A STRANGE PREACHER.

His name was Stange. Many will think his conduct was strange also. He was a zealous preacher and sweet singer. Nothing gave him so much pleasure as to go about the country preaching and singing. A benevolent gentleman, well off in worldly gear, desiring to make him and his family comfortable in their declining years, generously presented him a title-deed for three hundred and twenty acres of land. Strange accepted the donation with thankfulness, and went his way, preaching and singing as he went. But after a few months he returned and requested his generous friend to take back the title-deed. Surprised at the request, the gentleman inquired,

'Is there any flaw in it?'

'Not the slightest.'

'Is not the land good?'

'First-rate.'

'Isn't it healthy?'

'None more so.'

'Why then do you wish me to take it back? It will be a comfortable home for you when you grow old, and something for your wife and children if you should be taken away.'

'Why, I'll tell you. Ever since I've had that deed, I've lost my enjoyment in singing, I can't sing my favorite hymn with a good conscience any longer.'

'What is that?'

'This—

"'No foot of land do I possess,
No cottage in the wilderness,
A poor wayfaring man,
I dwell awhile in tents below,
Or gladly wander to and fro,
'Till I my Canan gain.
Yonder's my house and portion fair,
My treasure and my heart are there,
And my abiding home!'"

'There!' said Strange, 'I'd rather be able to sing that hymn than own America. Without, I'll trust that the Lord will take care of my wife and children.'

He continued singing and preaching, and preaching and singing, and the Lord, said the lecturer, did take care of him and his children after him.

What letters of the alphabet does a donkey like best?—*A* and *e's*.

TELEGRAPH OF HAIR.—A young lady sent us one of her hairs, as a curiosity of length. It was wound round a card, and the two ends fastened with sealing-wax; and we never had thought of unwinding it, till the other evening. It is of the wonderful length of seven feet and one inch! It is of the most beautiful auburn golden. But what length of electric telegraph would this lady's hair make, if extended in a line? The average number of hairs in a head has been stated at two hundred thousand. Her golden locks therefore, would reach, like the Sebastopol iron, from New York to Albany, and a little over. A lady's head may make a one hair telegraph of two hundred and sixty-eight miles!

PRETTY NEAR THE MARK.—I was in company the other night, a number of ladies being present, when a young man proposed a conundrum, which he said he had read in the papers. It was this:—"When is a lady not a lady?" There was a pause.—"Give it up," said all around, when to the infinite horror of the whole party the querist exclaimed, "When she's a little *buggy*." Nobody laughed—some were demure, some indignant, and some no doubt inclined to scratch—the querist's face a little. He was disappointed. Fumbling in his pocket he pulled out a paper, which consulting for a moment, he ejaculated, "Oh, I beg your pardon, I made a mistake. The answer is, When she is a little *sulky*. I knew it was some sort of a carriage."

From late American Papers.

THE BOSTON STEAMSHIPS.—We are happy to learn, says the Herald, that the Boston capitalists and merchants are taking hold of the new steamship enterprise with the right spirit. Subscriptions are given by those applied to in amounts that exceed anticipation, and we can safely say, that but a short time will elapse when Boston will be possessed of as handsome and efficient a line of steamers, plying between this city and Liverpool, as there is in existence.

THE CROPS.—The New York Tribune says the cry of unfavourable weather for gathering the wheat crop in that State is got up by speculators, and is a false alarm, but very little wheat having been injured, and next to none spoilt while curing. The editor vouches for this from personal observation, after a pretty extensive tour through the wheat growing-region.

The editors of the Rochester Democrat and the Albany Evening Journal give substantially the same report, after a pretty extensive personal examination with their own hands and eyes.

The Bangor Courier says—Offers have already been made by farmers to contract to deliver potatoes in this city, at harvest time, at 37½ cents per bushel.

NEWS BY THE ENGLISH MAIL.

THE CRIMEA.—A despatch to the following effect has been received from Prince Gortschakoff, dated Sebastopol, July 28:—"Yesterday the enemy opened a heavy fire, which lasted two hours and a half, against the bastion No. 4 (the Flagstaff). We have replied with vigor. Between the 23d and 27th, nothing new occurred at Sebastopol, nor upon the other points of the Crimea."

Prince Gortschakoff writes, under date 30th July, and says—"Nothing of importance has occurred before Sebastopol. The enemy continues a partial cannonade. We reply vigorously."

As the allies advance to the actual defences of the place, says one, they must expect to meet more elaborate works and obstacles, heaped one on another, with all the care which many months of preperuation admit. Even now, the enemy are strengthening the Malakoff, every day. It is not now what it was on the 18th of June, and a fortnight will not pass by, wheh it will be again changed. The battery at the White Works still goes on, and its effect will soon be proved.

A boat belonging to the British ship Ajax, captured a coach, containing the Russian mails. All the letters addressed to official persons, such as the Governor of Finland, &c., are written in cypher.

The Russians agree that flags of truce may be received at Cronstadt, Sweaborg, Revel, Libeau, Vindeau, Wasa and Yomea.

THE SEA OF AZOFF.—The Russians are fortifying the Spit of Arabas. Since the bombardment of Aganvey, measures of defence have been adopted. The arms of the Don have been closed and rendered inaccessible. Batteries have been erected on the coast, and a flotilla of gun boats established on the river. There is also a strong body of Cossacks and other troops, under the command of General Bagovert, collected near Nicholaieff.

Strong fortifications are being erected at Rostoff, and the channel of the Don is obstructed.

The Sultan has ordered magnificent necklaces in brilliants to be made, as presents for Queen Victoria and the Empress Eugenie; and saddles, embroidered in brilliants, to be made for the Emperor, the King of Sardinia, and Prince Albert. The value of these presents will be about 2,000,000f.

Omar Pasha is tired of his position in the Crimea, and wishes for a field where he can gain some distinction, or at least keep up the reputation he gained on the banks of the Danube.

THE RESTORATION OF POLAND.—The public will learn with surprise that, notwithstanding all the flourish of trumpets with which a meeting in favour of the restoration of Poland was announced to be held in St. Martin's Hall on Wednesday night, no meeting took place. The crowd who attended at the doors was, we are told, sufficiently great to have filled the hall twice over,—a fact sufficiently indicative of what the feelings of the people of England are with regard to the restoration of Polish nationality. The reason assigned for postponing the meeting was the illness of Sir De Lacy Evans.

THE ROYAL MARRIAGE BROKEN OFF.—The marriage which it was believed had been resolved on between a daughter of Don Francisco de Paula of Spain, and Prince Adalbert of Bavaria appears to have been broken off. The Prince suddenly quitted the court, and it is said, that he has been summoned home to join the army, but it is possible that this has only been done to cause the marriage to fail.

THE RHONE STEAMERS.—It appears from the *Courrier de Marseilles* to be perfectly true that the French government has purchased the Rhone steamers for operations in the Black Sea. They are flat bottomed, and the number of boats purchased is 97. By this means it will be possible to land even 50,000 men on points which would be inaccessible to vessels of ordinary construction.

Ten thousand French troops are to form a camp of reserve at Maslak, and the barracks of Galata and Pera.

PROSPECTS OF THE WAR.

We are still without intelligence of any material importance from either of the two principal seats of war. In the Crimea, the obstinate defence of a couple of Russian out-works is holding the whole army of the Allies in check. In the Baltic, a couple of Russian fortresses have reduced the noblest fleet that ever swam to a state of comparative inertness. It must be confessed that this is very far from being a satisfactory state of things; and, as the summer is now rapidly waning, it is not without considerable anxiety, that we inquire whether the brief season of fair weather which yet remains is to be employed by the Allies in the same abortive and fruitless manner as the summer months which have preceded it.

It is every day becoming more and more palpable that the plan upon which the Allies have based their operations, both in the Baltic and Black Sea, have been founded in error. It was, doubtless, a noble instinct which led them in the first instance to hurl defiance at the enemy at the points where he was known to be strongest and least assailable. To challenge him at Sebastopol—to defy him at Cronstadt—was a thought worthy of the fleets and armies of England and France; but when Sebastopol and Cronstadt are found to be so strong as to be capable of withstanding the most powerful efforts that can be made for their reduction, and when it is plain, that neither can be carried by the usual direct operations of war, except at the cost of a carnage that no commander would be justified in incurring, it becomes obvious that the mere accumulation of an immense fleet in front of the one, and the concentration of a prodigious army in the vicinity of the other, amounts to nothing more than the vain and profitless display of a power which can accomplish little or nothing at those particular points, and might be much more effectively employed elsewhere.

It is not too much to say that at the present moment the whole naval and military might of England and France is held in check by these two isolated fortresses, and from the manner in which our operations have hitherto been conducted, it would really appear as if we were at war only with Sebastopol and Cronstadt, and not with the Russian empire at large.

With a fleet in the Baltic capable of carrying fire and sword and all the destructiveness of war into every port and haven along the whole line of the enemy's coast, scarcely anything in the way of hostile aggression has been accomplished or attempted, simply because Cronstadt has as yet defied all endeavour to approach it. So again in the Crimea. With an army more than twice as strong as the mere exigencies of the siege could demand, and with a fleet in undisputed possession of the sea, nothing whatever is attempted against the vulnerable points of the enemy's adjacent territory, simply because Sebastopol still holds out.

This is where our commanders err. If Cronstadt and Sebastopol cannot be taken by direct assault, why should the bulk of our fleets and armies be fruitlessly detained before their walls? It is the boast of Englaad that she has now "a hundred pennants" proudly flaunting in the Baltic breeze. Can any one doubt that ten or a dozen of those pennants loftily displayed in front of Cronstadt would amply suffice to confine the whole Russian navy to its cowardly anchorage behind the batteries? What is there to prevent the remainder from carrying a terrible and destructive war into every other part of the enemy's coast? Are Revel and Riga to enjoy an immunity from attack for the simple reason that the waters before Cronstadt are too shallow to admit of our large ships getting within reach of it? Because Cronstadt cannot be reached, is no other place to be approached? Because the Russian navy will not come out to fight, are the "hundred pennants" of England to be ingloriously occupied all the remainder of the summer in the chase and capture of a few miserable fishing boats? We trust not. We trust that the gallant Dundas will at least spare the superb fleet which he commands from such a reproach as that.

Then, as regards the army before Sebastopol. We are assured upon the authority of officers who have recently returned to this country wounded or invalided—men of high intelligence and of great practical experience—that the Allies, owing to the original error of commencing the siege from the wrong point of attack, have at last worked themselves into a position so completely false as to forbid the faintest prospect of their every being able to carry the place from the ground they now occupy as long as the enemy's sources of supply and reinforcement remain open to him on the north. A sense of military honour in the mind of the present commanders of the allied army seems to render it indispensable that the repulse of the 18th of June should be redeemed by the capture of the Malakhoff and the Redan; and for the last six weeks all the available strength of the army has been assiduously employed in the construction of works which it is confidently anticipated will enable them to accomplish that object. But, as we observed in commenting upon this subject last week, supposing the Malakhoff and the Redan to be carried to-morrow, we should still be as far as ever from obtaining a permanent possession of Sebastopol. The Malakhoff and the Redan command a certain portion of the southern district and fortifications of Sebastopol, and so far undoubtedly present a point of considerable advantage to attain; but in their turn they are themselves commanded by the superior works which line the northern heights, still left in the undisputed possession of the enemy, and from the fire of which every part of the southern town must be rendered perfectly untenable by an adversary. To satisfy a point of honour it may be requisite that the Redan and the Malakhoff should be carried; but as far as the ultimate capture of Sebastopol is concerned, we are strongly inclined to believe that they might just as well be let alone.

The plain truth of the matter is, that Sebastopol can never be reduced and carried from the unlucky point at which the Allies have attacked it. If any proof of this were needed it would be found in the fact that after a nine months' siege, conducted with all the energy that an army thrice triumphant in the field could direct against its walls, its works of defence are at this moment as strong, if not infinitely stronger, than they were at the moment when they were first assailed. The allied troops and generals have alike been contending against difficulties which it is impossible for any amount of courage or skill to overcome, on account of the original viciousness of the position from which their operations were commenced. The question is whether this state of things is to continue—whether what was begun in error is to be doggedly persisted in now that the error is patent and conspicuous as the sun at noon day? We fervently trust that a better genius will guide the councils of our commanders, and that no false sentiment of honour will induce them to incur a wasteful sacrifice of the noble troops they command by an obstinate persistence in a course of operations from which no final success can possibly be anticipated.

Let it produce no feeling of depression or despair in the mind of our readers when we advise that the siege of Sebastopol be for the present raised. We have seen how little the magnificent army now before it has been able to accomplish, during the last two months, towards the reduction even of its recently-erected out-works. We have seen with what labour and what loss every inch of ground has been won from the enemy, and how distant we still are from the great object we have in view. Surely, then, it is necessary that the whole strategy of the siege should be changed. If Sebastopol cannot be carried by a direct assault upon its southern defences, it by no means follows that it may not be effectually subdued by a broader plan of operations in the open field. Kamiesch and Bala Clava are now so strongly entrenched and fortified that a comparatively small force of French and English would suffice to hold them against any attack that could be directed upon them from the garrison of Sebastopol. The siege, as directed from the south, is plainly abortive, and can never be attended with success. Then why should it not be raised? and whilst an adequate force of the allied army is left to maintain the two maritime positions of Kamiesch and Bala Clava—other portions of the army being at the same time firmly established at Eupatoria and Kertch—why should not the remainder be transplanted to some other point of the Russian territory, where it would be enabled to operate in such a manner as to prevent a single cartridge of ammunition or a single ration of food from ever again entering the gates of Sebastopol? With the sea completely at our command, and with a fleet capable of conveying a hundred thousand troops in a single expedition, there is no reason why an operation of this nature should not be instantly undertaken. Then, indeed, the fate of Sebastopol would be sealed. Deprived of all succour from without, its garrison would shortly be compelled to come out and brave a battle in the open field, or else perish within its walls. This can never happen as long as the Allies limit themselves to the assault of its southern defences, and take no steps either to subdue its northern fortresses, or to intercept the abundant sources of supply from which it has hitherto been sustained and fed. Let us trust, then, that a totally new campaign will be planned and executed before the recurrence of a Crimean winter shall put an end to all further operations for the year.

FRANCE.

The French Government has intimated to all whom it may concern that it will most decidedly resist any attempt to excite disturbances in Italy. A certain degree of agitation has been remarked of late among the refugees on the continent, as if something favorable was expected to turn up for them, or as if they expected some important event shortly to take place.

LOSS OF ASSYRIAN ANTIQUITY.—Intelligence has just reached London of the almost total loss of the fine collection of antiquities which the agents of the French Government have been employed for some years in bringing together, from the various ruins of Assyria and Bablyonia, for deposit in the Museum of the Louvre.