

the siege has dwindled to at least one-half; this would give about 15 per cent. of sickness in a month. Cholera and typhus prevail to a great extent, as many officers have fallen a sacrifice to them. From these reports will also be seen how bad the position of the defenders had already become after the capture of the redoubts on the 7th of June, as the former hospitals and temporary places for attending to the wounded were exposed to the hostile fire, and were obliged to be cleared. However, much has been done to direct all the wounded capable of being moved, first to the north side, and then to the valley of the Belbeck, in order to gain room. A new bombardment must greatly increase all former difficulties and disasters."

A letter from St. Petersburg of the 26th ult., in the *Constitutionnel*, says:—Prince Gortschakoff has received full powers to destroy the remains of the Russian fleet in the Bay of Sebastopol, on the day on which the garrison may be forced to retire to the north. It is hoped that before that day shall arrive, all objects belonging to the State and to private persons can be removed to Nicolatoff. This proves that no illusions are entertained as to the fate of the southern part of Sebastopol, that part is indeed already represented in Russian letters to be "only a heap of ruins."

MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF MAJOR M'GOWAN.

Major M'Gowan, of the 93d Highlanders, who was doing duty in the trenches on the night of the 6th, has disappeared in a rather mysterious and sudden manner. He went to visit some of the outposts, and as was supposed seen to be returning, some of the men on duty heard an alarm raised as if for assistance, in the direction in which he was last seen to proceed. The night was very dark, and on approaching towards the spot nothing could be discovered. Whether the gallant major has been killed or taken prisoner is a matter at present involved in some uncertainty. It is just possible that in the darkness of the night he may unwarily have strayed too near the Russian outposts, and have been thus captured. His absence has necessarily created a degree of uneasiness among his brother officers as to his fate.

RETURN OF CAPT. MONTAGU FROM CAPTIVITY.

Capt. Horace Montagu, of the Royal Engineers, who was taken prisoner on the 22d of March during the repulse of a Russian sortie against the works of the left attack, has lately been exchanged, and is now in camp. He was taken over the works of the Redan, and they were silly, probably in a spirit of bravado, exhibited to him. No doubt they have been considerably changed and strengthened since he saw them, but their general character must remain the same. His description of the Redan itself and the works beyond would lead to the conclusion that a direct attack against them would be very injudicious if made while the enemy still held the Malakoff hill; while if that position were silenced, the subsequent capture of the Redan, and the redoubts in rear, would be comparatively an easy task.

LARGE EXTENT OF LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

Leave of absence continues to be granted to a large extent. Taking fire of the latest general orders, those of the 3d, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th inst., we find the names of no less than 70 officers who have received permission to absent themselves. Of these, 29 proceed to England—26 of them in virtue of medical certificates, and three on "urgent private affairs," or in consideration of peculiar circumstances; 27 go to Scutari and Therapia for periods varying from two to five weeks; 12 on board ship; and two to the Monastery of St. George, where there are 10 rooms fitted up for ailing or convalescent officers. All these leaves of absence may be necessary, and fully justified by the circumstances of the respective cases; but such numerous departures are not the less extremely inconvenient to the army, and leave many regiments very short-handed of officers.

The correspondent of the *London Times* writes as follows from before Sebastopol, under date of Aug. 10:—"The Generals-in-Chief keep their information and intentions to themselves. If we get the Malakoff, little doubt is entertained that the south side will speedily be ours; whether we shall be able to remain in it under the fire from the forts on the north is another question. The Russians driven out, however, and the fleet destroyed, we shall be at liberty to busy ourselves with the northern forts or to move inland, as may be decided upon. As for the town, which we have treated with so much forbearance, it is not to be supposed that it will be left to us in its present neat and serviceable condition. If Russia be faithful to her military traditions, we shall obtain but a heap of ruins and ashes. No snug quarters will there be in Sebastopol for the allied armies, which have been so long alternately crippled with cold, plunged to the knees in mud, or seethed in sickly Crimean vapors. A time there was, now some ten months bygone, when Sebastopol might have been ours on easier terms and in better condition—a time when Russian prisoners expressed their surprise at not being sent into depot there, since they made sure the place had fallen into our hands after the battle of the Alma. It is bootless to recur to past blunders and omissions, or we might also talk of the time when the Malakoff was but a round tower, instead of the strong fortification, now the chief obstacle to the capture of the place, to which it is the key. However, if grievous errors have been fallen into, let us hope that they will in future be avoided, and that the next attack will be very differently conducted, and have a widely different result from the last."

All the accounts from Sebastopol prove that the place is on the point of falling, less, perhaps, from the fire of the Allies than from famine. The *Daily News*, which has put forth during the last few weeks exclusive intelligence on this head, says in its impres-

sion of yesterday:—"According to advices of high character, the distress of the Russian troops at Sebastopol is so severe that the early evacuation of the south side would not surprise those who are best acquainted with the real posture of affairs." Several deserters, too, had come in, who gave a deplorable account of the internal condition of the fortress, and the reliable statements of previous deserters made known, as we showed last week, the attack contemplated by Gortschakoff on the lines of the Tchernya. Rats are proverbial for leaving a falling house, and all the indications of the fortress falling stare us in the face. We are evidently at the beginning of the end, and the sooner the end comes, the better, for the works of the allies are now so near those of the enemy that the losses of the French in the trenches are about 100 per night, and our own about 50, owing to the close and almost unerring aim which the besieged can now take of the besiegers. The list of the casualties which General Simpson's last despatch enclosed, although forwarded anterior to the great battle of the 16th, is dated the 11th—is conclusive on this point. We are now only beginning to experience the advantages of having the Sea of Azoff in our possession, for the famine which at present prevails in Sebastopol is entirely owing to that circumstance, and if earlier means had been taken to secure what was so tardily and easily accomplished, we should, in all probability, have been spared the necessity of again wintering in the Crimea, which it is tolerably clear we shall have to do, whether we get into Sebastopol or remain before it. Shut out from the Sea of Azoff, the difficulty of the enemy in feeding his troops has been enormously increased, for the route by which his supplies now come is, at least, three times longer and five times more perilous than previously, because in fine weather the steppes cannot supply water for the draught cattle which bring the food, and in wet weather it is still worse, for the roads, as regards heavily-laden wagons, are impassable. It is probably the knowledge of this desperate condition of things which has induced the allied commanders to delay the bombardment, for in such a state of affairs every day that elapses produces destruction more deadly than projectiles. Nevertheless, whenever Sebastopol falls, an event of which we may be informed any hour,—we must respect both the bravery and skill of the Russians in defending it. However contemptuously we may treat the civilization of the enemy, or rather, sneer at his want of civilization, we should be doing injustice to ourselves to deny him the merit of extreme hardihood, admirable courage, and unflinching ingenuity.—*Willmer & Smith European Times.*

THE BOMBARDMENT OF SWEABORG.

At five minutes past eight the signal to commence action was made, and the ball was opened by a shell from the Pickle mortar vessel, which was anxiously watched to see how far our range was good. To our great satisfaction it fell on the very top of the citadel, close to a flag-staff where waved the Royal standard of Russia. (It is supposed that the Archduke Constantine was at Sweaborg.) And now the row began in earnest. All along our line bang went the 13-inch mortars, charged with Valenciennes, and other ignitable composition. In dashed the gunboats, firing as they advanced, rushing in at full speed, till within 3,000 yards of the forts; then wheeling sharp round, and making way for those astern of them. "Hurrah Johnny!" Off go the mortars from the island battery (which I don't think the Russians had seen before); but don't imagine we have it all our own way. A moment had not elapsed after we had opened fire, when from every embrasure, from guns en barbette, from mortar batteries, from the line-of-battle ships at the entrance of the harbor, and from the guns on the heights of Bakholmen, off went missiles of all description; and though many fell short, the disagreeable sound in the ear of passing shell or red hot shot were much too frequent to be pleasant. As our fellows got nearer they thought nothing of that sort of thing, both soldiers' and sailors' whole mind and energy being directed to pitch into the "Rhoosians" and revenge Hango (many of the shell and shot were marked "Hango.") The fire was kept up with spirit on both sides, with hardly any casualties on ours, until nearly twelve o'clock, when one of the most awful and terrific explosions ever witnessed took place close to the citadel. I can only compare it to a violent eruption of Vesuvius. A whole fort was blown up, thousands of shot and shell were thrown into the air, the latter bursting as they rose; and what appeared the most extraordinary was, that it seemed as if it were never to cease. Pillars of smoke, intermingled with shot, shell, and some affirm guns, constantly rolling out of, as it were, the bowels of the earth. The sea for half a mile was immensely agitated and covered with foam. Firing on both sides ceased for the moment, but as soon as the first burst of astonishment had subsided the air resounded with the cheers of the allies, not only from those engaged but from the vessels outside, whose rigging and yards were covered with men; but "Don't let them rest," was the order. "Blaze away, my boys, and careases and shell and red-hot shot were thrown as near the fire, to make confusion more confounded. Not another gun did they fire for more than an hour. The flames caused by the explosion spread rapidly; and building after building, barracks, stores, and small magazines burnt and blew up right and left. This entirely new method of warfare appears to have staggered the enemy; and, doubtless, it is a great triumph of naval service. If we had had these vessels out here in the beginning of the season, or double the number now, Cronstadt must fall, and probably all the ships be burnt. The whole of the right part of the place being in flames at four o'clock, our fire was directed on the dockyard and arsenal, which lies on the inside of the island, and we now saw a

light smoke rising above the town. As the evening shut in the enemy gave us some warm salvos, but though several shells burst on board mortar and gunboats, by what I can call almost a miracle nobody was seriously hurt.

HELSINGFORS IS SPARED.

Some French gunboats, wishing to take up a better position, sent a couple of gigs to sound a little to the westward, when the town of Helsingfors opened fire upon them from some batteries close under their beautiful church. It would be an easy task indeed for us to burn Helsingfors to the ground, but we have spared it, and only attacked their fortress, from a wish not to destroy private property; but, when our mercy is treated with such base return, we are almost provoked to turn the heads of our little gunboats in that direction. Yet it is evident they expect us to respect certain places, and avoid firing on certain spots, for on one huge building to the westward of Helsingfors is a piece of canvas stretching from chimney to chimney, with the words "Lunatic Asylum" painted in large black letters upon it; yet within 300 yards of it they have three immense batteries—one immediately under it, and the others on either side; and about half a mile to the east of it several hundred men were engaged building a mortar battery and magazine, and covering the latter with sand. This little transaction caused Admiral Penuud to observe that "there was much more honor in burning Sweaborg, but there would be more satisfaction in destroying Helsingfors."

The Russian journals laugh at these reports, and speak of the whole affair as a "naval fête," of which the expenses were defrayed by the Allies. A writer in the *News of the World* hereon remarks:—

"The 'great naval fête,' which the Czar's journal represents as having come off at Sweaborg, at the expense of England and France, who provided the fireworks, must, at any rate, be attended with considerable cost to his Imperial Majesty; for soon after the bombardment commenced, fires broke out, and extended among the public buildings, the magazines at Vargon and Gustafsvarv exploded, and, as Admiral Penuud says, 'one expanse of flame' was presented by the conflagrations as long as food for fire remained within range of the mortars of the allied fleet. The actual value to the latter of this victory may not be immediately ascertained, for the enemy will disguise the consequences of the bombardment as much as they possibly can, and our own Ministerial papers are rather obscure upon the subject. One journal speaks of another contemptuously, for having announced that 'the fortress is a heap of ruins,' and 'Sweaborg exists no more.' 'These foolish overstatements,' says your cotemporary, 'have much misled the public.' Admiral Dundas writes:—"I formed no part of my plan to attempt a general attack by the ships on the defences; and the operations contemplated by the Rear-Admiral and myself were limited to such destruction of the fortress and arsenal as could be accomplished by means of mortars. But why did it form no part of my plan to make so general and decisive an attack. Slow and sure may be good play, but quick and sure is better; and we have learnt nothing of the Russian force to give cause for apprehension that a quick blow would not be also a successful one. That the intentions of Admiral Dundas have been carried out in a manner reflecting the very highest credit upon all persons engaged in them, I cordially acknowledge. The Baltic fleet has inflicted great damage upon the enemy, and it has shown its capabilities; but I cannot altogether comprehend the reason why it has not been thought expedient to use the utmost energies of the fleet. Without a land force, the conquest and occupation of this Gibraltar of the North may not be thought of; but why should there not be a land force in the Baltic? France sent her soldiers last year, and could have sent them again. The present tactics are at variance with the modes adopted by commanders in former wars, who won glorious laurels for themselves, and did great service to their country. There is this to be further said against the slow process, that the enemy can take advantage of the time as well as ourselves. Sweaborg is described as a chain of seven islands outside a huge harbor, as though it were Plymouth for instance, and there are narrow but deep channels between them. These islands are armed with eight hundred guns, posted with the greatest science in fortifications, hewn, as at Gibraltar, out of the solid rock. At the bottom of the bay which they protect lies Helsingfors, the capital of Finland; and the best proof that Sweaborg still exists is, that we cannot (or do not judge the risk worth the gain) pass through any one of the channels between the islands, through respect for the terrific artillery by which they are commanded, and, consequently, we cannot touch Helsingfors. 'What we have done (says the *Morning Post*) is what might have been done even at Gibraltar. We have simply confined our intentions and our acts to shelling the place from a distance, and we have succeeded to the full bent of our desires in annoying the enemy effectually, causing him some damage, and harassing his armies."

IRISH INTELLIGENCE.

On Wednesday, the 8th ult., the parish priests of the diocese of Raphoe assembled in the Catholic church of Donegal for the purpose of electing a coadjutor bishop. His Grace of Armagh, and Primate of Ireland, together with the Right Rev. Dr. Cantwell, of Meath; Dr. McNally, of Clogher; Dr. Doniv, of Down; and Connor; Dr. Kelly, of Derry; Dr. Kilguff, of Ardagh; and Dr. McGittigan, of Raphoe, were present upon the occasion. The Rev. gentlemen who received the greatest number of votes were the Rev. Daniel McGittigan, P.P. of Kiltannon, 11; Rev. Dr. Kirby, President of the Irish College at Rome, 6; and the Rev. Hugh O'Donnell, P.P., of Kilran, 5 votes.

Mr. Murtagh O'Brien, Sub Inspector at Andee, claims the title of the late Marquis of Thomond and Earl of Inchiquin. The new aspirant does not offer to question the Inchiquin barony, now held by Sir Lucius O'Brien.

In the event of a vacancy in the representation of the county Clare, Mr. Pierce Creagh, J.P., has declared himself a candidate.

THE CASE OF SMITH O'BRIEN.—For the present, we deeply regret to say, the efforts made on behalf of William Smith O'Brien have failed, the answer given during the past week, having been unfavorable. The parliamentary friends of this noble-hearted exile have frequently endeavored to elicit a distinct reply to the memorial which was presented to Lord Palmerston early in the session; but it was not until last week that such distinct reply could be obtained. It by no means shuts out hope—quite the contrary; but it adds to the mental torture of one who loves his native land with a passion and ardor which men of a different stamp do not feel, and cannot comprehend. Lord Palmerston said that he and Sir George Grey were both of opinion that they could not, at present recommend that a free pardon should be immediately granted to him. This determination appears to have been arrived at more from a consideration of other cases, which would be ruled by the decision in his, than by the peculiar circumstances in his individual case. Lord Palmerston spoke kindly of William Smith O'Brien, and allowed to be distinctly understood that there was no personal or political resentment entertained towards him by the government. Indeed, he almost stated in words, that a similar application might, at some not distant period, meet with a more favorable reply, and that he would be very far from wishing "to shut the door of hope" against him; and, upon a question being put to him, he recommended that Smith O'Brien should not act hastily in any manner which would separate him from his country. He fully admitted the weight and importance of the memorial presented to him, and which as our readers are aware, bore the signatures of 150 members of the House of Commons, of every shade of party. If the Premier is to be believed, he is really anxious to allow Smith O'Brien to return to his home and his duties as a citizen; but it appears that the real difficulty lies in the necessity of dealing with the cases of the English Chartists, which cases should be at once taken into consideration, were Smith O'Brien restored to the exercise of his former privileges. For our part, and assuming that there is so far a connexion between the Irish and English cases, as that the decision on the one must involve a decision on the other, we can see no valid reason why Frost, Williams, and their companions, should not be allowed to return to England, provided they were so willing, which is barely probable. We express to Smith O'Brien our earnest hope that he will wait, we cannot say patiently, but hopefully, until the commencement of next year; for we hold something like a confident belief that, after what has been done and said this year, after the expectations that have been distinctly held out, and by which the government must be bound, the effort then to be renewed will be crowned with success. Indeed we should with pain and regret learn that he took any step which would have the effect of separating him from the country of his love, his hopes, and his sacrifices.—*Cork Examiner.*

CRIME AND OUTRAGE BILL.—The *Dundalk Democrat*, commenting on the Crime and Outrage Bill for Ireland, which has been renewed for another year, says:—"But what is the meaning of all their precautions at this particular period? Are they afraid of the organization amongst the Irish in America for an invasion of this country? Are they afraid the victims of their Irish rule, who have fled for refuge to the far west, will return to take vengeance when they find them grappled in the clutches of a powerful foe?—If they are not, why, we ask, pass a Crime and Outrage Bill, when Ireland is more tranquil than she ever was in the memory of our oldest inhabitants—when from the Giant's Causeway to Cape Clear not a breath of agitation is astir—and when the judges are congratulating the grand juries on the admirable order amongst the people?"

THE TIMBER IMPORT TRADE.—Limited as was the number of Belfast vessels employed last year in the timber trade between British America and this port, it is likely to be even smaller this season. Our shipowners, we are glad to know, at present find more profitable freights for their vessels of large tonnage and good class; and can, therefore, in most cases, afford to leave the St. Lawrence trade to smaller and inferior craft, suitable for nothing better. Several of the cargoes landed here during the autumn of 1854, from Quebec, &c., were imported in foreign bottoms—Prussians, Swedes, and Norwegians—quite a novel feature in our North American commerce. We regret to add that, in consequence of the comparatively trifling amount of building operations going forward, the timber trade is far from animated or calculated to induce speculation.—*Belfast Chronicle.*

It is now generally admitted that with a short continuance of the present weather all the exposed injury to the cereal crops will have disappeared. The potato stalks are now everywhere affected by the blight, but the tubers yet continue sound and most promising. The wages of agricultural laborers have gone as high as 2s. 6d. per diem this week, and the scarcity of hands is much complained of.—*Kilkenny Moderator, August 14.*

Agricultural laborers are in greater request and receive higher wages than has been known in Ireland at any period. Laborers for reaping, mowing and other harvest operations, were engaged in this city on Saturday last, at 12s. 6d. per week (wet or dry), and diet, and on Monday morning, when fine weather appeared to have set in they were eagerly picked up at 2s. 6d. per day and board.—*Limerick Chronicle.*

The married men of the Kilkenny Militia, stationed in Limerick, were permitted to hire each day for cutting the harvest. About twenty of them were engaged by the neighboring farmers. They return to their barracks in the evening.

A most melancholy case of hydrophobia terminated fatally near Grady Turnpike, Limerick, on the 13th ult. The victim was a fine boy of the name of John Hogan, aged 14 years, and the attack was made on him a few days previous by a wretched cur dog, which bit him over the right eye. His agony was so intense, that those who witnessed his dreadful sufferings were painfully affected, and he shrank in horror when mention was made of water. He died after the greatest pain, leaving his widowed mother to mourn over her bereavement.