had seen on the campaign, and were masked by plants of of Turkish tobacco. After I had spent a couple of hours examining the Chatalja flank of the Bulgarian position the commandant discovered that my credentials were for the Third Army, on the left flank, and I was passed along the lines to there. As I did not hurry, being anxious to see as much as possible of the Bulgarian dispositions and of the Turkish entrenchments confronting us, night fell before I reached Ermenikioi, and I spent that evening at Arienli, in the centre of the Bulgarian position.

“The next morning a blundering guide allowed me to go to the extreme left flank on the Black Sea before it dawned on him that my proper place was at the Staff Headquarters, two miles nearly behind the lines. On the left flank I was struck again by the care with which the Bulgarians had entrenched.”