



EUROPEAN NEWS.

PROGRESS OF THE SIEGE.

CAMP BEFORE SEBASTOPOL.

Nothing more of importance has occurred in the siege operations the last few days. The French are sapping towards the Malakoff, and already the trenches make a considerable show. An extensive place d'armes has been formed in the front of the Mamelon. The armament in the White Redoubt (Selenghinski Redoubt) above Carreing Bay, is being strengthened and works added. The Russians are adding to their number of guns on the verge of the cliffs on the north side of the roadstead, opposite to Mount Sapoune.

On our side we are extending the sap towards the Redan, and, as yet, have not met with any interruption from the enemy. A trench has also been made to connect the extremities of the right and middle boya proceeding with the old advanced work, and this again has been joined to the parallel extended to the Quarry Battery. A new battery of considerable strength is also in course of construction. It is expected that it will be ready for service in a few days.

The First Division (Guards and Highlanders) is to continue assisting in the trench duties to the right attack. Some of the regiments of the Light Division are greatly reduced in strength. The 34th Regiment has no captain and only three subalterns available for duty, and both it and the 7th Fusiliers have had to borrow officers from other regiments to carry on the duties.

General Pennefather left by the Colombo to-day for England. His constitution is said to have suffered considerably from the effects of the campaign. The Light and Second Divisions are now without any general officer, whether divisional or brigadier.

General Estcourt died early this morning, of the great regret of a numerous circle of friends, of cholera.

The French have been throwing shells at our batteries on the left. Several shells fell very near, in one instance a shell fell into the water between two of the ships—a three-decker and two-decker, but without doing any harm. The ships still remain broadside on the direction of the Malakoff hill. On several nights lately, boats from the fleet have stolen in towards the mouth of the Great Harbour, and discharged shells and rockets into the town. They have been within range of the guns of the forts, but the darkness has prevented the enemy from determining their position, notwithstanding the momentary flashes of their fire.

Active search has been made during the last few days for Russian spies supposed to be in the camp. Several innocent persons have been taken up on suspicion. Among others, Captain Freeman Armstrong, of the 15th Royal Irish Regiment, was yesterday arrested as a spy. He had come on horseback from the Third Division, and in consequence of some striking peculiarities in his dress and appearance, and certain questions about the work on Frenchman's hill which he put to the guard at the picket-house, he was thought to be a Russian agent in an assumed dress. Notice was given to the provost-sergeant, who followed Capt. Armstrong to Lukerinn, and there arrested him. It was in vain he made assertions of his being an officer of the 15th Regiment, he was compelled to come to the proper authorities. As he moved along, a crowd gathered, both French and English; there was no doubt that he was a spy, and loud was the explosion of indignation which followed. Capt. Armstrong became excited, and it was perhaps fortunate that his sword, which was curved, and not at all of the ordinary English shape, was taken from him. He was not identified until he reached the adjutant general's office of the Light Division. A short time since a Russian agent passed in a direction towards the Mamelon, dressed in the uniform of a French captain.

He had not advanced ten yards when the event took place. Lieutenant Marsh was quite young, had only lately received the appointment of adjutant, was active and intelligent, and gave promise of being a most efficient officer.

Captain Smith, of the 9th Regiment, succumbed yesterday to the wounds he received on the 18th inst.

Heavy gales of wind from the south and south-west have prevailed all day, and dense clouds of dust have been passing through the camp.

A bright warm morning. The wind subsided towards evening, and the night was quiet.

There was scarcely any firing on either side, and the working parties pursued their labor without interruption.

Another correspondent says: "The night before last, I am informed, a party of our engineers succeeded in approaching the mouth of the harbor sufficiently near in the Banshee, to enable them to discover a star battery in the course of erection in the immediate rear of the Malakoff—an addition to the strength of that position which I need hardly say would greatly enhance the difficulty of the capture. There is reason to believe that similar strengthening additions are less important, as it is not likely that that work will again be made a principal point of attack. The abandonment following, as a matter of course, on the seizure of the Malakoff, the latter next combination of the allies will be directed; and they will meet defeat if, after the experience of the last attempt, less uncertain measures of attack be not adopted. In view of the melancholy bungle made by our generals, at all events, in the calamitous attempt of this day, well may the Russians say—as was remarked by one of them on the day of the capture—that we are an army of lions led on by donkeys! For who will say that any of our successes hitherto can be justly attributed to the military skill or fortitude of our chiefs? In their most brilliant successes, nothing of the kind is to be seen. It is only months' siege, and it is only months' siege sustained. And, in speaking thus, I am no insinuation against Lord Raglan in particular; for, deficient as he has shown himself to be in the useful qualities of an energetic general, there is little ground for believing him inferior to those who command immediately below him. I know not that a single one of his generals of division or brigade has given evidence of the prompt energy and ready perception which carried our great duke and still greater antagonist through their brilliant series of triumphs; or even that of mediocre ability which, with such troops as those who conquered at the Alma, Balaklava, and Inkermann, could hardly fail to render defeat an impossibility and success sure. By this time this unflattering note may have impressed itself on even the dullest minds at home, as it has months ago done on those who were least willing to believe it here. But, unfortunately, taking the whole list of our effective generals, it would be difficult to better matters by a new selection; and the reform is not likely to be made by the promotion of younger blood, of men less entangled by the cramping slavery of routine—our hopes must still lie in our troops and the regimental officers, of whom the leadership must be had indeed, if success does not follow our arms. It is well for both armies that energy, at all events, is not wanting in the general-in-chief of our allies; or, whatever the vigorous mind of Pelissier decides on, our own plain leader is not likely to dissent from, and what may be thus planned will hardly fail to find British bayonets and sabres to aid in carrying into execution. That success should depend upon such a combination is, I admit, not flattering to our own military character; but better success under the guidance of (virtually) French generalship, than consummate our failure by yet other months of fruitless and most disgraceful inactivity."

The enemy kept up a very active fire in the supposed direction of our working parties last night. A limited number of shells were thrown from our batteries, chiefly against the Malakoff and Redan. There had been rumors of an attack on our lines being contemplated by the enemy, but no demonstration or advance took place. The anticipation of an attack was most probably due to a suspicion that intelligence of the decease of Lord Raglan, and the absence of many of our generals, would be carried to the enemy's camp, and that he might hope to gain an advantage by a surprise under these circumstances.

Dry weather appears to have again set in.

The latest accounts from the Crimea are encouraging. The bombardment on the part of the English had again commenced, and the fire of the Russians was feeble. The Redan had been silenced, and our countrymen were enabled to push nearer their approaches to the place. The French were about to renew the bombardment of the Malakoff, and were engaged in erecting new batteries on the old Russian redoubts of Carreing Bay. Mortars on new systems, the range of which was much greater than those previously in use, were to be introduced, and great hopes were entertained of their success. These mortars, it is believed, will reach the Russian line-of-battle ships and the Russian steamers, and prevent all future annoyance from that quarter. In the course of a day or two we may expect to hear of some very decisive action. According to a despatch from General Simpson, whose name is now permanently substituted for that of Lord Raglan, cholera has on the decrease; but this gratifying intelligence jars with the fact that the sanitary commissioners, Mr. Lawton and Dr. Sutherland, are on their way home, in consequence of their plans for the health of the troops having been impeded by the military authorities on the spot. The water, in particular, is described as being impure and even filthy, and, if these statements are not exaggerated, the return of cholera is more than probable. Lord Lamure, appalled by the charges which have appeared on this subject in the leading journal, which remind us of the terrible disclosures in the same organ of opinions at the close of the last and the commencement of the present year, has

been demanding the names of the countenances, which have been offered to him on one condition, a reasonable one as we think, namely, that the writers shall not be the victims of official vengeance. But as the telegraph from the Crimea gives us news at least ten days in advance of the ordinary advices, we are inclined to hope, from the improving health of the troops, that the picture may possibly have been overdrawn. The accounts from the Asiatic coast of the Black Sea are favourable, although nothing of much importance had occurred.

The Russian Government, in order to escape from the universal execration which has been expressed respecting the Hango massacre, has had recourse to a characteristic policy. It has commissioned a General de Berg to make a report on the subject, and the statements in this report are so much at variance with the actual facts as to disentitle them to the least credence. But the very perversion of the truth involves a confession of shame at the inactivity of the deed, and to keep General de Berg's falsehoods in countenance, a Russian steamer with a flag of truce, bearing the allied squadrons, on the 29th ult., written from Prince Basil Dolgorok, a letter from St. Petersburg, the previous day, stating, in substance, that flags of truce would only be admissible hereafter at three points—Cronstadt, Swaborg, and Revel, and insinuating, rather than directly asserting, that English flags of truce had been abused. The answer of Admiral Dundas to this communication is spirited and to the point. He denies the insinuation, and offers to institute an inquiry into the conduct of any British officer who can be charged with having so disgracefully violated his duty.

The allied fleet, although they have as yet done nothing striking with the great northern fortresses, have not been inactive. In the Gulf of Finland the fort of Rotsinhalin has been blown up, at Katka, a block of government buildings has been destroyed. Twenty-nine gallies were burned at the head of Werolax Bay, and the barracks and telegraph station at Krasnaja have been reduced to a heap of ruins. The infernal machines so cleverly laid down by the Russians have been laughed at, and destroyed in several places. The rumours relating to the bad health of the reigning Czar continue, and are strengthened in probability. Facts, too, leak out respecting internal disorganization. Seven Siberian regiments of the line had revolted, a plot had been discovered amongst the Slavonic party, and the state of affairs in the Ukraine was the reverse of satisfactory. Still, Russia makes no secret of her intention to refuse terms, and although she is apparently crippled in her resources, the retention of Sebastopol is the first and last object of her policy. Some fears are evidently felt respecting Poland, and the Grand Duke Constantine evinces a disposition, by concessions, to propitiate that weak arm of the empire.

Austrian diplomacy again forms a prominent feature of discussion. It is evident that the French Emperor's allusion to the Austrian alliance has been painfully felt at Vienna, for a circular, has been put forth by Count D'Alton, in order to show that the Emperor Francis Joseph has kept all his engagements with the Western Powers; and when Lord John Russell's speech of the 6th March Vienna, this view of the case will be said to have received a powerful confirmation. In the new circular, it is asserted that England and France retain the sympathies of Austria, but that she still reserves to herself the selection of the moment when she shall proceed to extremities, in reality, an adjournment of the question to the Greek Kalends.

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The Vienna correspondent of the Manchester Guardian writes as follows: "Nearly every letter received from St. Petersburg mentions the efforts which Russia is making, through the length and breadth of her enormous empire, to fill up the gaps which the sword and disease have opened in the ranks of her army. Restrictions without end have been removed, and all classes of men who from age, infirmity or social ties, have been hitherto wisely exempted from the toils of military service, are being marched pell-mell to take up arms beneath the Russian standard. The Empire of Russia is surrounded with foes, the mouths of whose cannon she dare not brave, and whose claims she finds it impossible to break. Her ports are blockaded, her commerce destroyed, and her flag is unseen on the surface of the ocean; while those of her enemies are displayed unmolested in every portion of the globe. Her soldiers must, night and day, be upon the alert against a wary and active foe, who is ready to dart upon any part of her coasts which is left for an hour unguarded. These are the cankers which are destined to eat into the heart of Russia.—Sebastopol may be strong, Cronstadt impregnable, Revel and Swaborg unapproachable, yet the weary, laboring and anxious watching, the insidious attacks of plague and pestilence, and the ruinous stagnation of trade, are evils which cannot be escaped. The hopes of England and France are not to be considered as resting on the successful termination of the siege of Sebastopol or the destruction of seaport towns, but upon the maintenance of a heavy and cor-

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EVENTS—DOMESTIC.

During the week the nation has been disturbed by rumors of the resignation of Lord John Russell, which it is held up to the Government. There is no actual proof that the Colonial Minister has resigned, but it is not at all unlikely that he has placed in the hands of the Premier a conditional resignation, to be used as circumstances may warrant. Lord John Russell volunteered, on Thursday night, an explanation of his previous unfortunate speech, but it is urged against him, with apparently irresistible force, that this only makes the matter worse for the views which he now declares he entertains are dissimilar to the views which he privately expressed to members of the late Government, with whom he was on terms of intimacy immediately after his return from Vienna. When a man loses caste on the score of candour, the worst construction is often placed on the most loudly dropped opinions, and no strong Russell's descent can be added, than the readiness with which every statement which he makes is challenged.

It was understood in the early part of the week that Lord John Russell would have been put upon his trial last night; but that order is now postponed until Monday, and the result will decide the fate of the Palmerston Cabinet. If the vote be adverse, through a combination of the Conservative and the Peace parties, Lord Derby will be sent for, will dissolve and appeal to the country—a result, under existing circumstances, which we should deplore, and which could not fail to be most disastrous. The onslaught is to be led by Sir Bulwer Lytton, who has shown a degree of serenity towards his old friends, the Whigs, since he joined the ranks of their opponents, which appears to justify to a large extent the laudable features of his character, as they have been depicted by one who bears his name. Men of great genius have their peculiarities, like ordinary mortals; but people rarely think of a popular idol on the testimony of others. When a fall is generally by his own hands—a rebuke quite as applicable to the literary baronet as to the Colonial Minister.

The Minister's triumph on Monday, they may be regarded as secure during the remainder of the session, which will be possible, no doubt, with as little delay as would be expected. As we stated when the intelligence of Lord Raglan's illness came to hand, the disappearance of the commander-in-chief from the stage of life would take the life out of Mr. Russell's career, because Parliament, like the nation, would feel it to be unjust to fraud the memory of a general who had gone to his great account, and who, during his life, had not had the opportunity of defending himself. This paper and honours' answer of fair play would be a sufficient answer to any resolutions on the Sebastopol evidence stronger than those which the committee themselves have adopted. Indeed, judging from the defiant tone and bearing of Lord Palmerston on the 21st night, his lordship appears to consider himself as in both the impudently flippant, and he heartily wish, for the sake of the mighty interests which are at stake in the issue, that his anticipations may be realized.

Lord Palmerston, like most Prime Ministers, has become intensely Conservative with the possession of power. The other night a very reasonable request was made to him, to which he declined to accede, and in declining, could not fail to give a fresh impetus to the Administrative Reform movement. An Order in Council appeared, it will be remembered, a few weeks back, directing an examination into the qualifications of candidates for certain government offices. Mr. Scully simply asked for the extension of this system over all the government departments, and that the examination should be an open one, Lord Palmerston, through his Chancellor of the Exchequer, moved the previous question. The Drury, his answer will hardly fail to turn the current to a purpose, and during the evening a somewhat acrimonious conflict arose between Sir Charles Wood and Mr. Lindsay, in which it must be admitted, the City merchant was not seen to great advantage. Nevertheless the division showed the number that the House contains a large number of members who cannot, like himself, afford to despise public opinion. Mr. Scully found 125 to vote with him, while the Government could only number 130, and a majority of 15 on a point raised by a man of third-rate standing was a moral—Ministers had fact enough to find it out.

Speculations are afloat respecting the probabilities of a dissolution of Parliament. A new Parliament, elected in the present form of the nation, would be a very different body from the existing one, for a belief, that a stronger feeling of indignation exists at the present time against the governing classes than has prevailed since the House of Lords rejected the Reform Bill. Never since that time has the middle and the lower classes been in such perfect union as they are now—the one annoyed at the absence of a vigorous prosecution of the war, the other at the interference with their personal and domestic comforts involved in the Sabbatarian crusade. Such a union would have the inevitable effect of electing the most democratic House of Commons we have seen since the day William the Fourth, and nothing short of very decided success in the Crimea and the Baltic will drown the memory of these wrongs. In truth, whether the appeal to the nation be made by Lord Palmerston or by Lord Derby we hold to be of little consequence, as the existing condition of things, for the prejudicial is lacerated at all sections of the aristocratic element. Perhaps a survey of society as it is, and as must appear to all the leading politicians, may justify Lord Palmerston's hope of victory in the early part of the week.—European Times.

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