

Hitherto it has been found impossible to touch the fleet, which has been able to shell the British camp, and has caused severe loss on certain occasions. Whether the town will suffer much from this new fire is not ascertained, but there can be no doubt, that it will be more destructive than any which has been yet brought against the enemy. The dreadful state of the road has prevented these heavy guns being brought up before, and the small force of our army has rendered it impossible to devote any number of men to the construction of a better route. However, the French have again given most ready assistance. The 27th of the Line and a regiment of Zouaves were set to work on the 12th in the neighborhood of Balaklava, and in a single day had completed nearly half a mile of solid well-laid road. With the present fine weather the whole will probably be completed in a few days, and the British army will be more easily supplied with provisions and munitions of war. The sufferings of our men a week ago were very great. All the commissariat mules were dead or disabled, the carts had broken down, and the men at the front had nothing to eat. For many days they were on half rations, and many, I believe, did not get so much. A mouthful or two of pork and a little biscuit was the supply of men who had to labor night and day, and who were exposed to all the inclemencies of a damp and rainy season. Ten days since the mortality was very great; for three days it reached eighty a day, and the dead formed only a small part of those who were rendered ineffective for work. Now that the road is in better order it is hoped that the commissariat will make renewed efforts to supply the troops regularly and well, and that during the rest of the campaign they will suffer no losses but those which are inseparable from a state of warfare. The *Royal Albert* arrived in the Bosphorus on the 15th, and proceeded yesterday to Sebastopol. Accustomed as we are to the sight of the finest vessels in the world brought together in a narrow space, yet it was impossible to withhold admiration from this splendid ship, which seems as manageable in the water as a frigate, and towers above everything that has been seen in this quarter of the globe during the present eventful year. The only thing that occurs to lessen the pride and pleasure of beholding her is the consideration whether such gigantic vessels be really the most effective in warfare, particularly in these narrow and shallow seas, where the chief difficulty of the battle lies in bringing the ships close enough for effective action. However, if any one can manage such vast bulks with success, it is the eminent commander who will take the command of the Black Sea fleet, and who has gained already so great a reputation for gallantry and devotion in the operations before Sebastopol.

SCENES IN BALAKLAVA.—A correspondent of the *Evening Mail* tells us how the British Admiral can bandy compliments with his Muscovite friends:—Admiral Dundas sent a Cheddar cheese as a present to the Russian Admiral, whom he had formerly been intimate with at Athens, with a punning note that he had greater pleasure in presenting him with it than with a ball. The opportunity for this piece of politeness was afforded by the sending on shore, under flag of truce, of the officer exchanged for Lord Dunkellin. The said officer dropped a tear at parting with the English! You may remember my alluding to his capture, near Mackenzie's Farm, sitting in a carriage in a most comfortable state of drunkenness. The smell emanating from the harbor on entering the town is quite mephitic, nay, pestilential. The graves are multiplying in the valley at a wondrous rate, whole bodies of Turks digging and burying; about four corpses passed me in about as many minutes. Coffins have long ceased to be made use of, whether for Moslem or Christian; all are buried together, regardless of distinction of creed. The sick were being brought down from the camp and embarked for Scutari in shoals. The ambulance waggons were all at work, and the French had lent us their mules, with cradles on each side, for conveyance of the sick. Nine hundred were thus carried, and put on board ship. The actual camp sick amounted yesterday morning to 3,500—that of the English expeditionary force, I believe, in toto to 11,000. The number of horses, mules, and oxen, dead and dying along the road, would make a new-corn look aghast. Some fresh "difficulties" are, I understand, in store for the medical department, not wholly undeserved. The French sick are well provided for, and most systematically. This fine weather will permit the guns and ammunition to be got up to the heights. More ships, with drafts for regiments, arrived this afternoon. What is going to be done next? is a question that you will naturally wish to put regarding Sebastopol. My idea, not unfounded, is, that as soon as ever the fresh supply of guns and ammunition can, by weather favoring or otherwise, be got into their places over against the besieged town, that a fresh combined allied bombardment, fast and furious, will be made for probably not less than forty-eight continuous hours, then an assault and storm, and let us hope, the capture of the place. These schemes failing, I think it not unlikely that the siege will be raised and a bloody battle will decide the first campaign in the Crimea. I walked to the Light Division camp, and found my friends all more cheerful, influenced by the genial change of weather. Poor Major Straton of the 77th had gone for Balaklava, by order, to embark for Scutari for the recovery of his health. Though gradually sinking for some time past, he manfully declined to be put upon the sick list till absolutely compelled by weakness. Several of my acquaintances have this died during the last four months. To give you an instance of the scandalous want of ordinary medical agents (be the fault where it may), I relate as follows:—As I was leaving the encampment, a soldier called me to say that an officer, a friend of mine, wished to see me, but was too ill and in too much pain to rise. I found him in a very pitiable state of

illness, for which he wished to apply a large blister, but he told me that there was no such thing in the whole Light Division.

The following is an extract of an interesting but truthful letter from the Crimea:—

Balaklava, Dec. 15.

The French have got up 150 new guns, including 45 mortars, and are ready to draw up the curtains. Two fine days have come, and we are getting up our large mortars, &c. The men suffer dreadfully from bad arrangements of all sorts. The French, with no transports, compared to us, are well supplied with everything. Out of 230 men, who, from wounds at Inkermann, had legs and arms amputated, 27 have died. We borrowed hay for our horses the other day from the French. However, warm clothing and other supplies are now being issued, and do great good. The Guards who have just come out have the old musket. We have no Minies for them, or at Constantinople! This is a positive fact. Thirty-five thousand Turks are to go to Eupatoria, and 12 batteries. If they don't fight they will serve to draw off some Russians, which will relieve us considerably. The Russians die by hundreds; they are very badly hurted in. Our reinforcements are too young—not soldiers—they cannot handle a firelock; they are food for the hospitals. If our new batteries do not knock the place in we shall never take it. Why the deuce did government send 20,000 diseased men from Varna to take the strongest fortress in Europe, incomplete in every military sense? If the troops suffer so much now, what will it be when the real bad weather comes on, in this land which the *Times* tells us is flowing with milk and honey?—*Morning Herald.*

PROGRESS OF THE SIEGE.—CONSTANTINOPLE, Dec. 21.—On the 16th the Russians made a sortie by night, but were repulsed by the French, after a severe struggle. The Rifles also repulsed a Russian sortie. Our mortars and batteries are ready to open, but the heavy rains impede the progress of the siege, and cause great sickness. General Adams died of his wounds on the 19th. Since the 16th of November, 24,000 English, French, and Turks had arrived in the Crimea in British vessels. The Turks at Eupatoria have been much strengthened from Varna.

A GENERAL ENGAGEMENT.—Despatches represent both parties as equally eager and ready for a general engagement; if the following be true, however, the Muscovite has taken the first step:—

VIENNA.—The following telegraphic news is in several of our papers this morning, but does not deserve implicit confidence:—"Odessa Dec. 25.—A courier has just brought intelligence that General Liprandi's corps, powerfully reinforced, is attacking Balaklava."

A correspondent of the *Daily News* assures us that the Allies are perfectly prepared for any contingency:—

CONSTANTINOPLE, Dec. 20.—The extraordinary activity which now prevails in every department of the military service gives great plausibility to the widely circulated report that Russia is secretly and quietly concentrating her forces, and determined to bring affairs in the Crimea to an immediate issue. It is said that the Czar has sent the most pressing and imperative orders to Prince Menschikoff to again attempt to force the British line, whilst Admiral Nachimoff, with the newly re-armed line-of-battle ships, is, at the same time, to quit the port, sail to the northward, and bombard Eupatoria, in which he will be supported on the land side by the troops under Prince Gortschakoff, who has lately received considerable reinforcements, and whose orders are to make himself master of the place *à tout prix*. When this movement has been successfully effected, the whole of the Russian forces will move to the south, concentrate themselves under Fort Constantine, and attack the Allies. To neutralise this dangerous plan by taking the initiative, is now the great problem to be solved by the Allies, and the extraordinarily active service of mounted couriers seen galloping every day between this city and Varna gives certainly credence to the supposition that some step of very great importance is being prepared and on the eve of being taken. Amongst other things, it is determined to retain, under all circumstances, the important, but hitherto rather neglected position of Eupatoria. It is alleged that the possibility of continuing to hold that place depends in a great measure on the success of a scheme emanating from no less a personage than the Emperor Napoleon himself. The particulars of this new plan of operations are, of course, kept secret by those military men acquainted with it, but from what has leaked out in conversation, I believe that your readers will find the following a pretty correct general outline:—Immediately after the receipt of the reinforcements now on their way to the Crimea from England and France the bombardment of Sebastopol will be re-commenced with greater energy than even at first. On the day after the French will storm the place, while the British and Ottoman forces will attack Menschikoff's troops. The Turks under Omer Pasha, who will by that time have landed at Eupatoria, will simultaneously attack the Russian positions at Simpheropol, whilst another division of the Turkish expedition, landed at Kopary, will at once march to the northward, and make itself master of the Isthmus of Perokop. After the storming of Sebastopol, General Canrobert and Lord Raglan will march towards Bakhiserai to obtain possession of that important position, leaving sufficient troops to invest the northern forts, and cut off all communication with the Russian army in the field, and then join Omer Pasha in the neighborhood of Simpheropol, where the decisive struggle will take place. The latest despatches from both Paris and London are said to finish with the words, "Sebastopol shall and must be taken."

The *Times* says—"It can no longer be doubted, or even denied, that the expedition to the Crimea is in a state of entire disorganization. All attempts to

deny it only end in admitting the fact, and all excuses only throw the blame from one department to another. There is not a single thing requisite to the efficiency of an army, excepting only the personal courage of officers and men, that is not gone almost beyond the reach of remedy. At the last date the army was on half-rations; some regiments were two days without food; the soldiers, and even most of the officers, were miserably ill-clad and ill-shod; still without any sufficient protection from the rain overhead and the pool under foot; they lived in perpetual water and damp; there was no drainage, and the whole camp was a sea of mud and filth, the hospital marquees being surrounded by the worst nuisances. There was still no road from the port at Balaklava. Three or four thousand horses had perished from hunger, exposure, and overwork, and the remaining few were reduced to mere skeletons; several regiments had been draughted off to the duty of beasts of burden, to carrying food and other supplies from the port to the camp; the winter clothing that had arrived at Balaklava could not be distributed, simply because there were not the means of conveying it to the camp; the mortality was certainly not less than 60 a-day, while the number daily sent to the hospitals and not expected to resume service during the winter was very much greater; there was a want of guns, of mortars, of shot, of shells, of fuel, of materials to make huts—of everything whatever necessary not merely to offensive or defensive operations, but to mere existence; and the army was disappearing or only sustained by daily reinforcements, not because it was in the face of an enemy, but simply, as it would in the heart of a desert, for want of all things by which life is supported. We cannot glance over the letters before us without discovering more and more deficiencies. As for the soldiers, poor fellows! they know their own wants, and that is all they can tell. The officers either look death in the face, and resolve to stay on, or escape home on some pretence or other; sickened of a service which refuses fair play to the greatest courage and skill. The medical officers, no ill judges, were predicting that two-thirds of the army would perish before March. Everybody of any energy and sense was sinking, not into apathy or inertness, but into despair. Meanwhile, Lord Raglan had scarcely been seen since the battle of Inkermann. There was a general belief that he did not know the state of things; that he felt himself wholly unequal to amend it, and that he accordingly kept out of sight the ills he could not remove.

"Unfortunately for the credit of those in command, but fortunately for truth and the eventual interests of this country, there existed the means of ascertaining how far this frightful disorder was inseparable from the design of the expedition, the situation of the army, and the climate, and how far it was the result of mismanagement. There was the French army, nearly twice the number, hard by. Here all was different. The men were still well fed, and well-looking, not the skeletons and scarecrows to which our own countrymen have dwindled; they were well clothed and retained even some smartness of uniform, while our soldiers were creeping about with haybands round their feet, and in greatcoats that scarce held together; their huts were generally up and weather-tight; they had plenty of food, with the command even of luxuries; they had a sufficiency of waggons and ambulances, with great abundance of mules in good condition; they could lend men to make a road for us, having completed a hard road from their own harbor before the bad weather set in. The contrast prevailed throughout every department, and was brought home to the British soldier in the most painful manner. Thus it was with something between admiration and disgust that the British army, which had not seen anything more than the anatomy of a horse for many a day, and which was obliged to harness forty to drag up one gun, saw the ambulance mules lent us by the French for the conveyance of our own sick, as well fed and strong as the day they were landed at Gallipoli. Wherever the British come across the French it is to witness the same mortifying contrast, and it is impossible not to draw the conclusion that the French are an army, and the British are not. In all domestic and civil affairs we pride ourselves on our organization, order, neatness, comfort, and abundance of all the materials of health and strength. In the scale of war we are found utterly wanting in these things. It is impossible to check the process of reasoning which refers to the fault of system a difference so marked and so disgraceful.—The British soldier cannot but perceive that the Frenchman is commanded by officers who understand their profession, and, what is more, feel a paramount interest in the condition of the common soldier;—whereas this cannot be the case in his own army."

IRISH INTELLIGENCE.

His Holiness Pope Pius IX. has appointed the Very Rev. Dr. McEnery dean of the diocese of Ardferd and Aghadoc.—*Tralee Chronicle.*

The site for a convent for the sisterhood of the Order of Charity was on Thursday marked out in the vicinity of Crumlin Road, in the presence of the Right Rev. Dr. Denver, Bishop of the diocese, and several of the influential Catholic inhabitants of this town. The site selected is contiguous to the Catholic Diocesan Seminary.—*Belfast Mercury.*

The pastoral of the Archbishop of Tuam contains advice with which the heart of the country will sympathise. He cannot recommend Catholics to enter the British army or navy while their religious duties are neglected or ignored. Nobly and wisely said.—If this tone were taken by Irish bishops and priests, we would not be for ever begging our rights, and for ever begging in pain. So spoke the great fathers of the Church when the souls, bodies, or temporal rights of the people were in danger.—*Nation.*

FATHER MATHEW.—Recent accounts from Madeira convey the pleasing intelligence of an improvement in the health of our venerated countryman, the generality of that island, where the thermometer seldom ranges below 75 degs. in the shade, having contributed to alleviate the malady from which the good Father suffers. We are also gratified to learn, that though far distant from those amongst whom the greater part of his life was devoted, and by whom he was more immediately surrounded and beloved, Father Matthew has experienced from the principal inhabitants of the island those civilities and attentions which are calculated to render a sojourn amongst strangers agreeable. It appears that notwithstanding the delightful climate of Madeira, the people

there are enduring much distress, from an extensive failure in the grape crops; and when we remember the extraordinary exertions of Father Mathew on behalf of our own poor, we are not surprised to hear that his sympathetic heart has been excited by the scenes which at present surround him. We earnestly hope to see him return at no distant period in renewed health.—*Cork Examiner.*

THE MAYNOOTH REPORT.—Copies of the draught report have been for some time in the hands of the commissioners, for approval or amendment as may best seem fit, and it is anticipated, that the closing deliberations will not extend beyond five additional sittings. Chief Baron Pigot is still an invalid in the south of Spain, but it is said that the other commissioners are already in possession of the right hon. gentleman's general views with regard to the terms of the report.—*Times Co.*

MINISTERS' MONEY (IRELAND) BILL.—The Commissioners appointed by Government to carry out Sir John Young's act, passed last session, for a re-arrangement of the tax levied as "Ministers' money," have just completed their labors. It will scarcely be credited that this obnoxious impost, the old source of endless sectarian bickerings, amounts, in the seven cities and towns in which it is collectable, to the paltry sum of £15,000, divided among some seven-and-thirty clergymen of the Established Church. Of these Dublin monopolises nearly two-thirds of the gross income, the sub-division of which exhibits a "sliding scale" of remuneration to the several incumbents which, to the uninitiated in localities, would seem to be almost ludicrously disproportionate.

CHURCH "REFORMERS."—The Dublin Protestant Association—whose efforts to effect an alliance, "offensive and defensive," with the right hon. member for Buckinghamshire, are now pretty clearly understood—have, at the instance of their clerical leader (the Rev. Dr. Gregg, unanimously agreed to the following resolution:—"That we esteem the present mode of nominating the prelates of our church as questionable in point of principle and of injurious operation upon the spiritual interests of the empire, and that, if it were superseded by a system of procedure which, duly recognising the paramount authority of the Monarch as the most dignified member of our church, and its legal head, should assign to the clergy and the lay members of the church conjointly a due influence in the appointment, the change could not fail to operate wholesomely; and that, with a view to the elucidation of public opinion on the subject, the letter of the Rev. Canon Stowell, of the 1st of August, on the subject, be entered on the minutes; and that the committee be instructed to ascertain, as far as practicable, how the Protestant public is affected towards the proposal of that highly respected divine."

Alderman Boyce was inaugurated Lord Mayor of Dublin, with the usual formalities, on Monday.

Trade in the Irish metropolis continues dull, and as yet there is no sign of amendment.

The breadth of land under crops in Ireland in 1853 was less by 42,263 acres than in 1852, and this year less by 119,737 acres than in 1851.

Mr. John O'Connell, M.P., and Mr. Daniel O'Connell, M.P., have accepted commissions in the Irish militia.

THE POLICE—THE WAR.—Ten young men from this county and city (Limerick) enlisted as drivers to the commissariat service in the Crimea, left Limerick on Thursday last for Dublin en route for Turkey. They were a hardy, active group of young Irishmen. Their pay will only be 2s 6d a day with rations. All the mounted police of Ireland, about 300 in number, are ordered to Dublin. For the purpose, it is thought, of selecting such of their horses as may be fit for service in the Crimea and accepting the services of such of the men as may be induced to volunteer.

The cavalry regiments in Ireland have received orders to raise each 120 men, instead of sixty already authorised. For each of the cavalry corps in the East, and have been directed to use every means in their power to have the men drilled within the prescribed period allowed for cavalry instruction—viz., four months in order that strong reinforcements of draughts and remnants may be ready for active service in the spring. The commanding officers have been instructed to pay particular attention to the riding drill, in order that the men may have a good seat on horseback.

WANTED—AN ARMY.—We are now able to estimate the value of those assurances so repeatedly made in the British parliament and elsewhere, that the Irish people were thronging in hundreds to swell the ranks of the new Militia. Here is the reluctant testimony of the *Evening Mail*:—

The letters which are received almost daily from all parts of the country, tend to develop the utter and total insufficiency, the gross absurdity, of the present attempt to raise this national force through the medium of volunteering. Except in a very few instances, the "call" seems unheard or unheeded.—The number proposed to be enrolled amounts, we believe, to something near thirty thousand men; of this number, we have reason to think, that the volunteers have not exceeded one thousand, or, at most, twelve hundred; and how many of those will ultimately make their appearance, is to be seen. The fact is, the system, concocted in England, and under impressions entirely English, is not understood in this country, or suited to the general habits of its population. The volunteer comes forward, is duly enrolled and attested, and pockets his ten shillings, and his "bringer" five; he is then sent about his business until his services are wanted, of which he is to get notice through the Post-office! Well, off he goes, but whither? In a majority of cases, he has neither home nor business—he has thrown up the one with the other; the 10s quickly find their way "down thatbourne from whence no 'cash' returns," and what is he to do? The poor ignoramus, expecting, erroneously to be sure, that he was to come more immediately into employment, and he, perhaps, has heard the old military saying, "no pay, no soldier," and sheer want sends him off to some recruiting party of the line nine or ten miles away, or to the militia regiment of another and distant county to pocket another ten shilling. To be sure, in his attestation into the line, he is to swear that he "does not belong to the militia;" but this oath he swallows with no qualm of conscience, under the impression that he does not actually belong to a service wherein he is neither paid, fed, nor clothed, and of which it might be difficult to identify him as a member, after the hurried interview he has had with the officer or clerk who enrolled him, and the justice before whom he was hastily attested."