LETTER FROM CHINA.

(Correspondence of the Philadelphia Presbyterian.)

Forces of the insurgents repelled—Present state of the rebellion—Provinces in possession of the rebels—Need for prayer.

CANTON, May 20, 1854.

The *North China Herald* of the 6th May gives a summary of the events recorded in the *Peking Gazette* from the date noticed in my last letter, viz: March 16th to April 14th. According to these statements, the Imperial forces were still successful against the Northern army of the insurgents; and they had driven it out of Chihli, the metropolitan province, into Shantung province. According to the statements of the *Gazette* up to March 16th, the insurgents were then at Fauching district, in Hokan department, in Chihli, and by these last statements, they were at Linsing, in Shantung, seventy miles to the south southeast of Fauching. The insurgents are stated to have lost, in various engagements, between three and four thousand killed.

It may be interesting to many of your readers to have a connected statement of the condition of the insurrection at the present time.

The portions of the country in the hands of the insurgent forces, at the present time, lie on both sides of the Yangtze river, extending a distance of perhaps four hundred miles along the course of the river, on both the north and south side of it. They hold possession of *three* provincial capitals out of the *eighteen* that are comprised in China proper, viz: Nanking, the capital of Kiangsu, Luchau, the capital of Ngauhwui, and Wuchang, the capital of Hupeh. In Kiangsu province they only hold possession of one large city beside Nanking, viz: Chinkiangfu. They hold two small places on the banks of the river between Nanking and Chinkiang, a distance of forty-seven miles.

The largest territory that is in the possession of the insurgents lies in Ngauhwui province. If we may judge anything from their holding nearly all the cities of departments, they are in possession of nearly the entire southern half of this province. They hold the principal cities of Ningkwoh, Chichau, and perhaps Hwuichau departments, which are situated south of the Yangtze river, and Nganking, Luchau, and Lungau-chau on the north of the rivers.

In Kiangsi province they hold possession of the cities of Kuikiang and Jauchau departments. And the adjacent departments of Nankang, Nanchang, and Kihngan, are so disturbed, that the usual literary examinations have been postponed.

In Hupeh, beside the provincial capital Wuchang, they have taken the two great commercial marts Hankau and Siangtan, the cities of Hanyang and Hwangchau departments, and the city of Hiaukan district in Hangang department, and the city of Yingching district in Tehngan department, to the northwest of the provincial capital.

In Hunan province they have taken recently the city of Yohchau department, and the cities of Siangyin and Ninghiang districts in the department of Changsha. The city of Changsha is also the provincial capital, so that it is no doubt invested ere this.

The insurgents have three armies now in the field, viz: the one which has met with such reverses in the North, one which has had such success in Nganhwui, and the third in Hupeh and Hanan. The Governor-General of these two provinces was killed in battle with the insurgents on the 12th of February. The number of inhabitants comprised in these contiguous portions of five adjacent provinces, may perhaps be forty millions out of the three hundred and sixty millions in the empire.

The insurrection which has broken out in Kwangsi again is extending. The volunteers which were sent in February from Canton to quell it, have been worsted in every engagement with the insurgents. The leader of this band is said to be Hwang Filung, a man who formerly kept a shop for the sale of quack medicines, near the office of the Pwanyu magistrate, in the city of Canton, and taught the art of boxing and other athletic accomplishments.

May Christians be excited to earnest prayers that God may overturn and overturn until he shall come whose right it is to reign, and until the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom, shall be given to the Lord of lords. With much respect youre very truly,

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ORDER AT ST. LOUIS—THE LATE RIOTS.—The *St. Louis Democrat* of the 11th inst., speaking of the restoration of order and quiet in that city, after the late election riot, says: The city was never more quiet. The proclamation sweeping the streets of boys after eight o'clock, seemed to be the very measure desired for a long time, and having observed its excellent results in this late emergency, we hope it will be persevered in for all time to come. All over the city the tranquillity was really wonderful. Wm. Farrington, one of those wounded during the riots, has since died. It is estimated that 2000 pistols and 500 bowie knives were sold in the city while the riots were in progress. The military who were ordered out, state in a card that their pieces were loaded with ball and buckshot; so that had it been necessary to fire on the mob, bloody work would have ensued.

THE WAR.

LETTER FROM CONSTANTINOPLE.

CONSTANTINOPLE, AUG. 17.—Still a state of feverish anxiety reigns, mingled with vague disquietude. The certainty of an immediate movement, and a severe and perhaps lengthened struggle, drives away all other topics of conversation and reflection. The internal state of the country, its financial prospects, its capabilities to bear protracted warfare, in short, all those subjects which during the period of inactivity occupied men's minds, are now for the moment forgotten, or are thought of only by those whom long residence in the country, or immediate concern with the machine of government, has taught to look beyond the bustle and excitement of the present hour. Two great subjects occupy the reflections of all—the contemplated expedition, and the sickness which has descended with such suddenness on the fleets and armies of the allies. Of the military movements little more remains to be said from this place. Varna is now the centre of interest, and the intelligence received direct from headquarters will be more exciting, as well as more accurate, than what is derived from the disjointed narratives of officers arriving here, or from the rumours which pervade the counting-houses of Galata. The Bosphorus is now deserted by all but a few vessels. The gigantic Orinoco still retains its position at Beicos, and the Rifles' band adds to the gaities of Therapia, and its sister villages. The slopes of the giant mountain are whitened with tents which the last detachments of British soldiers have pitched on the brown heath, and which they will only strike when they re-enter the vessels which hang in the stream beneath, and proceed at once to the Russian shores. Ships of the line make their appearance by one's and two's, drop down to the Golden Horn, and return with huge pontoons clinging to their sides, and long trains of boats following at their sterns. The arrival and departure of vessels are the only incidents. When a new and unusually elegant steamer passes the long lines of villas, whose walls are washed by the rapid current of the Bosphorus, innumerable telescopes are directed towards it by the ladies, whose chief occupation is to sit at their windows; and the consequence of several months' experience is that much nautical knowledge has been acquired in these quarters. A clumsy construction of ten years back is criticised contemptuously, while the Jason or the Simla excites transports of admiration. In fact English *prestige* has been chiefly advanced of late by two things—the large stature of the British officers, and the size and elegance of our mercantile marine. Of the former I will say no more except that their natural advantages have been much diminished by the hideousness of the regulation shell jacket, but as regards the exhibition of maritime power, it has impressed even the Turks themselves. From those highest in rank to the humble *caiqueji*, the impression on all is, that the power of England is something beyond compare, and though the war-ships of our nation are rivalled in strength and perhaps surpassed in elegance by those of her alley, yet the observation is frequently heard that no one can doubt the naval superiority of the English giaours, who compares the ships in which their soldiers have arrived with the little craft of the French.

The presence of cholera and the dread of fever give all news from the army a mournful tinge. The disease seems much abated in the army, and it is to be hoped that the precautions of the surgical staff and the good sense of the men will deliver the camp entirely from the scourge. It has been noticed that the men who wear white trousers have suffered much more severely than the Highlanders, and the medical men of the country have long been aware that warm clothing over the stomach is a great preventive of the disease. Accordingly, a supply of flannel belts has been ordered, which will, no doubt, have a good effect. Fever, however, weakens many a frame, and though its consequences have been in very few instances fatal, yet it tends to make the army more unfit for service, and, unlike the cholera, it spares no rank. General Cator, chief of the artillery, and Colonel Boyle, of the 77th Regiment, have arrived at Therapia, ill, and the effect of the heat and malaria is felt in every division of the army.

Accounts from Trebizond state that the Russians, after having passed the Arpatchai with 30,000 men, namely, 15,000 infantry, 5000 cavalry, and 10,000 Georgian irregulars, with eighty pieces of cannon, had advanced to Karak-Dere, and taken up a position in front of the Ottoman army, which was encamped at Subatan. Skirmishes took place daily between the Bashi Bazouks commanded by Ismael Pacha and the Cossacks of the advanced guard. The divisions of Bayazid and Artaghan had joined the army of Kars, which now numbered 35,000 regulars, 5000 Bashi-Bazouks, and 100 cannon. Provisions were cheaper, but money to buy them with was still scarce. The Kurds still continue their ravages, but with the help of the European Consuls it is hoped that the disorders will be quelled.

The loss of 330,000 lbs of bread by the fire at Varna is of some consequence to the British army. It amounts to a fortnight's consumption for the entire force. The navy has made up part of the loss by making over 100,000 lbs for the use of the land forces.

Some doubts prevail in certain quarters as to the prudence of embarking large bodies of men for transport while so great a mortality prevails in the fleet. The French navy has suffered most severely. The Ville de Paris has 50 or 60 dead, the Montebello no less than 140, and other ships have been afflicted to a great extent. The English fleet has met with much less adverse fortune, although the Britannia, Admiral Dundas's flagship, is said to have lost some men.

THE GREAT FIRE AT VARNA.

The fire at Varna did very considerable damage, for it destroyed nearly one half the town, and a large quantity of stores belonging to the British and French armies. It was almost miraculous that the gunpowder magazines belonging to the British, French, and Turks did not fall a prey to the flames. The fire broke out about seven o'clock in the evening, in a spirit store. This building was nothing more than a wooden hovel, and the flames soon spread along the adjoining fabrics, all of the same construction, till they approached very near the English powder magazine. The wind blew right in the direction of the magazine, and for some time it was in much danger. But the French troops had turned out, followed by some English companies; sentries were stationed round the magazine, water was procured, and intervening houses were pulled down to arrest the progress of the flames. No impression, however, was made upon the advancing element, which now embraced both sides of the street, till a body of 400 French sappers came up, bringing with them eight or ten fire-engines, which some of them plied most vigorously while others, with pickaxes and crowbars, demolished everything round about of a nature to feed the raging element. Parties of sailors from the ships in the harbour rendered similar assistance. But all would probably have been in vain, if the wind, which had hitherto been blowing directly upon the magazine, had not suddenly changed and begun to blow in the opposite direction. The flames being thus turned back, passed with inconceivable rapidity along both sides of the Corso, as the main street is now called, till it reached the depot where the commissariat stores were kept. They spread with such swiftness that it was impossible for the united efforts of more than 4000 military to stop them, by pulling down houses, throwing water, or any other measures. These stores and a large portion of their contents were destroyed. Much, however, was saved. Thence the fire spread, from three points at once, into the Turkish quarter, where a mosque and many houses fell a prey to it; and then the united mass of flames passed rapidly on, full in the direction of the powder magazines of the Turks and the French. It is impossible to describe the anxiety which prevailed at this moment, increased as it was by the explosion of some spirit casks from time to time. At one moment there was a complete panic, for a row of burning houses just opposite the magazines fell in with a horrid crash, scattering flakes of fire in every direction. But the falling materials happily crushed the flames beneath their own weight and advantage was taken of the circumstance to pour upon them enormous volumes of water from the engines, brought up from the sea. As in the case of the British magazine, the wind happily changed, and the "poudriere" was thus saved by three o'clock in the morning. The fire, however, raged the whole night in the Turkish quarter, and during the two following days there were numerous heaps of smouldering materials, which occasionally threatened a renewal of the conflagration. One half of Varna has thus been left desolate and in ruins. Between 400 and 500 houses were destroyed, and two mosques. During the night the French soldiers shot six Greeks; one was captured in the act of setting fire to a lumber-room in the general hospital, and killed upon the spot; and five, it is said, were taken into custody. The British forces, by this catastrophe, lost a vast quantity of oats and flour, and nearly all the boots and shoes stored for the use of the men. The French losses were still greater. Many of their officers have lost all their baggage. The effect of the fire was immediately to raise the prices of provisions and of lodgings to a very high rate, and to reduce many of the native inhabitants to a state of perfect misery—homeless and ruined.

WHEN TO FIRE THE TOWER GUNS.

The capture of Bomarsund was announced to the inhabitants of the French capital by the firing of 101 guns. There was no firing of guns in the English capital; and the difference has been noticed, as if it shewed that the French Government is more heartily concerned in the war than the English. Now we do not see that zeal for the success of firing guns at the Bomarsund fort in the Baltic is proved by firing guns at nothing in London. The sudden explosion of gunpowder without a definite object is no more appropriate as a testimony of national triumph or joy than any clatter which fools may mark. When a great multitude has a common joy, or a common anxiety, there is a general desire to be sure that everybody is intent upon the object of thought at the same moment. When guns are fired, we all know that we are all thinking alike; and the strength of national purpose is increased by that satisfaction of a national instinct. The taking of Bomarsund, however, was no sufficient occasion for that raising of the whole country, and probably there will be but two or three occasions on which it will be appropriate. First, the taking of Sebastopol; which would be practically depriving Russia of the keys of Turkey, and accomplishing the great act of justice for which the war was commenced. Secondly, the taking of Cronstadt or St. Petersburg; which would be to take the keys of our enemy's castle, in order that we might go in and teach him his place. Thirdly, the conclusion of peace, on terms securing a material guarantee for a better observance of law and order than we have had while Russia was at large.

THE HIMALAYA AND THE GRAYS.

Her Majesty's recently purchased steam-ship Himalaya arrived at Scutari, after a rapid passage from Liverpool of 10 days 22 hours, on the evening of the 7th ult., and, having received orders from Admiral Boxer, proceeded on the following morning to Koulalie, a cavalry barrack about three miles up the Bosphorus, on the Asiatic side. A stage having been constructed by Captain Kellock something similar to the one used at Liverpool, on the following day, viz., the 9th, the whole of the Scots Grays and remounts, numbering 370 horses, were disembarked in nine hours, without accident, and the horses in apparently as good condition as they were in when embarked at Liverpool. The loss on the voyage amounts to one, a horse of some 18 years of age, whose lungs could not stand the change of climate or the excessive heat which was experienced during the passage out.

On the evening of the 11th the Colonel had a parade in full dress, and so gay and lively were the horses, that if one of the officers yclept Toosey, had not been a pretty good 'cross country man, he must have been kicked out of his saddle, for his mare sent her hind legs up for about ten minutes, as though she meant to send her rider up to Beicos.

It was really a very fine sight to see a whole regiment, and such a regiment, after a journey or voyage of 3100 miles, just as fit to go into action and gallop over a squadron of Cossacks as they would have been the day after leaving Nottingham. Colonel Griffith and the officers were so gratified at the result of the voyage, and so pleased with the attention that had been paid to and care which had been taken of them, their horses, and men, that they presented to Captain Kellock, and Mr. Lane, the purser, a handsome piece of plate, with a letter of thanks and a suitable inscription, expressive of their feelings at the termination of the voyage.

The Lords of the Treasury have awarded Mr. John Dicker, inspector of mails, the sum of £500, as a compensation for his invention of an apparatus for transferring mail bags to and from railway carriages at full speed, without stopping.

An iron vessel of 330 tons, expressly made for encountering the floating ice on the coast of Newfoundland, is now being built by Messrs. Cato, Miller, and Co. She is the property of Messrs. Job Brothers; and is considered a very fine specimen of the combination of strength of material with lightness of construction.

Grabe, right-hand man of the King of Prussia's company, first foot guards, died at Potsdam last week. He was the tallest soldier in Europe. He stood seven feet one inch.

The Board of Admiralty have issued instructions to the controller of the transport service to provide a ship for the conveyance forthwith of 300 tons of heavy shot and shell to Malta.

DISSENTERS AT OXFORD.—A correspondent of the *Cambridge Press* says:—"I hear that some dozen youths from the wealthier portions of the dissenting party are about to enter at Oxford, and that inquiries are even being made by the head of a highly respectable family of Jews. At University College (Cambridge), Jewish youths, who have been successful, have, I believe, lodged and boarded at an establishment, intended, more especially, at all events,—for youths of a Protestant sect. No harm has resulted that I hear of. The youthful Goldsmid may not have become a Christian, but most assuredly his companions have not become Jews.

PROPOSED ROYAL MARRIAGE.—It is rumoured that the eldest son of the Prince of Prussia (heir to the throne) is to marry the Princess Royal of England, when she is sixteen—which will be in a little more than two years. Her father requested leave to let the lad pass the interval in England, where he might acquire the language and study the laws; but the King of Prussia has peremptorily refused, plainly declaring that England was a country of which the less was known by a Prussian Prince the better.

DIMINISHED CONSUMPTION OF TEA.—Although the gross export of teas from China to all the world does not fall short of last year, yet the quantity coming forward to the United States is little more than one-third of the supply shipped to corresponding date of last year. From July 1st to December 8th, the total quantity sent forward to the United States from all the ports in