

AN INTERIOR VIEW OF RUSSIA BY AN AMERICAN.

He says: "Being in Russia, any one will be struck with the fact, that the government of the country is a man, and one man only. Everything is controlled solely by the Emperor. You may be taken from your bed by night, and your fate settled without trial, hearing, judge or jury. The police have full power to take any man, and do with him what they are ordered to do; and the man is helpless. No such thing as a writ of *habeas corpus* exists here. I have known instances of persons taken from their house in the night, without recourse, and their history ended: the world ceased to know any thing of them after they were arrested.

"The Emperor is all power, in any and all cases. No Russian, be he nobleman or serf, can leave the soil without the Emperor's permission. Joseph, the great shepherd of the human race, I have known to have had ninety million roubles deposited in the government bank, and other millions in iron. But he could not leave the country, for he would take with him, or spend, too much money abroad. A man can no more leave Russia than an American can leave a State prison. At one of the depots on the railway between St. Petersburg and Moscow I found a gentleman who was in *naui* exile, and his crime having been that, on a visit to the United States, he overstayed his time a month or two, and when he returned, he discovered, that his property had been confiscated; nor was he allowed to live in any one of the capitals, but he was compelled to live in that out-of-the-way place—vengeance being meted out regarding in the slightest degree the Emperor's will.

"The Emperor is the chief business-man of the Empire. He does everything. Every man who has any authority whatever in the empire gets it from the Emperor direct, and is accountable to him alone. In Russia nearly all the important posts, military and civil, are now registered in his police district; he steps beyond that line, it must be by the Emperor's authority. Once a year, every Russian has to swear before Heaven that whatever the Emperor does, or may do, is right. The privilege is paid for every twelve months. If a Russian wishes to change his residence, even to the next town, he must first petition the Emperor for the privilege of locomotion, as he pays for every official paper he takes out; all of which makes it expensive to breathe, much more to move, in Russia. No contract is binding, no title to real estate can be transferred, except on stamped paper. The per-centage that goes to the government as a tax on the sheets of paper which the government issues, some of these sheets of paper bring the government from five hundred to two thousand dollars. Every Russian is a creature of the Emperor. Everything that belongs to a Russian belongs to the Emperor. The great estates are held by the nobles; but their title exists at the will of the Emperor. He can confiscate their property at any instant; and they are as absolutely his slaves, as are the meanest of his serfs."

"Only one great railway is finished in Russia: this is from St. Petersburg to Moscow. The Warsaw road is completed only thirty miles—from St. Petersburg to Gatchin. A portion of the rest of the road is graded, but nothing more has been done to it since the war began. They have no telegraph, and the only telegraph which exist being only short snitches between the rivers to promote internal navigation.

"Among the public works of the empire, for fortification or defence, the strongest are those of Cronstadt, embracing the fortifications in the Baltic, all of which are built with an eye to the protection of this place. Cronstadt is the place in America. It is the chief stronghold of the empire. If Peter the Great could come from his tomb, he would compliment his successors for having carried out his original idea of protecting all approaches to the capital by sea. And yet Cronstadt came very near being taken last year. And it should have been taken. It was only a series of accidents that prevented it. An American engineer who comprehended English naval affairs could have directed the fleet of Admiral Dundas last year, he would have taken Cronstadt. But the Admiral was afraid of infernal submarine machines; and on the day that everybody expected Cronstadt would be taken, he retired! The English fleet threw shells into the town, which exploded and set the place on fire in several engines. The fleet could have come up near enough to have supported their advanced gun-batteries; and if a bold and well directed movement had been made on that day, the town would have been carried or burned to ashes. Such was the opinion of the engineers of the Russian empire, who stood on the ramparts and looked on the Emperor. They expected it. This Russia was saved, for Cronstadt was spared.

"Cronstadt is about two miles in length by half a mile wide. It is strongly fortified on the south side, while it is open on the north. The channel being on the southern side, most of the guns are planted to com-

mand it. But with the light draft of boats which the allies are now building they could pass to the north side and open a deadly fire, where they would be little exposed. When they should once have passed Cronstadt they would be at the gates of St. Petersburg. It is only nine miles.

What Cronstadt has been the scene of the deepest interest, and it is strange how little the world comprehends the enormous losses that Russia has suffered in that place. When the clouds of war began to blacken over Europe, and it was ascertained that Sebastopol was the point where the allies would strike their chief blow, preparations were made by Nicholas to concentrate his best troops. When the war began, a large portion of the best trained divisions of the Russian empire were marched towards Sebastopol, numbering not less than two hundred thousand. Their terrific losses, which were always greater than the allies suffered, were constantly supplied by new drafts upon the best departments of the Russian army. It is not only probable, but certain, that up to the 1st of August last year, the Russians had lost three hundred thousand picked men, and after the southern side of Sebastopol was taken and the losses were accurately ascertained, the official report sent to St. Petersburg and the reports made in person by the commanders to the Emperor, settled it beyond a doubt that from the 1st of August till the retreat to the north side of Sebastopol the losses which had amounted to seventy-five thousand more. Such were the private reports of Prince Gortschakoff that were laid before the Emperor.

"When the allies met the Russians at Sebastopol it was very nearly an even game. Europe had passed through a broken peace for a generation. Nicholas came to the throne last August last year, the Napoleon era were subsiding. He had begun life by studying the laws, the languages of the people of all the European states. Nothing was left undone to make him the most complete prince that ever sat upon a throne. Whatever the science, the arts, the experience of other civilized states had produced, became his by inheritance, by study, by combination, or by purchase. He had brought into his empire and clustered around his throne the finest minds and the most flexible resources of the civilized world. When the allies met him at Sebastopol, they had no surprise to spare for him. His Gortschakoffs, Mentchikoffs, and other koffs, comprehended the whole system of warfare that had been produced by Napoleon, left to whom he started for St. Helena, better than any other men in Europe. He had, in imitation of Peter the Great, served a long noviciate, and mastered the whole business of empire. It may be fairly asserted by an impartial American that Nicholas and his agents understood their business better than any general among the allies. The whole science of warfare was exhausted before Sebastopol was taken, Russia was not surprised at a single step; she was nowhere taken unawares. They said she could not fight in the open field, but at Balaklava and Inkermann the rolls of English chivalry were wreathed in crape. Americans don't like to hear the allies say that the Russians cannot fight. We all know that Englishmen and Frenchmen are right with the terrific sacrifices the allies made in those open field battles, it is no compliment in their heroism, to say that they did not have a formidable foe to deal with. From the battlements of Sebastopol gleamed the best chivalry of the Russian empire—there witnessed the highest culmination of the military art in modern times.

(By Telegraph to the St. John, N. B. Reading Room.)

LATEST NEWS FROM EUROPE.

ARRIVAL OF THE "ASIA" AT NEW YORK.

New York, April 4th. The *Asia* arrived this P. M. Liverpool dates are to the 22d March.

It was rumored that the treaty of peace would be signed on Easter Monday. In the event of delay, the armistice would terminate on the 30th.

MARKETS.—Breadstuffs very dull; quotations nominal. Western Canal Flower 31s a 32s. Corn is lower.

It is generally believed that the treaty of peace would be signed on Monday, the 24th March. The tenth meeting of the Plenipotentiaries was held on Monday, the 23d, when the Prussian representatives took their seats.

The papers are full of congratulatory paragraphs respecting the late success of the negotiations.

PARIS FRIDAY.—The Emperor and young Prince continue to go on well.

The eleventh sitting of the Congress announced for Thursday, did not take place—it will take place to-morrow, 22d.

A letter from Kertch says that the news of the armistice produced a profound sensation of joy along the shores of the Sea of Azoff, and business became suddenly active.

The Imperial frontier established on the left bank of the Don has been closed, and this seems to confirm the intention manifested by the court of Russia to abandon all its maritime establishments on the Black Sea.

Letters from the camp in the Crimea extend from the 2d to the 7th of March, and are chiefly occupied with accounts of the weather.

General Cordington has issued general orders dated March 3, forbidding to fire upon the enemy until the expiration of the armistice on the 31st.

The line of the aqueduct running along the left bank of the Tchernaya is the line of separation between the English and Russian armies.

There is a report from the Crimea that two divisions of the army—the Highlanders, and the 2d and 4th Division, under Sir C. Campbell, will immediately proceed to Canada.

DISAPPOINTMENT AT VIENNA—ANOTHER LITTLE PICKING FOR AUSTRIA.

The speech of the Emperor Napoleon has produced a disagreeable impression here, as but slight mention is made of Austria, while England and gallant little Sardinia are mentioned with almost possible relief. According to a letter received from a perfectly well-informed person residing in Paris, Count Baol, the representative of Austria, meets with far less attention than Count Orloff, the Plenipotentiary of Russia, and it is likely enough that such is actually the case. In this respect, Austria well deserves the attention of Russia has fought her battles bravely, and obtained the respect of her antagonists; but the policy of Austria has been such that she is equally disliked, and perhaps equally distrusted, by all parties. A Vienna correspondent makes a communication to the *Frankfort Post-Zeitung*, well deserving the attention of the diplomatists now assembled in Paris. The Austrian states literally:—"When peace is concluded Count Baol intends again to direct his attention to a matter which was set aside when the European-Russian war broke out, a claim of some formidable dimensions. The matter in question is a claim which Austria made on the Porte when Count Leiningen was on his mission to Constantinople. What is desired is the cession of a little strip of land, called the Sutorina, which runs into the Austrian territory in Dalmatia, and has frequently led to quarrels." Now Austria has not only to have the Sutorina, but also another strip of land which is at Kleck, behind the island of Sabloncello, but she has no more claim to either of them than she has to the island of Soudavia or Wallachia.

A WILLIAM TELL SHOT.—The Boston Post must be held responsible for the following:

"In Putnow, Rensselaer county, New York, Horace H. Wadsworth, with his rifle at arm's length, at twenty paces, shot a potato from the head of a young man named Crogan. The potato was cut in two, and by the force of the ball a wale as big as a man's finger was raised on Crogan's head, and the poor fellow thought his skull was split, though no blood was drawn nor any real harm done. The truth is a party in the tavern, somewhat elated, had been discussing the story of William Tell, and that led to the previous trial. Crogan says it was the first and last time that he will ever stand as a live illustration of Swiss patriotism."

Mr. John Young, indefatigable in all matters pertaining to the commercial prosperity of his country, is meeting, on behalf of the Montreal Board of Trade, a project no less interesting than new. He proposes, as a public act, a telegraphic communication between Quebec and a point on the north shore of the Straits of Belleisle, 700 miles East of Quebec, and only 1878 West of Liverpool. There the Canadian line of Steamers should touch. Thence the European news should be flashed along the wires, for the benefit of the Western World. The advantages of this plan, as regards time and distance, are manifest.—New York Albion.

A paper in Ohio tells that a good joke of several prisoners who were confined in one of the country jails of the Buckeye State. The jail was old and dilapidated, and one night they escaped from their dungeon vile, in other words "broke jail"—but instead of escaping, the jailer found them the next morning seated on top of their prison-house pounding the roof with great violence. Surprised beyond measure, he asked them what they were doing, whereupon one of them replied that the house leaked so bad when it rained, they concluded they would just step out and repair the roof.