## LATEST NEWS FROM ENGLAND.

### SPEECH OF MR. LAYARD.

On Wednesday pursuant to invitation, the County Hall at Aylesbury was densely filled with the electors of the borough and hundred, to hear from Mr. Layard an account of his parliamentary conduct since his election, and his opinion on the state of affairs in the East. The chair was taken by Mr. Acton Tindall, Clerk of the Peace.—Mr. Layard said: Gentlemen,—You have no doubt seen, that I have been offered office, and have declined it. Some time before I had the honour of representing Aylesbury, Lord Granville named me as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and I served for a short time in the Foreign-office; but Lord J. Russell's ministry went out about three weeks after. Of course it was my duty to go out with the government, but Lord Derby, who succeeded, behaved to me in the most handsome manner. I was not then in parliament, but Lord Derby told me, I might remain in the office until his son returned from India, as he intended him for the post; but then, if he continued at the head of affairs, he would give me an equivalent appointment, or a diplomatic mission on the continent. That was a handsome offer, and one which I could have accepted without any compromise of principle. I had not as yet entered life as a public man, and could easily have accepted the mission abroad. All my political friends were of opinion, that I should accept the offer, except Lord J. Russell, who expressed himself to the contrary, and his opinion I did not hesitate to follow. Lord Derby remained but a very short time in office, and Lord Aberdeen succeeded him. Lord J. Russell put me down as Under Secretary for the Board of Control. Shortly after, the same noble lord sent for me and informed me that a gentleman remained unprovided for, whose ability and long public services entitled him to a position, and his lordship threw himself upon me to resign my office in favour of this gentleman. I acceded to Lord John Russell's request, and Sir Thomas Redington was appointed to the Board of Control. Shortly afterwards Lord John Russell offered me a consulship in Egypt; but that I declined. Shortly afterwards the great question which is now agitating the whole world began to show itself in the East, and Lord Stratford was sent to Constantinople. He was anxious that I should accompany him, and I did so. Those questions then arose about which I differed from Lord Stratford; and I returned to this country. Government having sustained a great defeat, went out of office, and Lord Palmerston succeeded. Lord Palmerston offered to appoint me Clerk of the Ordnance, but I felt that, having voted only two days before, that no confidence ought to be placed in the late government, I could not consistently take office in another composed chiefly of the same materials ("*hear*," *and cheers*). Secondly, I recollected that I had stated it to be the duty of government to put the right men in the right places, and I was in no way connected with the Ordnance. The new government disagreed, and three of its most important members retired. Lord Palmerston then offered me the office of Under-Secretary at War. I simply made some conditions as to being allowed certain influence and accepted it. But on the following day, Lord Palmerston sent for me again, and said that for certain important reasons he was obliged to withdraw his offer, but that at Lord J. Russell's request, I could have the office of Under-Secretary for the Colonies. I now felt that I was in the same position as I had been a few days before. I was not acquainted with the colonies, and although, in time of peace, I might have had time for learning, I felt that, at a moment of great national emergency, public men, when called on to act, would betray themselves, if they attempted to do that for which they had had no previous preparation. I, therefore, declined the office, at the same time informing Lord Palmerston, that if he succeeded in forming a government worthy of the public confidence, and of my confidence, he should have my independent support (*hear*). So much for my autobiography. With respect to the general question, it has been said that constitutional government is on its trial, and that the eyes of the world are turned upon England to see whether constitutional government can carry out its principles. Now, *if public men, at a time when the national interests are at stake can forget everything but themselves, and scramble for office, taking the first place that is offered to them, I say that we shall be the laughing-stock of the world*, and the system of which we are so proud will be looked upon as a sham, in which the public places are to be only filled by the men who are unprincipled enough to sacrifice their country in order that they may obtain the emoluments of office (cheers). Messrs. Cobden and Bright endeavour to make it appear that we are fighting for the Turks. True, to a certain extent we are; but the condition of the Turks is not an essential part of the war question. It is all very well to excite public feeling against despotism, and to point to number one and two despots fighting for the third; but the real truth is, that we are fighting for the Christian subjects of Turkey. You are aware that of late years there have been great ameliorations of the Turkish laws and, in consequence, the Christian population have made immense progress in learning and civilixation, while liberal opinions have been rapidly gaining ground amongst them. The Emperor of Russia saw this progress with alarm; and his object in sending Prince Menschikoff to Constantinople was, if possible, to check the growing liberal tendencies of the Christian population of Turkey. He knew that, if the Christians could at any time render themselves capable of self-government, he might bid adieu to those magnificent provinces, the possession of which would make him the greatest monarch in the world. Accordingly, Prince Menschikoff was sent to Constantinople shortly after Lord Aberdeen had been made prime minister—(hear, hear)—and my impression is, and I shall hold it to my dying day, that if we had exhibited a bold front,we should never have been obliged to go to war (cheers). Instead of telling Russia what England would permit, and what she would not, we pursued half-measures, at one time patting her back, at another checking her, but never pursuing anything like a bold and decisive policy. All this time we had at Vienna,to protect the interests of Turkey,a man of great worth and many estimable qualities, but entirely unequal to such a crisis, but *the misfortune throughout the whole affair has been that our government has never put the right man in the right place, nor been able to sacrifice private, ar party, or family considerations to the public interest* (loud cheers). How did we get into this war? Our Minister for Foreign Affairs told us that we were "drifting" into it. I ask, was that the word of a statesman appointed to guard the destinies of a country (hear, hear)? The war was proclaimed to have no territorial objects; every one knew it had not, but was that a statement to be made to Russia, showing that she could lose nothing—we, everything? Our government having "drifted" thus into war, they made the plunge at last without having the slightest idea of what were the necessary preparations. They first sent the troops to Gallipoli, without having prepared any supply of food, and had it not been for the French, they would have starved. Then they sent them to Varna, and I must mention, that during their first operations I was in constant communication with the government, and there is scarcely anything which has happened since that I did not foretell, and which might have been avoided, had my advice been taken. Next the Crimea expedition was determined on. Government tells us that it was determined on in spring, but for their own sakes, I trust that that is not the case. Were it so, I should say that some people ought to be sent to Tower-hill, where persons were formerly sent for crimes for which they now get distinguished and rewarded (cheers and cries of "*The Garter!*") If the expedition was contemplated in spring, they should have taken every preliminary precaution, before resorting to the critical experiment of throwing a British army on a foreign shore. But nothing was done. I saw the magnificent fleet of men-of-war and transports, and thought that England, possessing such resources, ought to be able to accomplish anything. Although I knew the expedition was late, I thought it could not possibly fail, and I was still further confirmed in my opinion by the victories of Alma and Inkerman, which placed the old English courage on a pinnacle higher than any it had ever before attained. But after the battle of Alma a delay took place, and why? If we advanced at once, it is stated by the best military authorities, that Sebastopol must have fallen; the panic was so great, that the gates would have been thrown open to us; and it is also known that the French wished to advance. We could not, because we had made no preparations for the transport of our wounded; and thus, in consequence of the neglect of the Government, two days were lost—and with them an opportunity which will never occur again (hear). Again, after our forced march across the country, an extraordinary delay took place; and the result was, that when, on the 17th of October; we ostensibly opened fire, we in reality did nothing (hear, hear). Having alluded to the want of roads, of depots, and of transports, Mr. Layard went on:—Thus the army were left no tents, no necessaries; and while supplies were rotting in abundance at Eupatoria, the soldiers were perishing in hundreds at Balaclava. For the sick we had no hospital, although the French had prepared one; and the consequences of this neglect were dreadful. The medical staff was insufficient, a statement of which I will give you a striking proof. There was a steamer called the Kangaroo, on board of which were placed 700 sick and wounded men. She was to have sailed in the afternoon, and a doctor was to have accompanied the invalids: one doctor being considered enough for 700 wounded men on ship-board. I was on board another vessel, and what was my surprise to see the Kangaroo still alongside, with the flag at half mast high as a signal of distress. Our captain went to see what was the matter, and he found the deck so covered with the dead and dying, that he could scarcely walk the deck. He asked the captain, why he had not gone, and the latter answered, that the medical man who had been ordered had never come (hisses, and a general expression of horror and indignation). The medical man who so acted was subsequently found out, tried by court-martial, and acquitted; and do you know why? It appeared that the general had told him to be in readiness to go and to present himself at his tent at a certain hour. Now, whether it was ,that the doctor did not like to go, I cannot tell, but instead of going into the General's tent, he went up outside and looked at it, and he was acquitted on the grounds that he had strictly fulfilled his orders (loud cries of "Oh, oh," and "Name"). What is worse, he has been allowed to remain in the service since. But the same neglect pervades all our service. Lord Raglan writes home that he wants forage, because the hay has not arrived from England. Conceive the absurdity of bringing hay from England, when in Turkey there are hundreds of miles covered with the best horse-food (hear, hear). No wonder that our troops should perish, when porter is kept sailing backward and forward while the men perish, and the transports are loaded in such a way that medicines are put at the bottom and chain shot at the top, so that when the vessel calls at Scutari, she has to be wholly unladen in order to get at the medicine chests (hear, hear(. All this time, it should be recollected that we have in our pay 350,000 tons of transport; and the estimate for that item alone is £5,000,000 (hear, hear). But we have now in command men born in another century, who have spent all their lives at the clubs, and now at sixty or seventy years of age are sent to take charge of the army. To remedy this state of things, it is proposed to send out commissions, a course against which I have entered my warmest protest, because I believe they can lead to no good. You send out commissions to inquire into the transport and commissariat. Do you think any officer in the service will give evidence before these commissions? No, an unsatisfactory inquiry will be executed, which will have no effect, but that of screening the offenders. But it is impossible that such a state of things can be permitted to go on much longer. England finds her army of 54,000 men reduced to 15,000, or 18,000 at the most, some regiments being reduced to the officers and a corporal; and it is believed that, with proper attention to details, all this misery might be avoided. What we want is to recal these men, and not to lose time in sending out commissions, which can lead to no particular results (cheers)—Resolutions were then passed approving of Mr. Layard's parliamentary conduct, and the proceedings terminated.

---

### THE BALTIC FLEET OF 1855.

We have endeavoured to obtain a correct estimate of this gigantic English "Armada," or "100 pendants," and we believe the following list will be found as correct as can be obtained, at this early period, of the ships intended to form the expedition:—

Commander-in-Chief—Rear-Admiral of the Blue the Hon. Richard Saunders Dundas, C. B.

Second in Command—Rear-Admiral of the Blue Michael Seymour.

Third in Command—Rear-Admiral of the Blue Robert Lambert Baynes, C. B.

Captain of the Fleet—The Hon. F. T. Pelham.

| | Guns. | Horse power. |
|---|---|---|
| Duke of Wellington (flag) | 131 | 700 |
| Royal George, Captain Codrington, C.B. | 102 | 400 |
| Exmouth (flag) | 91 | 400 |
| James Watt, Captain George Elliot | 91 | 600 |
| Orion, Captain Erskine | 91 | 600 |
| Cæsar, Captain Robb | 91 | 400 |
| Nile, Captain Mundy | 91 | 500 |
| Majestic, Captain J. Hope, C.B. | 91 | 400 |
| Cressy, Captain Warren | 8I | 400 |
| Colossus, Captain Robinson | 81 | 400 |
| Sanspareil, Captain Heath | 70 | 350 |
| Blenheim, Captain W. H. Hall | 60 | 450 |
| Hogue, Captain Ramsay | 60 | 450 |
| Ajax, Captain Warden | 60 | 450 |
| Edinburgh, Captain Hewlett | 60 | 450 |
| Russell, Captain Scott | 60 | 200 |
| Hawke, Captain Erasmus Ommaney | 60 | 200 |
| Cornwallis, Captain Wellesley | 60 | 200 |
| Pembroke, Captain G. H. Seymour | 60 | 20) |
| Hastings, Captain Caffin | 60 | 200 |
| Imperieuse, Captain Watson, C.B. | 51 | 360 |
| Euryalus, Captain Ramsay | 51 | 400 |
| Arrogant, Captain Yelverton | 47 | 360 |
| Amphion, Captain A. C. Key | 34 | 300 |
| Horatio, Captain Cochrane | 24 | 250 |
| Cossack, Captain Fanshawe | 21 | 250 |
| Pylades, Captain D'Eyncourt | 21 | 250 |
| Esk, Captain T. F. Burch | 21 | 250 |
| Tartar, Captain Dunlop | 21 | 250 |
| Archer, Captain Heathcote | 17 | 200 |
| Retribution, Captain Fisher | 28 | 400 |
| Magicienne, Captain Tatham | 16 | 400 |
| Odin, Captain Willcox | 16 | 560 |
| Sampson, Captain Brock | 6 | 467 |
| Dragon, Captain Stewart | 6 | 560 |
| Bulldog, Captain W. K. Hall | 6 | 500 |
| Penelope, Captain Sir W. Wiseman | 18 | 650 |
| Lightning, Captain B. J. Sullivan | 3 | 100 |
| Vulture, Captain Glasse | 6 | 470 |
| Desperate, Commander White | 8 | 400 |
| Conflict, Commander Cumming | 8 | 400 |
| Cruizer, Com. the Hon. G. Douglas | 14 | 60 |
| Harrier, Commander Story | 14 | 160 |
| Ariel, Commander Luce | 9 | 60 |
| Falcon, Commander Pullen | 17 | 100 |
| Basilisk, Com. the Hon. F. Egerton | 6 | 400 |
| Rosamond, Comander Crofton | 6 | 286 |
| Driver, Commander Rice | 6 | 280 |
| Janus, Lieutenant Kane | 4 | 220 |
| Locust, Lieutenant—— | 3 | 180 |
| Otter, Lieutenant W. A. J. Heath | 3 | 120 |
| Porcupine, Lieutenant Jackson | 3 | 132 |
| Zephyr, Lieutenant Bond | 3 | 100 |
| Recruit, Lieut. J. F. Day | 4 | 160 |
| Weser, Lieutenant Commerell | 4 | 160 |

**FLOATING BATTERIES.**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ætna | 16 | Thunder | 16 |
| Glutton | 16 | Trusty | 16 |
| Meteor | 16 | | |

Horse power not published.

**MORTAR VESSELS.**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Blazer | 1 | Manly | 1 |
| Firn | 1 | Mastiff | 1 |
| Hardy | 1 | Porcupine | 1 |
| Havock | 1 | Surly | 1 |

Horse power not published.

**STEAM GUNBOATS.**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gleaner | 3 | Hind | 2 |
| Pelter | 3 | Jackdaw | 2 |
| Pincher | 3 | Jasper | 2 |
| Ruby | 3 | Jack | 2 |
| Teazer | 3 | Magpie | 2 |
| Badger | 3 | Redwing | 2 |
| Snapper | 3 | Skylark | 2 |
| Biter | 2 | Snap | 2 |
| Boxer | 2 | Starling | 2 |
| Clinker | 2 | Stork | 2 |
| Cracker | 2 | Swinger | 2 |
| Dapper | 2 | Thistle | 2 |
| Fancy | 2 | Weasel | 2 |
| Grinder | 2 | Pigmy | 2 |

Belleisle, 24, Commander Hosken, hospital ship.

Æolus, 24, ammunition magazine.

Perseverance, store ship.

Volcano, floating engineers' factory, Master Commander Dyer.

The operations in the Baltic this spring will be conducted on a scale of extraordinary magnitude. In addition to the naval forces of England, which are to consist of one hundred steamers, France will send fifty steam-vessels and a powerful land armament, which is now stationed along the coast from Calais to Cherbourg. For the conveyance of these troops and all the *materiel*, the French Government have entered into a contract with an English company, the representative of which is at present in Paris—an arrangement which will have the advantage of leaving the vessels of war to act with all their power against the great Russian strongholds in the Gulf of Finland.

---

MELANCHOLY DEATH OF A BRITISH ARTILLERY OFFICER.—Major Charles Colville Young, of the Royal Horse Artillery, just returned from the Crimea, and *en route* from Turkey to the Isle of Wight, where his wife and family reside, was killed, on Saturday morning last, by falling from the top-story front window of one of the bedrooms of the Fountain Hotel, High-street, Portsmouth. The deceased arrived at the hotel, on Friday night, and on retiring to bed gave particular directions to the "boots" to call him at seven o'clock next morning. The "boots" saw him partially undressed, and there is no doubt, that he retired to his bed; but about two o'clock on Saturday morning he appeared at the bed-room window, and called to a police-constable, to whom he said, he did not feel well, and that he wished to get quietly out of the house to a chemist's shop opposite, without disturbing the people in the hotel, as it was so late. The policeman went to his inspector, to see what assistance he could give, and when he returned the deceased was lying bleeding on the pavement beneath the window. He was dressed, and had an umbrella as if he was going a journey. A surgeon was immediately procured, but the unfortunate gentleman died before four o'clock, owing it was supposed, to the rupture of a blood vessel. He had fractured his ribs in falling, but there was no wound on his head. The surgeon thought the deceased might have had a fit of vertigo, through hanging over the window sill. He was 38 years of age. When lately engaged in the trenches before Sebastopol he received a flesh wound in the leg. There was no evidence that his mind was in any affected. He had been in the army since 1833, and had served in Spain, in India, the Chinese war, at Madras (where he was military secretary to Lord Harris, and afterwards the Marquis of Tweeddal, governors of that presidency.) The jury returned a verdict to the effect,that the deceased was killed by accidentally falling from a window.

[The above gentleman was the youngest son of our late Governor Sir A. W. Young].—*Ed. H. Gaz.*

---

### AUSTRALIA.

**SERIOUS RIOTS AT BALLARAT.—COLLISION WITH THE GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES.**

We have received advices from Melbourne to the 2d of Dec. On the 30th November, disturbances took place at Ballarat, which assumed a very serious aspect, and on the 2d Dec. order had not been re-established. The cause of the disturbances was a refusal on the part of the diggers to pay the "license"—a decision adopted at a monster meeting on the previous day. The following report appeared in the *Melbourne Argus*:—"Messrs. Commissioners Rede and Johnson, with their troop of mounted and foot police, with drawn swords and fixed bayonets, demanded from the diggers their licenses. The diggers assembled in masses, many with arms, to resist the enforcement of the tax. The cry of the diggers was—'We will not have drawn swords or fixed bayonets.' 'Where is the Governor?' 'Send up Sir Charles Hotham.' 'We want justice, and we will have it.' Upon this, Mr. Commissioner Rede declared he was determined to collect the licenses. ('We hav'nt got them; we can't give them.' 'We have burnt them.')—Mr. Commissioner Rede: