

RUSSIAN FLEET AT CRONSTADT.

The Allied fleet now extends from the London Shoals to the Toboukin Light, thence far along the northern shore to the town of Cronstadt, and still the "frigates" they come "to ship and sink" and block ship, screw frigates and paddle, gun-boat and mortar-vessel; and now is the time that something might be accomplished, but that that was the object in the forts, whatever might have been done last year. The difficulties are now very great, if not insurmountable. A range of submarine piers, one on each side of the entrance, to a point where the town is out of range. From this same Lis Nas to Man-of-War Harbour a large portion of the Russian fleet—sloops, frigates, and corvettes; these are backed by a number of gun-boats, and, singular to say, twenty of them are paddle-boats. The iron-clad gun-boats were taken off the railway for this purpose; but the factory at Cronstadt is fast making many more.

On the northern shore with the elaborate cart-works, now green with the vegetation of spring, protect it from any light attack in that direction; these have been constructed since the late of 1854. In the distance above the bank their best ships are lying ready for sea, with their engines and jacks bleaded with the flag of Cronstadt and the Tsar. In the distance above the bank they are ready to command the channel. On a fine day, the view is not a bad panorama. On either side of you stretches the white walls of the Russian men-of-war, and now and then a white steamer, the shot and now verdant with spring and the stately pine, and dotted with many beautiful villas as far as the eye can reach. In the distance, the magnificent dome of the Kera, and the golden spires of the churches of St. Petersburg, may be seen clear against the faint blue sky, with the white sails of the Russian men-of-war, and the white sails of the Russian men-of-war, and the white sails of the Russian men-of-war. Altogether the scene is a singular one. Here is an immense force, with the naval resources of three hundred miles of coast, and the Tsar's army, has the game been played, that neither side has scarcely fired a shot.

But the forts are the most magnificent objects in the world. They are the finest specimens of solidification of solidity, with guns frowning their above tier; and so well are they kept in repair, that they look from this distance as if fresh from the millers. The work is so perfect, and the fortification appears to be quite a rage with them. Everything is arranged to catch the eye. But nature has done a great deal for them. The fortifications of Cronstadt and Sebastopol, and they have taken every advantage of what she has given them as a foundation for works of defence.

THE RUSSIAN PEASANTRY.

Colossal as the power of Russia may be considered, it is as with its empire, so with its peasantry. It is weak. It is no *vox populi*, and therefore is deficient in the most characteristic feature in national greatness. The peasantry has never been taken into consideration that, with few exceptions, the peasants of Russia are slaves. They form two classes—peasants of the crown; and peasants of the private proprietors. The latter, Nicholas has done much to lessen the evils of the former, and to render their manumission, as well as that of the latter, more gradual and easy. The condition of both is still degrading and deplorable.

It is calculated that about six part of the peasantry belonging to the crown, are their property, as much as the cattle on their estate. The rent paid by the crown peasants is fixed; that paid to the private proprietors is determined by the means of getting money—or, in other words, it is a tax on their industry. There is no law to restrain the demands of the master—their time and labor are absolutely at his command. Some of the nobility send their slaves to St. Petersburg or Moscow, to be instructed in various trades; and then either employ them on their estates, or hire them out to other persons to exercise their trade, or dispose of them at an advanced price. Some of the Russian nobles have several hundred, and some a thousand peasants—and from this fact, as may well be supposed, their wealth is immense, in whatever manner the labor of these slaves is employed. It is not only the nobles, but the men, must labor for their master, for such pay as his caprice or means may dispose or enable him to give. These are besides demanded out of their hands, and are exacted from them as soon as a child reaches the age of ten, his labor is required; and when he reaches fifteen, each male is obliged by law to labor three days in a week for his master, and to be ready to be employed on other days, in any case—for example in a manufactory; in this case, however, he has his hire in food, and clothing. In the hands of the master, instead of exacting the labor of a slave for the stated portion of the week, agrees to receive rent; and he is bound to furnish him with a portion of the necessities of life. The aged and infirm are provided with food, raiment, and lodging at his expense.

The master has the power of correcting his slaves by blows or imprisonment; but

the law—in such a country easily evaded—forbids the exercise of any great cruelty. No slave can quit his village, or—if he be a domestic slave,—his master's family, without a passport. Inured to the force of hard labor, the punishment of runaway slaves. A master may send his slave into the public workhouse, or into the army,—in the latter case, he sends one man less to the next levy. No slave can be legally sold, except to a farmer, or perhaps a hard laborer. A slave may obtain his liberty by manumission, by purchase, or by serving in the army or navy.

It is, however consoling to reflect that, injurious as the state of the Peasantry may be to the higher feelings of the master, it does not tend to corrupt his. Their houses—formed of well trees,—are in tolerable repair, and well adapted to their habits. They sometimes, but not often, consist of two stories; the lower forms a store-room—in the upper of which they dwell. A kind of gallery runs outside square as a staircase. There is generally but one room in the habitable part. Their furniture seldom comprises more than a wooden table and benches fastened to the sides of the room, wooden platters, bowls, and spoons, and perhaps a few articles of iron. Their diet is substantial, consisting of black rye-bread, eggs, salt fish, mushrooms, and bacon. They also have a favorite dish—both-pot of salt or fresh meat, groats, and rye-flour, seasoned with onions and garlic. They are not fond of wine, and their cheap rate. Their clothing however is dense. To clothe a Russian peasant or soldier costs nearly three times as much as in America; but their clothing is strong, and being made loose and wide, lasts longer. Greatly to be regretted, however, is their style of dress becomes they very well. As to their personal appearance, they may be described, as a large, coarse, hardy race—possessed of great bodily strength—rarely below the middle stature—strong-armed—lean, but hardy-looking. Their hair is in the male and small—their lips thin—their teeth even and white—their hair brown, reddish or flaxen—their beards short and bushy. The complexion of the female peasantry is brunette. Some of them, as among other things, are remarkably superstitious. Being deprived of education beyond that requisite sharpening of their instincts to render them more valuable as a property, they cling to old traditions with a tenacious grasp. They believe in ghosts, goblins, and every variety of supernatural phenomena.

Probably the most singular superstition in the world prevails in Moscow. The people of that city and for hundreds of miles around it, almost adhere to the Great Bell which hangs in the tower of Ivan's Tower.

On festival days—which in the Greek calendar are remarkably numerous—they resort to the Great Bell as they would to a sanctuary. The origin of this superstition is involved in obscurity; but as no people, however deeply they may be sunk in ignorance, are so insensible as to be altogether indifferent to the attractions of political and social liberty, the custom may probably be traced to a tradition connected with the bell, which is handed down among the Russian peasantry for several generations.

This tradition, it appears, refers back to a period when the Russians enjoyed a condition approaching to that of pastoral simplicity. The alarm bell in a tower before the Kremlin was brought from Novgorod when that city was conquered in 1477. There it had been used as a signal for the people of that Republic to assemble, in the event of foreign danger or intestine tumult; and they regarded its removal to Moscow as the greatest calamity that could befall them. Therefore, the love of bells became quite a passion among the peasantry of Russia; and several of the Emperors, without paying much regard to the political sentiment involved in the matter, gratified their taste by the purchase and erection of new bells, instead of supplying a substitute for the dearer strains of liberty.

THE PARIS EXHIBITION.—OPINION OF ENGLISH JURORS.—Attention is called by the English jurors now in Paris, to the extraordinary beauty and interest of the collection in the Paris Exhibition as a whole, not that it has attained its full proportions.

Disappointed with the half failure of the opening, too many of our countrymen have leaped the conclusion, that there is little to see in the Champs Elysees—a very false conclusion, inasmuch as the jurors are bound to oppose. They declare loudly in favour of "the superiority of the objects exhibited over those of 1851," and they call the earnest attention of our artists, manufacturers, and workmen, to this fact. We cannot, however, but generally regret the truth of the assertion—though we might have to qualify it in some few particulars.—*London Athenaeum.*

REMARKABLE BALLOON ASCENSION.—TRIZES HAZARD'S GAZETTE, AUGUST 18. ARRIVED IN FOUR HOURS.—Wm. D. Barnist, of Adrian city, Michigan, ascended, on Friday afternoon, in a balloon, from that place, at 10 o'clock in the morning, and descended, in Clarion county, Pennsylvania, 21 1/2 in the afternoon, making the computed distance of three hundred and fifty miles in the extraordinary short time of four hours. This is his second trip, and an experimental one with a balloon of unusually large size. It is thirty feet in diameter, contains one cubic foot of gas, and is capable of holding nineteen thousand cubic feet of gas. After his ascent to the distance of three miles and a half, the aeronaut struck the eastern current of air, which, he says, is continually blowing in the direction of the prevailing wind, from the Lakes, through Central Ohio. His intention was not to descend until dark, as he was above the rain clouds in the clear upper sky, but the excessive cold to which he was exposed brought on the accustomed ailment of a severe cold, and he was obliged from properly managing his balloon. He was in that sleepy state when his "craft," anchored in a tree in Red Bank, having descended in consequence of the evaporation of gas.—The cold was so severe, that his feet were completely frozen.

WHAT IT COSTS TO BORROW A CITY.—That war is an expensive occupation the British Government and people are beginning to understand, as the means of augmenting the strength and opening of the fire of the allies suggest a calculation as to the cost of the iron balls which have been thrown into Sebastopol by the five hundred cannon which have hurled them in what Gortschakoff calls an infernal rain. The accounts by the Asia represent that each of these guns fired one hundred and twenty rounds a day, which gives a total for the five hundred of sixty thousand rounds. This fire has been continued for thirteen days, and during those thirteen days, and during eighty thousand missiles rained down on the city.

The weight of shot fired from the guns of the allies varies probably from nineteen to one hundred and forty pounds, and of the shells from fifteen to one hundred and ten pounds. The forty-five pound ones would probably be a low estimate for an average. This would give a daily delivery of iron to the Russians amounting to two million seven hundred thousand pounds, and a total for the thirteen days of thirty-nine million six hundred and eighty thousand pounds of the prime cost of which, in the rough, at the average price of pig iron in England for the last year, was not less than three hundred and thirteen thousand three hundred and eighty dollars.

This is of course, and without any regard to the enormous cost of transportation to the Crimea.

If the cannon balls fired from the allied lines during the thirteen days were rolled into rail bars, weighing sixty pounds to the yard, the bars would extend three hundred and thirty miles. If laid as a single railroad, would suffice as a single trackroad from New York to Albany, with all the necessary turn-outs.

The charge of powder for each gun would probably average about six pounds, which would give a total for the thirteen days of four millions six hundred and eighty thousand pounds of powder. Such powder is worth here eighteen cents a pound, but in England would not probably cost more than fifteen cents, at which price would be a total cost, for gunpowder, of two thousand dollars.—*American Paper.*

Why is a perfumer the wisest of men?—Because he never lacks scents.

TRIAL OF AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS AT THE FRENCH EXHIBITION.—Thomas Greeley, Esq., of the N. Y. Tribune attended a trial of the Plow and the Reaping Machine, at the "Imperial" College of Agriculture, some twenty-five miles west of Paris. He says— "I have seen the Reaping Machine at the Exhibition and tried here, and that of the M. Sra. Howard, Bedford, England, was pronounced the most effective. I understood Mr. James Howard that was executed by the winner, and from Austria, that was confidently bragged on before the trial, actually twisted around, broke off, and gave up the ghost, in light clover soil free from stones, and with but a single span of horses before it."

"We all went out in the afternoon to a large clover-field, where a quiet cluster of the farmers were gathered, and the trial was conducted by Mr. McCormick's Mower—one of the very few (I regret to say) Yankee farming implements that were seen, and no competition at this time, but the machine worked admirably, cutting very smoothly, closely and clearly, a swath five feet wide as fast as the span of horses drawn could take it, and with but a moderate demand on their muscles." The ground was quite uneven, and at one place the grass was vigorously stamped down by the spectators, in order to show where the wheels were, and the circumstances. In this way some stalks were made to escape cutting, but the machine was none the less a success, and the exhibition of its feature of the performance was the entire absence of Mr. McCormick's agent, after the first round, leaving the machine to be operated entirely by the exhibitor, who never said it before that day. There was a very general and hearty manifestation of delight from the assembled farmers, and I trust that not this only but other American machines, which never saw a competitor in competition with those of Europe, under the eye of a critical committee. If the Exhibition is to be any thing more than a level show, here is (in its) its proper element.

A NEW WAY TO RAISE BEANS.—A gentleman in Soneca Falls, N. Y., last spring, planted some Lima beans. Not being provided with poles he had recourse to the following method. He took his flowers, trimming them up so that they served the purpose of poles. For a time all went on well, till, at length, the beans began growing so thickly on the poles, that he was obliged to finally draw up by the roots.

VOLCANIC MUD PHEMISSED.—On the 19th ult., as the steamer *Tobouknig* was winding her way down the Ohio river, the crew were on board of her beheld a remarkable upheaving of waters in the centre of the stream. When about seventy-five miles below Louisville, they beheld a dark, turbid, muddy water, about thirty feet in diameter, thrown up, somewhat after the manner of a fountain, to a height of fifteen feet. It rose and sunk several times.

TROSTEN DIVER.—In a lecture on what had been said, Wendell Phillips observed:

"In Italy you would see a man breaking up his land with his cows. In France you would see a man with a tread in Sweden with his bare feet. In Rome, Vienna and Dresden, if you hire a man to saw wood, he does not bring a horse along. He never had one, nor his father before him. He puts one end on the ground, and the other on his breast, and taking the wood in his hands, he saws it. In Florence, a city filled with the triumph of art, there is a single auger, and if a carpenter would bore a hole he does it with a red hot poker. This results not from the want of industry, but of sagacity of thought. The people are by no means stupid. They have the sea, the sea, the sea, and children, with an industry that shames labor saving Yankees. Thus he makes labor, and the poor must live. In Rome charcoal is principally used for fuel, and you will see a string of twenty mules bringing little sacks of it over their back, when one mule could bring all of it in a cart. But the charcoal vender never has a cart, and so he keeps his mule and feeds him, and has no want of industry, but there is no competition."

A VICTIM OF CONFIDENCE.—A fellow on the mecessary was staggering about with more liquor than he could carry. "Hail! 'who's the matter now?" he said a chap came up and said, "I am a victim of confidence." "Why—how—why, the fact is, I on a lot of my friends have been getting liquor on the race to-day, and they have got me to hold the tables."