

News Department.

Press Papers by Steamer Canada, Feb. 2.

IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT.

HER MAJESTY'S SPEECH.

The Lord Chancellor then handed the Speech to the Queen, which was as follows:—

My Lords and Gentlemen,—

Since the close of the last Session of Parliament, the arms of the Allies have achieved a signal and most important success. Sebastopol, the great stronghold of Russia in the Black Sea, has yielded to the persevering constancy and to the daring bravery of the Allied forces. The naval and military preparations for the ensuing year have necessarily occupied my serious attention; but while determined to omit no effort which could give vigor to the operations of the war, I have deemed it my duty not to decline any overtures which might reasonably afford a prospect of a safe and honourable peace. Accordingly, when the Emperor of Austria lately offered to myself and to my august ally, the Emperor of the French, to employ his good offices with the Emperor of Russia, with a view to endeavor to bring about an amicable adjustment of the matters at issue between the contending Powers, I consented, in concert with my Allies, to accept the offer just made; and I have the satisfaction to inform you that certain conditions have been agreed upon which I hope may prove the foundation of a general treaty of peace.

Negotiations for such a Treaty will shortly be opened in Paris.

In conducting those negotiations I shall be careful not to lose sight of the object for which the War was undertaken; and I shall deem it right in no degree to relax my Naval and Military preparations until a satisfactory Treaty of Peace shall have been concluded.

Although the War on which I am engaged was brought on by events in the South of Europe, my attention has not been withdrawn from the state of things in the North, and, in conjunction with the Emperor of the French, I have concluded, with the King of Sweden and Norway, a Treaty containing defensive engagements applicable to his dominions, and tending to the preservation of the balance of power in that part of Europe.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,—

The Estimates for the ensuing year will be laid before you. You will find them framed in such a manner as to provide for the exigencies of War, if Peace should unfortunately not be concluded.

My Lords and Gentlemen,—

It is gratifying to me to observe that notwithstanding the pressure of the War, and the burthens and sacrifices which it has unavoidably imposed upon my people, the resources of my Empire remain unimpaired. I rely with confidence on the manly spirit and enlightened patriotism of my loyal subjects for a continuance of that support which they have so nobly afforded me, and they may be assured that I shall not call upon them for exertions beyond what may be required by a due regard for the great interests, the honor, and the dignity of the Empire.

There are many subjects connected with internal improvement which I recommend to your attentive consideration.

The difference which exists in several important particulars between the Commercial Laws of Scotland and those of the other parts of the United Kingdom, has occasioned inconvenience to a large portion of my subjects engaged in trade. Measures will be proposed to you for remedying this evil.

Measures will also be proposed to you for improving the laws relating to partnership by simplifying those laws, and thus rendering more easy the employment of capital in commerce.

The system under which Merchant Shipping is liable to pay local dues and passing tolls has been the subject of much complaint. Measures will be proposed to you for affording relief in regard to those matters.

Other important measures for improving the law in Great Britain and Ireland will be proposed to you, which will, I doubt not, receive your attentive consideration.

Upon these, and all other matters upon which you may deliberate, I fervently pray that the blessings of Divine Providence may favor your councils, and guide them to the promotion of the great object of my unvarying solicitude, the welfare and the happiness of my people.

At the conclusion of the reading of the Speech her Majesty and suite left the house.

WELCOME TO ADMIRAL LYONS.

On Monday the inhabitants of Christchurch, Hampshire, gave a hearty welcome to Admiral Lyons, their fellow-townsmen, who was born there on the 21st November, 1790. The gallant Admiral has been staying with his cousin, Admiral Walcott, the local representative, and resident in the neighbourhood. An address was presented on hustings erected in the centre of the town; to which the gallant Admiral, attended by his relatives (including Lord Arundel and Surrey, his son-in-law, and Lord Maltravers, his grandson), and friends was escorted in procession. The day was singularly auspicious, the neighbouring gentry for miles round were attracted to the scene, and the town presented an almost endless series of banners and triumphal arches:—

Admiral Walcott read the address, which congratulated Sir Edmund on revisiting the scene of his birth, after an eventful life spent chiefly abroad in the service of his country. It also related his rise, step by step, in his profession, until he succeeded to the command of the English fleet in the Black Sea, and how, among other exploits, without the loss of a single ship or a single life, he succeeded in conveying the army from Varna and landing it in the Crimea, where again he performed essential service to the country by the unanimity of his co-operation with the land forces, by the emulation he inspired, and the example he gave, and by the cord unity of his intercourse with our allies. It likewise complimented him for the heroic devotion which he breathed into the officers and seamen of the fleet, whom he never led but to victory, as at Kerch and Kinburn.

The Earl of Malmesbury elaborated the doeds recorded in the address, with much eulogy of the Admiral's gallantry. In reply, the feelings of the courageous sailor got the better of him, when he spoke of the position of every man of the fleet in the welcome he had received.

A luncheon followed, at which the Earl of Malmesbury presided, and, in proposing the health of the hero of the day, spoke of the unprepared state of the country for war when it was first entered upon: in illustration of which, he stated, when he accepted office in 1852 there was not fifty guns fit for service. Not only that, "the carriages of those guns were in such imperfect state that, at the funeral of the Duke of Wellington, when it was necessary that an escort of seventeen guns should attend his obsequies as a deceased Field-Marshal, it was some considerable time before that number could be found in a sufficient state of repair to travel safely the requisite distance over the streets of London." The noble lord spoke also of the ignorant calumny of some, and the personal pique and cruel jealousies of others, that caused the commanders sleepless nights and harassing days of mental fatigue supported only by an approving conscience, which should say to them, as he said now to his gallant friend, "You have done your duty." (Cheers.)

Admiral Sir Edmund Lyons replied in a most interesting speech, giving a graphic account of the personal observation of the battles fought by the soldiers. He said—"My lords, ladies, and gentlemen, you have done me the honour of associating my name with the names of those who have distinguished themselves in the Crimean campaign. I only wish that I felt myself deserving of the praise that you have so kindly bestowed upon me. But all I pretend to is an honest and earnest desire to do my duty to my Sovereign and to my country to the best of my humble ability. (Cheers.) The nature of the present war is such as to afford but few opportunities to fleets or large ships to take any prominent or distinguished part. In the Black Sea the Russian fleet has been self-annihilated, and we had the mortification of seeing their ships of war sunk beneath the waves by their own hands instead of by our broadsides. In the Baltic, again, the enemy's fleet has lain at anchor, secure under the shadow of their own granite walls and stupendous batteries. The commanders-in-chief in the Baltic have had to report many daring and successful exploits performed by the officers and men under their command, and I, on my part, have had the satisfaction of reporting what has taken place in the Sea of Azoff, where I think I may say, without any fear of contradiction, and with perfect safety, that the exertions of the commanders-in-chief have been seconded by as gallant a band of young officers as ever went forth in the service of their country. (Cheers.) And here, perhaps, it may not be irrelevant to say that, in the course of our expedition there, a letter was intercepted from the Emperor, in which his Imperial Majesty emphatically declared that he would almost as soon see the allies in his palace at St. Petersburg as in the Sea of Azoff. I should be ungrateful if I did not on this occasion

acknowledge the good service of the officers and men under my command, which showed itself in nothing more than in a hearty co-operation with the army. They conveyed the troops to the shores of the Crimea; they landed them there; they supplied them with food and matériel to carry on the siege for eleven months; nor was their sympathy ever wanting in the hour of sickness and suffering; and thus was fostered that kindly feeling between the two services which has from time to time brought forth such good fruits during this memorable campaign. (Cheers.) We saw from the decks of our ships the battle of the Alma. General Borquet, with the French division, passed almost within hail of the *Agamemnon*, and anything finer than his attack on the enemy's lines could scarcely be conceived. We saw the British army ford the Alma and form on the opposite bank under cover of the artillery, which, on that occasion, as on all others, peculiarly distinguished themselves throughout the Crimean campaign. We saw them also capture the position of the enemy, which the Russians thought impossible to be carried by any troops in the world. We saw them advance to the attack, and so striking was that movement that General Canrobert, at that time second in command of the French army, told me afterwards that he could only compare it to an English red brick wall supernaturally lifted up from the ground and propelled forward, so steadily, so unwavering, and so irresistible was that attack. (Cheers.) I saw likewise the charge at Balaklava, and, however that may be criticised in a strategical point of view, I believe that it will go down to history as one of the finest and most brilliant cavalry charges that was ever made since the world began. (Cheers.) No man could have seen that chivalrous action, as I did, without feeling proud of his country and grateful to the gallant band who engaged in it. And at the battle of Inkermann, again, I had a still closer view of that memorable conflict. On that day great and heroic deeds were performed. Each man in the French and English army fought as if the fate of the battle and the honour of the allies depended on his own individual exertions. (Cheers.) And great and glorious were the results, and I should think of it to the end of my days with the greatest pleasure and satisfaction, did there not come with it the alloy of the battle-field; but that is the natural and inseparable concomitant of war. We saw, too, from the decks of our ships, the final attack on Sebastopol, in which, however, a violent gale of wind prevented us taking part. We saw all the alternations of the struggle of three hours, which terminated so triumphantly for the allies. We saw the French rush out from their trenches into the Malakoff. We saw also their attack on the Little Redan, where, after performing prodigies of valour, they were unable to maintain a position. The attack on the Great Redan was, to some extent, concealed from our view by the intervening hills, but I am well acquainted with the position and the circumstances of the attack, and here I may perhaps be permitted to say, in reference to it, that while our brave allies, the French, favoured by the nature of the ground and protected by the fire of the English batteries, were enabled to carry their sap within thirty or forty yards of the Malakoff, it was not so with our troops. Every step they took was enfiladed by the enemy's batteries, and they were unable to approach nearer than from 220 to 250 yards of the Great Redan. Nevertheless, our troops, when called upon, rushed out of the trenches to the attack, and although decimated, and more than decimated, in the passage across the intervening ground, they succeeded in effecting a lodgment in the battery, and would probably have retained it, but they found that, unlike the Malakoff, which was encircled all round, the Redan was open in the rear, and thus the enemy was enabled to pour in an overwhelming body of troops, and so to recover the position as often as it was wrenched from them. There is another circumstance, also, which is not generally known, but of the truth of which I assured myself by asking General Niel the other day in Paris. When the French made their unsuccessful attack on the 18th of June, it was only discovered afterwards that they had only spiked the enemy's guns imperfectly, which in their retreat were unavoidably turned upon our allies. A more positive order on this subject was subsequently issued, and on the 8th of September all the guns in the Redan were too effectually spiked by the English, and thus rendered useless to repel the advances of the enemy's hordes from the rear. It was utterly impossible to withstand the overpowering numbers that rushed in. But I glory in being able to say that never was British courage more conspicuously displayed than on that day. (Loud cheers.) The example of the gallant Welford, who fell gloriously in the action, and of the brave Hand-