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CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

Montreal, Saturday, April 6th, 1878.

REPUBLICANISM IN FRANCE.

Even those who may be opposed to Democracy in the abstract, cannot do otherwise than rejoice at the progress of Republicanism in France, because they must see in that fact the living proof of a return to stability and prosperity. That the Republic is making rapid and substantial progress in France is evident to any one who observes the course of events in that interesting country. We need not refer to the result of the October elections, nor to the invincible force of public opinion which literally wrenched submission from Marshal MACMAHON. We have events of a more recent date upon which to found a judgment. On Sunday, the 3rd March—Sunday is strangely the usual polling day in France—seventeen legislative elections took place. Two of them were held to fill seats rendered vacant by the deaths of M. RASPAIL and M. DUCAMP, both Radicals, and in them the success of the Radical candidates was, of course, a foregone conclusion. Fifteen were held to replace fifteen deputies of the Right, whose elections had been invalidated by the Chamber for irregular practices. Of these the Monarchists failed to gain more than four seats, in spite of the local influence possessed by the majority of the invalidated members. This, then, is a clear gain of eleven Republican votes, a result all the more remarkable that official candidatures have been abolished, and that full liberty was accorded to every class of voters.

Another signal triumph for the Republic is the secession of the Constitutionalists from the Opposition. These Constitutionalists were a group of thirty-five Senators, under the leadership of the Count de BONDI, who acquired reputation and importance from having frustrated, last December, the various schemes put forward for continuing the policy of resistance, notwithstanding the result of the elections. These Senators are not Republicans, and have usually sided with the Opposition, but lately, in presence of certain essential bills introduced by the Government, it was found necessary to choose between a policy of resistance, with the risk of the most serious complications, and a policy of conciliation and submission to the will of the country. Twenty-two Senators out of thirty-three have resolutely chosen the latter course, and the step has added materially to the strength of the Dufaure Administration.

The two events which we have just chronicled, with other manifestations of public opinion which could not be overlooked, have enabled the Government to pass some organic laws which will amplify the security at the same time that they will expand the liberties of the French people. The budget, which had been thrown into confusion by the crisis of the 16th May, has been voted by a large majority. The law conferring the right on the Executive of proclaiming the state of siege only in case of foreign invasion, has also passed by a strong vote. The effect of this measure in diminishing the chances of *coup d'état*, and the prostitution of the army to political purposes, is incalculable.

In her foreign policy, the French Republic has acted with a prudence which has strengthened her position abroad,

while it has contributed to the peace and quietude of the country itself. The fruits of this abstention from foreign complications will be abundantly reaped in the forthcoming Exposition, the success of which is assured if only war does not break out between England and Russia. The partial stagnation in trade will be relieved not only by the money of thousands of visitors, but also by the sales of French products of all kinds which will necessarily follow their display in the Trocadero Palace.

THE BRITISH FLEET AT THE DARDANELLES.

The following article contains full particulars with regard to its passage of the Dardanelles:—On the 9th, Saturday last, Admiral Hornby acting under instructions from home, took five of the ships under his command up the Dardanelles. We steamed up to Chanak, asked permission to pass, were refused, and came back to Besika Bay. Bitter was the disappointment, loud the groans, when our British sailors saw their ships turn back to the old anchorage; but a gleam of hope remained in the fact that orders were given to bank fires ready for ten knots steaming at twenty minutes' notice. We remained in a condition of excitement and extreme tension for the next three days, for it was well known that the Admiral was keeping up constant telegraph communication with the Admiralty, and the signal "Telegram on shore" was constantly being made. On Tuesday, the 12th, a rumour got about that the fleet had orders to enter again the Dardanelles, and this was confirmed by the circumstance that the Admirals and Captains of the fleet held a meeting on board the *Alexandra*, Admiral Hornby's flagship, a meeting which was neither more nor less than a council of war. And our surmises proved true. When the Captains returned on board their ships it was made known that tomorrow the fleet was to go up the Dardanelles, and at all hazards to force the passage, leave or no leave. Now arose in the fleet such excitement as had not been known in the British Navy for many a long day. Sir John Duckworth and his famous passage, seventy-one years ago almost to a day, were the staple subject of conversation, while maps were studied and books of naval history referred to. Admiral Hornby's orders were lithographed, and a copy sent to each Captain. They contained perfect and explicit instructions what to do, how to act, together with plans of the principal fortifications; in fact they were models of despatches, clear and precise. On Tuesday night the weather, which had been threatening, became very bad. The barometer fell, a strong wind blew, and a heavy sea got up from the N.E. When the hands were turned up in the morning the topgallant masts and all superfluous gear aloft were got on deck; hammocks put into the tops for the riflemen, and the Gatling guns ranged alongside them. The morning was dreadful, rain came down in torrents, a dense haze over the water obscuring the land, the weather high and bitterly cold, the sea rough and tempestuous. At 8.30 a. m. the ships formed into two lines, passing up the coast in the teeth of a gale of wind which increased in severity the closer the squadron got to the narrow entrance of the Dardanelles. At 10.15 a. m. the fleet passed the Castles of Europe and Asia, steaming in the following order:—Starboard Division—Asiatic side.—*Alexandra* (flag), *Sultan*, *Téméraire*. Port Division—European side.—*Agincourt* (flag), *Achilles*, *Swiftsure*. About eleven o'clock snow began to fall, blinding those on deck, and completely obscuring the land—in fact, the dangers of navigation seemed almost worse than the gauntlet of the forts. The officers had an early meal, as also the men; and, this over, quarters were sounded, and then the Admiral's plan of attack was made known. The guns were loaded with heavy charges of powder and Shrapnell shell, trained on the beam, and run out just level with the battery ports. But the messengers of death had a smiling face upon them, for the tompions were in, and everything looked peaceful. The tops were filled with riflemen, and Gatling guns and all torpedo defences prepared, but nothing warlike was to be seen. Admiral Hornby's instructions were to pass peacefully, if possible; not to make any demonstration calculated to excite the Turks into a breach of the peace; but if the forts did open fire on us, then— These words were the orders: if any of the forts fired at and hit any ship of the squadron, the two divisions were to attack and to silence the two forts above Chanak—Forts Namazieh and Chanak Castle. At 2.30 p. m. the ships arrived off the first point at which any serious resistance was expected. This was a 40-ton Krupp gun, mounted in an earthwork some three miles below Chanak. The orders respecting this formidable piece of ordnance were:—The ships will pass within 200 yards of the gun, their broadsides bearing on it in succession; if the Turks fire it, it is to be dismantled and the works around it destroyed. At a speed of eight knots, surrounded with a dense fog, the snow falling thickly, the wind howling through the rigging, the squadron groped about for this wretched gun. It was luckily seen; so, in pursuance of orders, the ships formed into single line and awaited the result. Breathless silence reigned over the ships, broken only by the dull thud, thud of the engines; yet beneath that quietude was the great

est excitement. At the guns stood their crews, one man ready to slip out the tompion, the others to run the gun out, while the captain of the gun stood immovable, lanyard in hand, one jerk of which would have sent the enormous shell spinning on its errand. Our hearts were in our mouths as the flagship came abreast of the Chanak gun; the little puff of smoke, the flame, the crash were eagerly watched for, while minutes seemed years. At last relief came; we had passed in peace, and the tension was removed. Let me pause a moment to recount the power of the English ships; and, as armour is not of much utility at 200 yards, we may dismiss the construction of the sides of ships at once to number the guns. The *Alexandra's* broadside was composed of five 18-ton guns and one 25-ton; the *Agincourt's*, of seven 12-ton guns; the *Achilles*, of eight 12-ton guns and one 9-ton; the *Sultan's*, of four 18-ton guns and one 12-ton; the *Téméraire's*, three 25-ton guns and four 18-ton; the *Swiftsure's*, five 12-ton guns, and one 9-ton gun, or a gross available total of forty guns. Having passed the gun our attention or rather our ears, were riveted to the two forts above Chanak. As the big gun did not open its fire upon the squadron, we did not expect to hear much of the great batteries which we were now approaching. I have said "hear," for it was absolutely impossible to see anything of the shore. As the town of Chanak was passed the wind increased in strength, the fog thickened, the snow and sleet fell worse than before, blinding the officers on the bridges, and biting ears, cheeks, and noses. The current, too, was dead against us, and was running nearly four knots. In this fearful weather, when neither ships ahead or astern were visible, and guided only by the hoarse cry of the leadman in the chains, did the squadron pass the narrows of the Dardanelles, here only three-quarters of a mile broad. At a speed of eight knots against the wind and current the forts of Chanak and Iscala and Namazieh were passed. Breathless silence prevailed on board the ships when these formidable batteries were being passed; they were the only point of serious resistance, added to which the Turkish authorities had given us the pleasing information that torpedoes had been laid down between the two opposite forts. But, no; nothing occurred to bar our progress up the Straits; no torpedo exploded under our bottom, and no shell came crashing against our sides. For the next two miles were passing smaller forts and redoubts, but of these we took no notice, as they could all have been easily disposed of by a few shells.

Fort Namazieh would not have been such an easy nut to crack. It mounted twelve 18-ton Krupp guns behind heavy earthworks faced with stone. The magazine, however, was much exposed, and had one of our Shrapnell struck it the whole would probably have exploded. The rear of the fort appeared wholly undefended. At 3.30 p. m. we passed Cape Sestos; not that it could be seen, but the position was judged from the soundings. Here the passage widens, and remains so to about two to three miles across. So, having passed all danger, and there being no more fortifications to encounter, the orders were given to unload the guns and to return the shell and powder to the magazine. With a feeling of relief the guns were reduced to peaceful condition. Speech that had been pent up during the past two hours now came forth, and tongues that had been tied were loosened in an incessant chatter. A flood of excitement was poured out: what would have been done had the Turks fired upon us, and how disappointed many were that we had been allowed to pass in peace, and yet that peace was a close shave of war. The Constantinople authorities had given orders to the forts to resist the passage, and it is stated that it was only the interference of a person high in authority in the Turkish service that prevented bloodshed; this official at the last moment, countermanded the Constantinople orders on his own responsibility. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the fog was so thick that the gunners in the forts could hardly have seen the ship. The circumstance was, of course, mere chance, a meteorological freak. Off Karakova, in the Hellespoint, the fog suddenly lifted, and, with a clear passage before us, we rattled on at full speed, anchoring before the town of Gallipoli exactly as the clock struck six, having been eight hours on the journey.

Gallipoli was apparently deserted; but the fact was that the inhabitants had retreated to their homes and had barred themselves in. The poor things, mostly women and children, had taken fright at the sudden appearance of the English squadron, and were under the impression what we were about to bombard the town while the Moscovs assaulted the lines.

Part of the squadron (*Agincourt* and *Swiftsure*) remained there to watch the movements of the belligerents; the remaining ships (*Alexandra*, *Téméraire*, *Achilles*, and *Sultan*) got under weigh the next morning and proceeded to the Sea of Marmora. The morning was bitterly cold, a cutting northerly wind was blowing; but there was no snow or sleet, and the sun shone brightly. We passed close to the Gallipoli lines, and could see Fort Victoria, and line after line of white tents stretching across the hills, while the soldiers were very busy throwing up rifle-pits and making various kinds of defences. The fort had one very big gun pointed towards the spot whence Gourko and his troops are expected to issue.

On the morning of the 15th the squadron anchored off Prinkipo, Prince's Island, some ten miles from Constantinople. Very disap-

pointing to see the minarets of the city in the distance only. No officer is allowed to visit the place at present.

Our stay at Prince's Island was very short, because we were within the lines laid down by the terms of the armistice to be held by the Russians, and soon received notice to quit. The squadron was rapidly coaled, and left on the 17th for Tuzla Bay. This place is about eight miles distant east from Prince's Island. It is a snug, sheltered anchorage, and just outside the boundary line. Evidently we are not going to be caught asleep. Steam is kept up ready at a few minutes' notice, night or day, and after sunset the little black torpedo-launches go prowling round and round the squadron. *Si vis pacem, para bellum* is evidently Admiral Hornby's motto. Our future movements are, of course, very uncertain; but one question fills all our minds, "How and when shall we make our return passage through the Dardanelles?"

H. M. S. ALEXANDRA.

The flagship of Vice-Admiral Hornby, commanding the Mediterranean fleet, now in the Sea of Marmora, is H. M. S. *Alexandra*, the largest masted ironclad vessel, with broadside armament, that has yet been constructed, and the best contrived for an efficient all-round firing of her guns. This fine ship is 325 ft. long between perpendiculars, 63 ft. 8 in. broad, and 18 ft. 7½ in. deep, with a burden of 6950 tons, and 942 tons displacement; her draught is 23 ft. forward and 26 ft. 6 in. aft. Her ironplate armour and its backing weigh not less than 2350 tons. The water-line is protected by a belt having a maximum thickness of twelve inches of iron, which is carried forward down over the bows and ram; the machinery and magazines are protected aft by an armoured bulkhead with plates five inches thick; the batteries are protected by armour from 8 in. to 5 in. thick. The construction of the hull is such as to give the greatest possible strength, with a massive longitudinal bulkhead extending to within forty feet of the stem and stern, and with several transverse bulkheads, dividing the different sets of engines and boilers and of magazines in so many compartments; besides which the ship has a double bottom, with a space of four feet between the two bottoms. The engines, constructed by Messrs. Humphreys and Tennant, of Deptford, are on the compound system, with an aggregate indicated power of 5000 horse, for both sets of engines together; they work a pair of twin screw-propellers, which are 21 ft. in diameter. With these making sixty-seven revolutions in a minute, the speed attained was fifteen knots an hour at the official trial; but the estimated maximum speed of the ship, with her full armament and load on board, is fourteen knots an hour. She can also, under favourable conditions, attain twelve knots and a half under sail. Her masts are hollow iron, serving as tubes for ventilation. The decks are lofty, spacious, and airy, with a height of 2 ft. 6 in. on the main deck, 19 ft. 4 in. on the upper deck, and 11 ft. 6 in. on the living or mess deck, the comfort being as great as in an ordinary dwelling-house. The battery of the *Alexandra* consists of two Woolwich rifled muzzle-loading guns of twenty-five tons each, and ten of eighteen tons each. The two larger guns are placed in a central battery on the upper deck, forward, so that they can be trained to fire right ahead, while two of the other guns, placed aft in the same upper-deck battery, can be trained to fire right astern. On each broadside four to six guns can be fought at once. The sides of the ship, forward of the main-deck battery, are set back, above the level of that deck, so as to allow two guns on each side to be fired right ahead. This facility of commanding almost as great a range of fire as a turret-ship possesses is the especial merit of the *Alexandra*, and would give her a powerful advantage in fighting the enemy.

Vice-Admiral Geoffrey Thomas Phipps Hornby is a brother of the Rev. Dr. Hornby, Head Master of Eton School, and a cousin of Lord Derby. He is the son, by a sister of the late Field Marshal Sir John Burgoyne, of the late Admiral Sir Phipps Hornby, who served in the French wars at the beginning of the century, was a Lieutenant on board the *Victory* when she carried Lord Nelson's flag, and got a medal when in command of the *Volage* in Sir W. Hoste's action off Lissa. The present Admiral, born in 1825, entered the service, on board the *Princess Charlotte*, in 1837, and was present as a midshipman at the bombardment of Acre by Sir Robert Stopford and Sir Charles Napier. He afterwards served under Admiral Percy at the Cape of Good Hope; under his father Sir Phipps Hornby, in the Pacific, and on various other stations. He has been twice round the world. Admiral Hornby has worked hard all his life at the theory and practice of his profession. When a young captain, he got leave for a year and studied steam in the dockyard at Portsmouth. It was he who commanded the first flying squadron as Captain, with the rank of Commodore, taking the squadron round the world. He has besides had great experience in manœuvring fleets. He was Flag Captain to Sir Sidney Dacres when that officer commanded the Channel Fleet, and subsequently, as Rear-Admiral, he himself held that post, succeeding Admiral Wellesley. In addition to his professional acquirements, Admiral Hornby is thoroughly acquainted with official business, having served under Mr. Ward Hunt as a Lord of the Admiralty in Lord Beaconsfield's Administration, as his father had served in that of the late Lord Derby.