

A Russian Reconnaissance.

"A small detachment of troops from Krasnovodsk," says the *Invalide Russe*, "effected during the month of November a reconnaissance on the Transcasian military section, in the localities about Attrek. The expedition was made under the direction of General Lomakine, commander of the district, at the head of two companies of infantry conveyed by sea from Krasnovodsk to Tchikischliar, and which then marched along the right bank of the Attrek. The Turcomans of the country showed no hostility to the Russian troops when they landed, and several Yomoudes even served them as guides along the Attrek, and executed conscientiously commissions with which they were charged. General Lomakine arranged with Turcoman chiefs relative to the conditions under which these latter might entrench within the limits of the Transcasian region. They submitted willingly to the terms proposed, which consisted in the tribes which shall come on to the Russian territory having chiefs regularly elected, responsible for the good conduct of the nomads, engaging to inform the authorities of the places chosen for the encampments, and to serve in general as intermediaries between the Russian officials and the people. In conformity with these conditions the Atabai and the Djafarbai have appointed two khans, whose election has been confirmed by the commander of the detachment. The Tchikienks who encamped near Kooria-Daria have also manifested the intention to live on good terms with the Russians. On a demand made to them they gave up thirty two Yomoude prisoners captured in a razzia made on a camp at thirty eight versts (about twenty four miles) from Krasnovodsk, and sent a trading caravan and three chiefs, promising to surrender the remaining prisoners at the end of December by a second caravan to Krasnovodsk. The detachment returned to that place from the banks of the Attrek on the 2nd December. The sanitary state of the troops was excellent, and there was but one man on the sick list."—*Broad Arrow*, Jan. 9th.

The Brave Sailor-Lad.

A few days out from New York a great ship was overtaken by a terrible storm, which lasted nearly a week.

One day, at the height of the tempest, the rigging at the mainmast head got trangled, and some one had to go up and straighten it. The mate called a boy belonging to the ship, and ordered him aloft.

The lad touched his cap, but hesitated a moment; cast one frightened glance up and down at the swaying mast and furious sea, and then rushed across the deck and down into the fore-castle. In about two minutes he appeared, and without a word seized the ratlines—the rope ladder of the vessel—and flew up the rigging like a squirrel. With dizzy eyes the weather-beaten crew watched the poor boy at this fearful height. "He will never come down alive," they said to each other.

But in twenty minutes the perilous job was done, and the boy safely descended; and straightening himself up with a smile on his face, walked to the stern of the ship.

"What did you go below for when ordered aloft?" asked a passenger of the brave boy. "I went—to pray," replied the boy with a blush, and a quiver of the lip.—*Selected*,

Parliament Square.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE GROUNDS—NEW DEPARTMENTAL OFFICES.

The following is from the annual report of the Hon. Minister of Public Works:—

The fence or boundary wall on the line of Wellington street is finished. It extends from Dufferin Bridge to the new workshops. The iron railing is also complete. Designs for iron gates are prepared and approved. When the grounds are laid out they will be placed in position. Drawings have also been prepared for approach to the canal at or near Dufferin Bridge end of fence. It is proposed as an experiment to lay the sidewalk on Wellington street, from the gateway opposite the main entrance of East Departmental Building to Dufferin Bridge, with wood blocks.

The design, furnished by Mr. Marshall Wood, for the adornment of the grounds as exhibited in a large model, having been submitted to the Department, it was decided that it should not be adopted. A plan arranged by Mr. Calvert Vaux, of New York, and myself, was submitted and approved, and is now being carried out.

The main avenue, parallel to the line of Wellington street, is being brought to a level; the original grade had a rise in its length from east to west of nearly seven feet. One of the advantages gained by lowering the ground will be, that the basement rooms of the West Block, now dark and gloomy, will on the lowering of the present road obtain uninterrupted light, and will be rendered suitable for offices, &c. The level line of the road likewise will materially add to the appearance of the facade of the Central Buildings or Parliament House. The square is now being graded in accordance with the plan approved. When the alteration of grade to avenue was decided upon, extra drainage, new gas main and water pipes from the "City waterworks" were provided for, so that connections can be made when required. Since the date of Confederation the various departments have ingressed in their wants and requirements to a very great extent, and staffs of the several Departments have been largely augmented. Hence the accommodation in the two Departmental blocks has been found insufficient even with the additional accommodation provided in the attics of each. It has accordingly been decided that an addition to the West Block should be made, the sketch plans for which have been prepared and approved. This proposed extension will be a continuation of the westerly portion of the West Departmental Block, 245 feet in length, 60 feet in width, three stories in height with basement. The style of architecture in its external features will be in accordance with the present building, with improvements in internal arrangement suggested by experience, the whole is to be fire proof. Plans are now being prepared so that tenders can be obtained this year for the basement portion. This will expedite the work and give time for the consideration of the details required in the superstructure. The excavation is now being made by the contractor for this work at a schedule rate of prices. Cost is lessened and difficulty overcome by having one contractor only for both works.

Work done under the immediate superintendence of the Department.

Contractor for excavation and levelling, Mr. B. Gibson.

REVIEWS.

Blackwood's Magazine for January, 1875, republished by The Leonard Scott Publishing Co., is now ready. The following is the table of contents:

- I. "Giannetto."
- II. "Idas: an Extravaganza."
- III. "Alice Lorraine." Part X.
- IV. "The Abode of Snow."
- V. "The Story of Valentine and his Brother." Part XIII.
- VI. "The Life of the Prince Consort."
- VII. "The Great Problem: Can it be Solved?"

The new story which begins the first volume of the new year is told in a very quiet style by an Englishman, who spent a winter at Nice with an invalid daughter, during which time he met with Giannetto, an Italian fisherman. The interests are aroused and kept active by the mystery attached to this man, who suddenly received the power of speech and song when over twenty years of age, although he was born dumb. The story is to be continued.

"Idas: an Extravaganza," is an attempt to exhibit the tendencies of materialistic theories in their extreme issues.

"It is the depravation of social and political morals consequent upon the materialistic theory, thus developed far beyond the contemplation of its modern sponsors—the wildest excesses springing generically from the confounding the things essentially distinct, which that theory is grounded upon—that we have to deal with in the ensuing pages."

"The Abode of Snow" begins with an account of the "jhula," or bridges made of ropes of twisted birch twigs, which are neither safe nor pleasant to cross, but the greater part of the article is devoted to a description of the customs of the Tibetans, and especially the workings of polyandry.

A very entertaining article is the review of the first volume of Mr. Martin's "Life of the Prince Consort"—a book which "cannot fail to increase the admiration and reverence of the nation for the great and dutiful soul who lived a life obscured by its very greatness, in the midst of us, and who only now can be fully known."

G. R. Gleig—Chaplain-General—gives his views on the subject of religious belief in the paper entitled, "The Great Problem Can it be Solved?" which the author says is written "exclusively for those in whom, unfortunately for themselves, the principle of faith has been shaken."

It is a clear and comprehensive article, that cannot fail to interest any thoughtful reader.

The periodicals reprinted by THE LEONARD SCOTT PUBLISHING CO. (41 Barclay Street, N. Y.) are as follows: *The London Quarterly*, *Edinburgh*, *Westminster*, and *British Quarterly Reviews*, and *Blackwood's Magazine*. Price, \$4 a year for any one, or only \$15 for all.

Delmonico, the lion tamer, has been devoured at Berlin by one of his own lions.

It is reported that an unusually large concentration of troops in Russian Poland has taken place.

A Madrid despatch reports that General Loma has destroyed several cannon foundries of the Carlists in the Province of Quisquosa.