

THE FAILURE OF OUR VICTORIES.

We cannot say that we are altogether satisfied with the conduct of the war. There are people, doubtless, who will not be surprised at this avowal. When were we satisfied? What do we expect? Is war to proceed with the regularity and certainty of a cotton mill or an express train? Nevertheless, often as we have made the complaint before, we have good reason for it still. We are not about to complain of delay and reverses: on the contrary, we are about to complain of a very great success, which has taken us by surprise, and which we are wholly unprepared to follow up. In fact, such is our want of forethought and preparation, that we turn our very triumphs into failures. It was once said of a great general, that he made a better use of his defeats than his antagonists did of their victories, and we are doing the very contrary, that is, we are committing the stupidity charged on the antagonists in question. All the world is singing our success at Sweaborg. We have surpassed ourselves. Our fleet in the Baltic has so often looked at a fortress, shelled it for an hour or two, and then sailed away, pronouncing the fortress impregnable, that we are really astonished to find we have regularly shelled out, burnt, and blown up a first-class fortress, without any harm to our own men and shipping. We are not only astonished—we are stupefied, paralyzed, and rendered utterly helpless at our own sudden success. So it appears we are equally helpless, equally "struck all of a heap," by disaster and success. Of the two, of course, it is more agreeable to die of joy than of grief; but when a man is dead, it signifies little what he has died of, and till we can die to some purpose, it is better not to die at all. So we take the liberty of entreating that for the future, matters may be so arranged and prepared that we shall not die of our victories, but may make a businesslike use of them, and make them the parents of more victories. Indeed, we always imagined—so, at least, we were taught in our school books—that the chief use of a victory, especially one entirely unexpected, was its moral effect—the encouragement of the victor, and the prostration of the vanquished; whereas the immediate result of our last great victory in the Baltic is the utter prostration of the allies, and, by a natural consequence, the great encouragement of the Russians. The latter, who a month ago were trembling in all their ports, wondering whose turn would come next, and where the fatal blow would be struck, may now be at ease. They may take breath, and go about their defences in a more deliberate manner. Why? Because the allies have gained a great victory. They have done their work for the year. As a correspondent naively expresses it, "With the bombardment of Sweaborg, the operations of the Baltic fleet will, in all probability, be brought to a close for this season." Now, what is the reason for this singular determination? It is not merely that the dramatic idea of unity requires one success for a year; nor yet that the mind of an admiral is only capable of conceiving one idea, and carrying out one design, in the course of a year. We are aware that Boards, and distinguished functionaries, and great generals and captains who have grown old without much service, are apt to be slow and periodical in production. But in the present instance, the reason which turns a splendid victory into a real defeat is the original imprudence of not having a reserve of mortars in the Baltic! Did we say a reserve of mortars? Why, we had not a single mortar to spare! Nay, we ran it rather close even at home: for, when the news came that we had used up all our mortars, the first impression here was, that we had none to take their place. Of all things in the world there is nothing so easy to make, so cheap in its material, and so little inconvenient to keep in store, as a mortar. It is simply a mass of cast iron, that may be turned out at any foundry, and of which any number might be stored at the public establishments. Properly painted, it keeps itself for ever. What is more, it is its own storekeeper, for, though there may be difficulty in ascertaining the number of cartridges, or knapsacks, or even tents, one could not easily walk through the yard of an arsenal without counting the mortars. The wear and tear of ordnance, too, was a matter of notoriety. At the very beginning of the war, there appeared statements in all the papers to the effect that an ordinary iron cannon became useless after four or five hundred rounds; and, though it appears our guns in the Crimea must have served us better than this, the computation has proved a little over the mark with our mortars in the Baltic. The account of their failure is curious:—"The average number of shells thrown by the mortars during the late bombardment was about 220 each; one was disabled by the breaking of the pin on which it revolved at the 95th round; another burst at the 114th; another at the 148th; one became useless at the 213th; and the Growler's held out well until 355 rounds had been fired from it when it burst. The remainder of the 16 were all more or less damaged." The causes of failure were well known beforehand; the substance of the mortar is crystallized, as it has been expressed, by the progress of a multi-

tude of small internal fractures at each successive shock. The surface exposed to the action of the powder is honeycombed, and there is also an escape of fire in the act of explosion. All this is known, and that not vaguely. Never was there so easy and simple a calculation, and never was there so direct and inevitable an inference, as that, when we had duly bombarded the place and spent so many shells, our mortars would also be spent and effete. Nevertheless, we are wholly unprepared for that result. At the end of the affair, we are surprised to find that we are placed *hors de combat*. The disastrous intelligence is telegraphed with due pomp—nay, with a species of triumph, as an additional proof of the work we had done. Thereupon the Admiral in the Baltic prepares to send home the gun-boats—that is, his only serviceable weapon; and all the fleet very naturally concludes the season to be over. But so little had this certain and measurable result been provided for, or even thought of, at home, that the Admiralty and the fleet were at cross-purposes as soon as it occurred; for while Admiral Dundas was sending home all his mortar-vessels, the Admiralty was detaching the *Sanspareil* from her Majesty's escort in the Channel, summoning her to Woolwich, and loading her with mortars to go out to the Baltic. When, then, in due time the Admiralty heard that the mortar-boats were actually on their way home, they had to send out a second steamer to stop the mortar-boats and collect them somewhere in the Baltic to receive their new mortars somewhat nearer to the scene of action, in the faint hope that they may do a little more work before Christmas, 1855. We must say, that the actual results are an immense deduction from the boasted victory. Just consider how the matter really stood at the close of the bombardment between us and the Russians. We had not silenced their batteries, but we had silenced our own. The two immense fleets were helpless, except to keep the Russians in harbour. The big ships might have carried any number of mortars, carriages and all, as ballast; in fact, one ship is now taking out mortars enough for the whole flotilla. In 48 hours a perfectly new mortar might have been substituted for every spent one, and the gun-boats might have presented themselves as the heralds of their own victory at Revel, or Riga, or even Cronstadt, before the enemy had time to adapt his defences to the very important fact established at Sweaborg. He had evidently made a miscalculation there, and was not prepared for the means at our command; he has probably made the same miscalculation elsewhere, and is equally unprepared, if we are only prepared to repeat the blow. This, unfortunately, we are not. So we are forced to leave him time to improve the occasion, and our victory of Sweaborg is only a lesson in self-defence which we give Russia, at no great cost to her, but at immense cost to ourselves. Our people, indeed, are, attempting to calculate the damage we have done in pounds sterling. But, if this is to be the single achievement of the season in the Baltic, we fear the balance is sadly against us, for the fleets in that sea have not cost the allies a farthing under ten millions a-piece, and the utmost damage we can boast to have done at Sweaborg is a million and a-half, or thereabouts. The mere pecuniary results of the season, then, are immensely against us. That, however, is a small affair. The worst is, that we have thrown away the opportunities of this year just for want of looking forward and being prepared for the contingency of success. Next year, doubtless, we shall have mortars enough; but the Russians will then be prepared for us, and we may not be able to go through our pretty but destructive dance of gun-boats, just within range, with the same success. The truth is, the Russians learn faster than we do, and will always be just so much a head of us to set at defiance our immense superiority of wealth and mechanical skill. At least, they will do so till there is rather more of the *vicida vis animi*, which is ever foreseeing and providing for the future in our conduct of the war.

THE RUSSIAN ORATOR.—The *London Punch* says, "the *Invalide Russe* and the *Journal de St. Petersburg* have gained a great accession of literary talent in the article of a contributor. That individual is the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone; late Chancellor of her Majesty's Exchequer, whose speeches in Parliament in behalf of the Russian cause will be published in those journals, and will powerfully tend to animate the subjects of the Czar against the allies. We are not prepared to state, what the Right Hon. Gentleman will get by his contributions to the Russian papers; but we trust, that the University of Oxford will give him the sack."

A new Province has recently been added to Holland by draining the ground over which the Sea of Haarlem washed; 29,000 acres of land having thus been reclaimed by this operation.

THE BOMBARDMENT OF SWEABORG.

At five minutes past eight, the signal to commence action was made, and the ball was opened by a shell from the Pickle mortar vessel, which was anxiously watched to see how far our range was good. To our great satisfaction it fell on the very top of the citadel, close to a flag-staff where waved the Royal standard of Russia. (It is supposed that the Archduke Constantine was at Sweaborg.) And now the row began in earnest. All along our line bang went the 13-inch mortars, charged with Valenciennes, and other ignitable composition. In dashed the gun-boats, firing as they advanced, rushing in at full speed, till within 3,000 yards of the forts; then wheeling sharp round, and making way for those astern of them. "Hurrah Johnny!" Off go the mortars from the island battery (which I don't think the Russians had seen before); but don't imagine we have it all our own way. A moment had not elapsed, after we had opened fire, when, from every embrasure, from guns *en barbette*, from mortar batteries, from the line-of-battle ships at the entrance of the harbour, and from the guns on the heights of Bakhholmen, off went missiles of all descriptions; and though many fell short, the disagreeable sound in the ear of passing shell or red hot shot was much too frequent to be pleasant. As our fellows got nearer, they thought nothing of that sort of thing, both soldiers and sailors' whole mind and energy being directed to pitch into the "Rhossians" and revenge Hango (many of the shell and shot were marked HANGO). The fire was kept up with spirit on both sides, with hardly any casualties on ours, until nearly twelve o'clock, when one of the most awful and terrific explosions ever witnessed took place close to the citadel. I can only compare it to a violent eruption of Vesuvius. A whole fort was blown up, thousands of shot and shell were thrown into the air, the latter bursting as they rose; and what appeared the most extraordinary was, that it seemed as if it were never to cease. Pillars of smoke, intermingled with shot, shell, and some affirm guns, constantly rolling out of us, it were, the bowels of the earth. The sea for half a mile was immensely agitated and covered with foam. Firing on both sides ceased for the moment, but as soon as the first burst of astonishment had subsided, the air resounded with the cheers of the allies, not only from those engaged but from the vessels outside, whose rigging and yards were covered with men; but "Don't let them rest," was the order. "Blaze away, my boys!" and carcasses and shell and red-hot shot were thrown as near the fire, to make confusion more confounded. Not another gun did they fire, for more than an hour. The flames caused by the explosion spread rapidly; and building after building, barracks, stores, and small magazines burnt and blew up right and left. This entirely new method of warfare appears to have staggered the enemy; and doubtless, it is a great triumph of naval service. If we had had these vessels out here in the beginning of the season, or double the number now, Cronstadt must fall and probably all the ships be burned. The whole of the right part of the place being in flames at four o'clock, our fire was directed on the dockyard and arsenal, which lies on the inside of the island, and we now saw a light smoke rising above the town. As the evening shut in the enemy gave us some warm salutes, but though several shells burst on board mortar and gunboats, by what I call almost a miracle, nobody was seriously hurt.

HELSINGFORS IS SPARED.

Some French gunboats, wishing to take up a better position, sent a couple of gigs to sound a little to the westward, when the town of Helsingfors opened fire upon them from some batteries close under their beautiful church. It would be an easy task indeed for us to burn Helsingfors to the ground, but we have spared it, and only attacked their fortress, from a wish not to destroy private property; but, when our mercy is treated with such base return, we are almost provoked to turn the heads of our little gunboats in that direction. Yet it is evident they expect us to respect certain places, and avoid firing on certain spots, for on one huge building to the westward of Helsingfors, is a piece of canvass stretching from chimney to chimney, with the words "Lunatic Asylum" painted in large black letters upon it; yet within 300 yards of it they have three immense batteries—one immediately under it, and the others on either side; and about half a mile to the east of it, several hundred men were engaged building a mortar-battery and magazine, and covering the latter with sand. This little transaction caused Admiral Penard to observe that "there was much more honour in burning Sweaborg, but there would be more satisfaction in destroying Helsingfors."

After three months' incessant labor, the Russians have replaced the great bell in the tower of San Juan, on the Kremlin, which our readers perhaps recollect, on being tolled for the late Czar, fell and broke through no less than three separate stories of vaults, killing five persons on the spot. The bell is said to be the largest in the world, weighing no less than 80,000 pounds.

ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

Minutes Committee Meeting, Sep. 5th, 1855.

PRESENT.  
Jeremiah Simpson, Esq., President,  
His Honor Judge Peters, Hon. Mr. Coles, Hon. Cap. Rice, Hon. Mr. Mooney, Hon. Mr. Warburton, Charles Haszard Esq., Thomas Pethick, Esq., James Walkinshaw, Esq., Henry Longworth, Esq., George Wright, Esq., Mr. Bagnall, Mr. George Smith,  
Read Minutes of last meeting.

Cap. Rice, from the Committee appointed to ascertain what old seeds and casks were in the society's store, presented report, on which it was Ordered that all old seeds excepting Indian Corn be destroyed, the latter to be ground and sold at auction along with old casks.

Read letter from Mr. Haythorne, who reports that he has 8 Tup Lambs on hand, the stock of Imported Ram, entrusted to him last fall. Mr. Henry Longworth reported that he had 12 Tup Lambs on hand of the same description, and Mr. Charles Haszard, that he had 6, whereas it was Ordered, that the Secretary, Messrs. H. Longworth and George Smith, be a Committee to view the said Lambs, selecting those they consider suited for the purposes of the Society. Prizes not to exceed £3 each, and report to next meeting.

Resolved, That some of the above young Rams be lent out for service, until the Autumn of 1855.

On motion of Mr. Coles,  
Resolved, That a Committee be appointed to divide the yearling Rams purchased by the society last fall, into three equal Lots, one Lot for each County, after division to be drawn for, and that the sub-Committee nominated above be a Committee for this purpose. The Rams to be forwarded to King's and Prince Counties as soon as possible, for distribution as under, viz:

- 3 for St. Eleanor's,
- 3 for Cascumpec,
- 3 for Georgetown,
- 3 for St. Peter's.

The 6 drawn for Queen's County to be sold at auction on the same day.

Mr. Walkinshaw from sub-Committee appointed to examine the Society's Account Books reported, that they were not properly worked up and balanced, that they had written to the late Secretary on the subject twice, without receiving any reply; in consequence of which they had been handed over to Mr. Cundall for adjustment.

Ordered, That the Prizes to be awarded at the Cattle Show on the 26th inst., be the same as last year with the following additions, viz:

Best pen of 3 Ewes of any age,	£1 10 0
2d do do do	1 0 0
3d do do do	0 10 0
Best pen of 3 Ewe Lambs,	1 0 0
2d do do do	0 15 0
3d do do do	0 10 0
Best Ram of any age over 2 years,	1 0 0

Resolved, That the Industrial Exhibition take place this fall as usual, and that the prizes be the same as offered last year, excepting that there will be no prize for carpeting, and that prizes will be given for Ducks and Geese, same as other poultry.

On motion of Mr. Walkinshaw,  
Resolved, That all articles intended for competition, excepting live stock, be sent in to the Secretary before 12 o'clock on the Tuesday preceding the Exhibition. The Judges to give their award on that day, and that the Exhibition be open to the Public on Wednesday the 31st of October, at 10 o'clock, a. m.

Read application from Mr. Roger Harper for permission to send Galloway Bull off the Island. Ordered, That the Secretary write to Mr. Harper and inform him, that he may sell the Bull, but not to go out of the County, until the expiration of Bond.

Ordered, That 35 sets of Fanner Mounting be procured from Pictou, suitable for Stewart's Machine immediately. On motion, that a reaping machine be imported from the States, it was Ordered, that the Secretary write to the makers and engineer particulars.

Resolved, That Mr. Pethick and the Secretary be a Committee to examine and report upon Mr. Charles Haszard's accounts connected with the purchase of Stud Horses in the States, and that Mr. Haszard be paid Twenty-five pounds for his services in purchasing said Horses.

Read Mr. Haythorne's letter relative to Hop Clover. Ordered that 50lbs be imported in the spring.

Moved, That the Committee of Royal Agricultural Society are of opinion, that Mr. Stark's duties as School Visitor having greatly increased, he cannot give the necessary attention to his duty as Agricultural Lecturer, therefore, Resolved, That application be made to the Government respecting the matter, and praying that the sum now taken from the Agricultural Society's grant be withdrawn from Mr. Stark, and the Society allowed to apply it for other purposes.

By order,  
Wm. W. Innes, Secy,  
Committee Room, Wednesday.