

THE NEXT CAMPAIGN.

Of the six months of winter, three are already past. In three more, the Crimean winter will be at an end, and the season when military operations may be best attempted will have arrived. It is certain the Allies will do well to form their plans early enough to execute them before excessive heat dries the wells and destroys the pasturage of the plains. If the Crimea is to be conquered, their armies, then probably a quarter of a million strong, must take the field before April is far advanced. A council of war will shortly be held at Paris, at which the Duke of Cambridge, attended by Sir R. Airey, will be present. Sir E. Lyons, too, will join in the conference and may be daily expected at Marseilles. The object of this meeting will be to weigh thoroughly the several plans for the next campaign, and, when a decision is formed, to carry out combined operations with energy and completeness. It is reported, that Marshal Pelissier has been foremost in requesting that this council should be held. September and October, the French General was sanguine as to an autumn campaign and pushed forward his columns with what looked like activity. The telegraph, which, through Lord Panmure, was used to make known almost daily intelligence, became on a sudden silent. The expectation of the two nations, and we may add of their Governments, was highly raised. The French crossed the Valley Baidar, seized the heights to the north, pushed forward a division to the head waters of the Belbek, and threatened the passes of Aitoder and Albat. At that time an opinion was expressed, that the Russian plateau, steep as a wall towards the south, and to be gained only by narrow passes, was a position not to be attacked. The contrary, however, was urged even by military men, who held that any chain of hills could be forced or turned. The result proves, that the former judgment was well founded. Marshal Pelissier is said to have given his opinion, that no campaign is possible from the present base of operations. The Russians, more than two months since, held the passes with a force which could resist any assault. The roads were scarp'd, the hills strengthened by works. By April they might be made absolutely impregnable, or, if determined valour might force them, it would be after a slaughter from which it is the duty of a general to shrink. What plan of campaign is resolved on will, of course, be a secret, till the hour for its execution arrives. It is evident, however, that the allies have a great advantage in possessing two bases accessible to their fleet and impregnable by the enemy. Eupatoria and Yenikale are now converted into two intrenched camps, from both of which Simpheropol and the Russian rear are threatened. The country is not difficult, but the chief difficulty is likely to be the want of water. Perhaps this cause may lead to the abandonment of any operations from Eupatoria. The enemy, on the other hand, has the advantage of a central position, from which he may oppose the converging forces which operate from the points of the coast. We cannot doubt that which military science can effect, after 18 months' of preparation, awaits us in our march against the Russian positions. Though of success there can be no doubt, yet it is the duty of our generals to purchase it as cheaply as possible, and we therefore trust that the deliberations of the council will be wise and far-sighted.

DANGER OF "SEEING THE LIONS" AT SEBASTOPOL.

It is more than hinted, that as soon as the Tchernaya be frozen, Gortschakoff intends to throw his troops across and to attack the allies. In the meantime the allies do not attack Gortschakoff. They do not fire a single gun against the works on the north side. But the north side fires daily upon the south; and although with little effect, I am sorry to add, that in one day, during the present week, we had a private of the 18th killed and four wounded, English, while cooking near the dock; and on the other side of the Arsenal Creek, one French man killed, and also an ox. So that there is even yet some danger in "seeing the lions" at Sebastopol. During the fete of St. Barbe, I am happy to record, we did not lose a single man. Had a shell fallen among even one of the many military reunions gathered together on that night, the enemy might have made a grand coup. A French colonel and four captains out shooting near the Teberday, and somewhat too eager in the pursuit of sport, were surrounded by Cossacks and taken prisoners; dogs and all. Shooting is an amusement that cannot be indulged in every day, for the weather is now very unsettled and variable. As to gales and rain, the winter has certainly set in this year more fiercely than did the winter of 1854, and at this moment the valley of Inkermann resembles a lake, while our roads are knee-deep in mud in many places, and parts of the plateau and plain perfectly like a swamp, and impassable. People are in some parts of the camp suffering a good deal from boils on the chest, which are attributed to the water, never good, having become much worse since the rain set in. Our medical officers are on

the alert and watching the men most anxiously, so that, come what illness there may, it is reasonable to presume that with our increased comforts, and experience, and huts, we shall not again have to deplore the loss of so many of our fine fellows.

EXPULSION OF SPIES AT BALA CLAVA.

Having ridden across to Bala Clava to take up my new passport, or rather permis de sejour, at the Commandant's office, opposite the Main Guard, I was astonished to find that my number therein was as high as 1,042, and on leaving the building by another door than that by which I entered, I found more than a hundred persons waiting to obtain similar documents. Capt. Macbean, of the 29th Highlanders, is the officer appointed to inspect each passport, and grant or refuse a permis de sejour. These "tickets of residence" contain the name, occupation, and residence of the applicant, and are dated in the present month and signed by the Captain Superintendent, whose name I have just above mentioned. No. 1,421 was the last number issued, when I was present, but Levantines of all nations and creeds are still flocking down to the Commandant's (Colonel Hardinge) where Captain Macbean, able and cautious as he is, has a most difficult task to perform. There are some of our population here who are better known than trusted. Accordingly, instead of presenting themselves at the office, these worthies have sent in some friend to personate them and to leave such passport as they might have been able at Athens, or Constantinople, or Smyrna, to procure. Calling next day to receive the passport and permis, many, on their names being asked for, forgot their assumed one, and answered in their own, which, of course, instantly opened the eyes of the officials, and led to the passport being committed to the flames and its bearer to the police. The bearer, in company with others in the same predicament, soon finds himself on board a steamer bound to Constantinople, where he is dropped on the pave, and the original owner of the passport is also sought out, and forwarded to the same destination. By these summary means we, at Bala Clava, shall be well rid of spies, if not cutthroats and cut-purses; and as Kamiesch is acting in the same way as Bala Clava, the Crimea will soon necessarily stand in a very improved position. We have had these Russian sympathisers and spies too long among us, but I am happy to say, the new system will gradually root them out. And a glorious capture has this week been made by the English police of a celebrated Russian spy, whose "pock-marked face" and "grey horse" have figured in our local Hue and Cry for some time past. He was this week literally "caught napping" in a hut on a sly spot, not a hundred miles from the Monastery and Karani; but now "Othello's occupation's gone." The French swear that had they caught him they would have shot him instanter. Another spy has just been taken near the monastery, where he has been in the habit of making night signals to the Russians, by bonfires and rockets.—Correspondent of Herald.

THE FETE OF ST. BARBE AT SEBASTOPOL.—At the fete of St. Barbe at Sebastopol, I believe I was the only Englishman present; and I had the pleasure of visiting every room in the city where the French artillerymen were assembled, at mess, and, moreover, the difficult task of drinking a verre with each chairman before leaving the room. Dark cloth was hung on the walls, and on this we perceived swords and bayonets and pistols, and rifles arranged in the most appropriate devices, intermingled with inscriptions of "Vive l'Empereur, Napoleon III." Every thing had a military turn, the chandeliers were pistols lashed around the circumference of two hoops, one above the other; so that, as the muzzles were all up, candles might be placed therein. The effect, when lighted up, was very pretty; and the tables were plentifully supplied. All the men were in full uniform. In their choruses, they almost drowned the noise of the Russian cannon, which fortunately were then not plied with the vigour of the preceding or following day. The weather was piercingly cold, with frequent squalls of rain; so that probably the Russian officers thought it best to shelter their men a little. But the pause in the firing benefited the French. The dinners among the officers were like all dinners among gentlemen. In the mess where I had the honour to dine (Captain Jaubert's), four Russian mortars stood on the four corners of the table, mouth downwards, and a socket was for the nonce attached to each to contain a wax candle. And then, overhead, the officers' pistols were arranged into chandeliers; but instead of such hoops as the men had, chains were here used, detached from bits and bridges, which produced a more brilliant effect; and then a wreath or two were introduced, formed of such leaves as could be collected in the month of December.

How OUR SOLDIERS ARE FED AND CLOTHED.—If our Allies, the French, had last winter the advantage over us in point of clothes and huts, they certainly have not this winter in one single point. No soldiers could be better clothed, better fed, and, one ought to be able to say, better huted than ours. Each man gets the following rations daily: 1 pound of bread or one pound of biscuit, 1 pound of meat, 1/2 gill of rum, 1 ounce of rice, 1-4 ounce of pepper to every eight men, 1-4 pound of preserved vegetables or 1/2 pound of potatoes, 2 ounces of candles to every twelve men, 4 1/2 pounds of wood or 2 1-2 pounds of coal, 2 ounces of sugar, 1 ounce of coffee or 1-4 ounce of tea, and 1-2 ounce of salt. When lime-juice is served out, an ounce is given to each man, but this last luxury is not given oftener now than once in three weeks. Fresh meat and good bread are always now served out daily, except on Sundays and Mondays, when salt meat and biscuit are given instead. As regards dress, each man gets, gratis, in addition to his usual kit in the field, 1 pair of long boots, 2 pair of drawers, 2 jerseys (blue or white, as he may prefer), 1 comforter, 1 pair of mits, 1 hood, 1 fur cap, 1 mackintosh and leggings, 1 pair of wooden clogs lined with wool, 1 extra rug, and 1 winter coat, in addition to his usual great coat.

RUSSIAN POLAND.—A person who returned from Poland not only confirms intelligence which has been received from that Province, but has communicated one or two facts which would seem to indicate, that if the war is carried on a year longer, there will be serious disturbance in Russia. The general levy is now going on in the kingdom of Poland, and the unfortunate peasants are driven together by the Cossacks "as if to a game at battue." The cordon of Cossacks along the Russian frontiers towards Austria is so close that the men are literally within hail of each other. However, not ten days ago several of the unfortunate recruits made a bold dash into the Vistula, and most of them managed to reach the Austrian territory. In the neighbourhood of the fortress of Zamosc 160 conscripts fled into the woods where they probably died of cold and hunger, as they have not since been heard of. The kingdom of Poland is one great theatre of misery, but the peasants have begun to display the energy of despair, and refuse "to robot" (?) for the proprietors of the soil, under the plea that, as they have not hands enough to till their own land, they cannot be expected to work gratuitously for other people. "If the inhabitants of Warsaw speak the truth, the same insubordination prevails in several of the other Russian provinces." The Russians are so jealous of persons coming from Austria, that the passports are sent on to Warsaw, and their owners must wait at the frontier station until permission to continue their journey has been sent from that city.

THE POWER OF SCHAMYL IN GEORGIA.—At the risk of destroying many romantic notions in the minds of my readers, I must plainly state that the indisciplined and badly armed rabble that comprises the followers of Schamyl, though invincible in their mountain fastnesses, are utterly harmless in the plains of Georgia. Nothing can be more absurd than to read the periodical victories recorded by the imaginative writers in the German papers, in which, as an example, 60,000 Circassians are represented as being within two days' march of Tiflis. The truth is this. When the fields have been sown, the mountaineers have leisure, until the harvest time approaches, to undertake a little foray, and a few hundred horsemen will assemble, and, descending from their mountain retreats, fall like a thunderbolt on some unsuspecting Russian village. The place is sacked, the inhabitants murdered in cold blood, or carried off as slaves, and the intrepid followers of Schamyl, loading their horses with the booty, bent a hasty retreat. It would be impossible for that chief to assemble and keep together any considerable force for a longer period than a week. If it were even in the power of Schamyl to provide food for his undisciplined force, his followers would, nevertheless, disperse, for it is for plunder alone, that the Circassian, Lesghien, or Daghestanese quits his mountain village. A single Russian dragoon regiment, backed by a troop of horse artillery, would suffice to rout any force that Schamyl could bring into the plains of Tiflis. Nobody is better aware of this than that chieftain himself, and he has displayed consummate wisdom in never having committed himself in any similar expedition. In their own inaccessible mountains and wooded heights, the Circassians and Daghestanese are beyond danger; but as a serious menace to Russian rule in the Transcaucasian provinces, they are not entitled to the credit and importance that has been bestowed on them in Europe.—Duncan's Campaign with the Turks in Asia. If the moon be made, as they say, of green cheese, we surely require a still-on to see it.

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