THE EXAMINER:

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND NEWS.

EDWARD WHELAN] This is true Liberty, when Free-born Men, having to advise the Public, may speak free.—EURIPIDES. [EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

VOL. V. CHARLOTTETOWN, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, MONDAY, AUGUST 27, 1855. No. 7.

Literature.

(From the Dublin University Magazine for August, 1855.)

THE BATH OF THE STREAMS.

BY DENIS FLORENCE M'CARTHY.

I.

Down unto the ocean,
Trembling with emotion,
Panting at the notion,
See the rivers run;
In the golden weather,
Tripping o'er the heather,
Laughing all together,
Madcaps every one.

II.

Like a troop of girls
In their loosen'd curls,
See the concourse whirls
Onward in their glee;
List their tuneful tattle,
Hear their pretty prattle,
How they'll love to battle
With the assailing sea.

III.

See the winds pursue them,
See the willows woo them,
See the lakelets view them
Wistfully afar;
With a wistful wonder,
Down the green slopes under,
Wishing too to thunder
O'er their prison bar.

IV.

Wishing too to wander
By the sea-waves yonder,
There awhile to squander
All their silvery stores;
There awhile forgetting
All their vain regretting,
When their foam went fretting
Round the rippling shores.

V.

Round the rocky region,
Whence their prison'd legion,
Oft and oft besieging,
Vainly sought to break—
Vainly sought to throw them
O'er the vales below them,
Through the clefts that show them
Paths they dare not take.

VI.

But the swift streams speed them,
In the might of freedom,
Down the paths that lead them
Joyously along;
Blinding green recesses
With their floating tresses,
Cheering wildernesses
With their murmuring song.

VII.

Now the streams are gliding
With a sweet abiding—
Now the streams are hiding
'Mid the whispering reeds—
Now the streams outglancing
With a shy advancing,
Naiad-like go dancing
Down the golden meads—

VIII.

Down the golden meadows,
Chasing their own shadows—
Down the golden meadows,
Playing as they run;
Playing with the sedges,
By the water's edges;
Leaping o'er the ledges,
Glistening in the sun.

IX.

Streams and streamlets blending,
Each on each attending,
All together wending,
Seek the silver sands;
Like to sisters holding
With a fond enfolding—
Like to sisters holding
One anothers' hands.

X.

Now with foreheads blushing
With a rapturous flushing—
Now the streams are rushing
In among the waves;
Now in shy confusion,
With a pale suffusion,
Seek the wild seclusion
Of sequestered caves.

XI.

All the summer hours
Hiding in the bowers,
Scattering silver showers
Out upon the strand;
O'er the pebbles crashing,
Through the ripples splashing,
Liquid pearl-wreaths dashing
From each others' hand.

XII.

By yon mossy boulder,
See an ivory shoulder,
Dazzling the beholder,
Rises o'er the blue;
But a moment's thinking
Sends the Naiad sinking,
With a modest shrinking,
From the gazer's view.

XIII.

Now the wave compresses
All their golden tresses;
Now their sea-green dresses
Float them o'er the tide:
Now with elf-locks dripping,
From the brine they're sipping,
With a fairy tripping
Down the green waves glide.

XIV.

Some that scarce had tarried
By the shore, are carried
Seaward, to be married
To the glad gods there;
Triton's horn is playing,
Neptune's steeds are neighing,
Restless with delaying
For a bride so fair.

XV.

See at first the river,
How its pale lips quiver,
How its white waves shiver
With a fond unrest;
List how low it sigheth,
See how swift it flieth,
Till at length it lieth
On the ocean's breast.

XVI.

Such is Youth's admiring,
Such is Love's desiring,
Such is Hope's aspiring
For the higher goal;
Such is man's condition,
Till in heaven's fruition
Ends the mystic mission
Of the eternal soul.

(From Blackwood's Magazine for August, 1855.)

INTERNAL SUFFERINGS OF RUSSIA FROM THE WAR.

BY AN EYEWITNESS.

[The writer of the following statement left Russia, where he had resided for many years, in the course of the present summer.

[It will be observed that he apologises for any defects of style which appear in the narrative, on the ground of the length of time during which he had been unaccustomed to write his own language. No such defects will, we feel satisfied, be found; as the facts, so deeply interesting in themselves, and so important in their bearing, are told in plain sensible terms, leaving no doubt of the writer's sincerity, and his desire to tell nothing but the truth.]

Having recently left the interior of Russia, I think it my duty to lay before the public a plain statement of the results already produced by the events that are now passing. About the court and capitals I can give no information, as I was only in them for a few days on my way home; but all that I advance here relative to the particular part of the country I have lived in so long, is the truth, and to be relied on. I had the honor of giving the same information to some of the highest personages in the kingdom soon after my arrival, and apparently they did not think it without importance; so I have ventured to lay it before my country, trusting that what has hitherto been dark will now appear in the light of truth; for I have put nothing down that did not come under my own personal observation, or that I did not obtain from sources on which I could rely. I had thought of publishing a large work upon Russia, but was deterred by reading the books already published, which showed me that I should be obliged to repeat much that has been already written by abler pens, and which may be relied upon; I have therefore confined myself to what relates exclusively to the influence exercised upon all classes in the interior by the war. There is, doubtless, much left unsaid that might be of interest, but of which I possess no information upon which I can depend; and true to my resolve of only advancing what I know to be facts, I have left out all that is in any way doubtful. I am quite unused to writing for the public, and have employed my native language so little of late years, that I trust the garb in which I have clothed my truths will be excused if it be a little foreign in appearance; for the heart of the writer beats with a truly British enthusiasm, and breathlessly awaits the moment when his country will have triumphed over all her enemies.

The persons who are the greatest sufferers by the present war are land proprietors. If the war continue, they will, for the greater part, be brought to ruin. This will be seen by the following facts, which came under my observation upon an estate where I have resided for some years, and which I can give as an average specimen of the whole country. (It must be remembered that I only speak of the south of Russia; of the north I know comparatively nothing.) The estate in question consists of about 40,000 acres of land, with about thirteen hundred serfs. Its principal productions are linseed, corn and wool, which are all sold for exportation by way of the ports of the Azoff and Black Sea. These two seas having been closed for some time, all the raw produce remains rotting on the hands of the producer, with the single exception of wool, which finds a ready market in Germany, being transported overland through Austria; still the price diminished sensibly last year, on account of the increased cost of transport. I will now proceed to state the details of the losses experienced last year upon this one property. The average income amounts to about £6000, out of which £1500 has to be paid as interest of the mortgage—for this, like most other estates, is mortgaged to the government. Last year there were about 1500 quarters of linseed, which, sold on the spot, would fetch upon an average 16s. per quarter. Of this not a bushel has been sold; so, on this article alone, there is a loss of £1200. The wheat grown was about the same quantity. The average price of wheat is 12s. per quarter, and now only a limited quantity can be sold at 8s.; but, supposing the whole to be sold at that price, the loss will still amount to £300. This, however, is not the case, and the loss is not less than £500 upon wheat. Last year the price of wool was, upon an average, 15 per cent below the usual price; in some instances there was a loss of 20 and 25 per cent; the quantity sold usually fetched about £1400—so there was another loss of more than £200. Upon this same estate there are kept about eighteen thousand sheep, of which there are generally sold every year two thousand for their tallow and skins, at an average price of 7s. a-head; now, on account of the difficulties of exporting tallow, the price is only 5s.,—another £200 out of the pocket of the proprietor. It will be seen by the foregoing statement that the income of the possessor of this one estate is diminished more than one-third, by restrictions laid upon trade by the closing of the ports of the Azoff and Black Seas; and as this may be taken as a good criterion of the whole southern part of Russia, the loss is consequently something enormous. A few of the proprietors, it is true, sold their produce, at almost nominal prices, to merchants who speculated upon the results of the Conferences at Vienna, and bought up largely and transported the corn to the different ports of the south, to be ready to take advantage of the first opening of the trade, had the Conferences led to the much-desired peace. The immense quantities of corn destroyed during the late expedition to the Azoff, did not, as was stated, belong to the Russian government, but was the property of private speculators, among whom I know one who bought largely in wheat in the month of March, transporting it to Berdiansk, and I have no doubt he is a very large sufferer by the late events. I do not assert, however, that no portion of the the corn belonged to the Imperial government, but certainly not more than a fifth of the whole quantity was intended for the use of the troops, although it might have all been seized for that purpose later in the war, under the name of *voluntary contributions.*

I have attempted to show the losses that the present war occasions the landowner, by the trammels it imposes on trade; we will now take into consideration the enormous taxes he is subject to, in order that the government may be provided with means of carrying on the war, or ruining him, which is synonymous. The most severely felt tax at all times is the conscription. This in time of peace does not take place oftener than once a-year, and the number of recruits required is generally seven from every thousand serfs; but since the war broke out there have been two conscriptions in the year 1854, and already one in 1855, each of twelve in the thousand, being, for eighteen months, thirty-six able-bodied labourers out of every thousand males, old and young together. I do not know what the proportionate number of able-bodied men there is in a thousand males, but the effective strength must be considerably diminished when such a large number is taken away. This is not all. When the recruits are sent to the town to be examined and passed by the proper authorities, there must be for every twelve men at least eighteen more, in case the others should be rejected: these are sometimes kept away from their work two or three weeks, without any indemnity whatever. By this statement it will be seen that, during the last eighteen months, the possessor of the estate I have quoted above has given to the government forty-seven conscripts, being the proportion of thirty-six in the thousand for thirteen hundred, and lost the labour of about seventy men for a space of fourteen days; which latter loss, at 6d. a-day, will be £24 10s., without counting the entire loss of forty-seven men for ever. But every proprietor is obliged to pay a sum of money (about £8) to provide the recruit with an outfit and arm him; this will give again a sum of £376 for the year and half. The southern governments, in consideration of their vicinity to the seat of war, are exempted from the militia of thirty in the thousand, which is being raised in the northern governments. If they have not the militia, they are subjected to exactions under the name of *voluntary contributions.* In the spring of 1854 the estate was obliged to send forty oxen as rations for the troops then in the Danubian provinces; at the same time there were required five waggons, with a pair of horses and a driver to each, which are to be returned at the end of the war. These were for the transport of baggage and troops upon an emergency; and it was upon them that the armies who fought the battle of Inkermann were transported last autumn. In the autumn of the same year (1854) there were required half a pood (18lb.) of biscuit from every male serf for the army, which, for 1300, would amount to 650 poods; but the proprietor offered 1000 poods, which had to be made and despatched in about three weeks. While the preparation of the biscuit was going on, there came another order for ten waggons, with a driver and a pair of horses to each, to be ready and delivered up to the authorities in ten days, as the case was urgent. This was just before the news of the descent in the Crimea reached us. All these exactions were made just at the time when the harvest was going on—the end of August—so that the hands were of the greatest consequence to get all the corn housed before the autumnal rains broke up the roads and rendered the transport impossible. The number of oxen required to transport the biscuit was twenty pairs, which were absent nearly four months, as they had to carry it a long distance after the roads were broken up, and when the mud was knee-deep. A little later in the same year there were required a number of oxen again for rations. I do not remember the exact number required; but having sent so many away with biscuits, and the murrian being very bad among the cattle at this time, instead of sending them, the proprietor forwarded to the proper authorities £90 in money.

In April of the present year double the quantity of biscuit of that contributed last year was required; and as I travelled through the country in the month of May, I saw thousands of tons piled outside the towns, ready for transportation to the army, which of course has to be done by the proprietors and peasants of the crown. I met upon the road long strings of waggons going to load with this biscuit, and stopped and talked with the drivers, who were for the chief part peasants belonging to the crown. They lamented bitterly their hard fate, being obliged to leave their homes just as the haymaking was about to commence; and as they had to perform a journey of some 1500 versts, going and returning, it would be late in the autumn before they reached their homes again, and consequently too late to make any preparations for winter. Many of them said to me: "Batushka! we suppose that we are intended to starve this winter; last winter we suffered enough while the troops were passing, but now we shall not be able to provide anything for ourselves, for there are only the *babas* (old women) at home, and what can they do?"

The peasants of the crown are subjected to many of the same exactions as the proprietors—I think to all of them, except only the waggons, and about them I am not sure. I know they had to provide the biscuit just as their superiors had, and the oxen, too, for rations. It is, however, extremely difficult to ascertain the amount of contributions exacted from these poor, miscalled *free* serfs; for the employes by whom they are managed exact so much from them for their own use, saying that it is required for the service of their government, that it is impossible to distinguish what is really for their use, and what for that of their master. The war is a rich opportunity for the employes to make money, because they make all their demands upon the peasants without producing any written authority from a superior officer, merely stating, in their written or verbal orders, that certain articles are required on such a date, and of course they are ready without any demur or inquiry, as it may happen that the government actually, in this particular instance, requires what is demanded: then the man who sought occular demonstration is considered refractory, and sent to Siberia to improve his manners, and to serve as an example to others, who, after this, will be ready to give all that is required of them without inquiry.

Another exaction to which all the agricultural population is subject, is the furnishing means to transport all the munitions of war through the country. At the beginning they were paid for this service in a kind of government check, called *contremark,* which was received again at the treasury in payment of the poll-tax; but since August 1854 this has been changed, and this service is paid in money—*i. e.,* not paid at all, for the employes pocket the money, which it is never prudent to ask: the contremark was of no use to the employes, consequently the service was always accurately paid, but now the peasants get nothing but kicks and cuffs for their trouble.

The sufferings of the inhabitants of those villages situated on the lines of march taken by the armies that traversed the country from north to south, during the winter of 1853 and 1854, were so intense that even the soldiers themselves pitied them; and it takes something to touch the heart of a Russian soldier. The troops, in order to obtain sustenance, were obliged to disperse themselves over a large tract of country, marching in a parallel direction, and falling on the poor peasantry, whose stock of winter provisions was only prepared for the wants of their own families; like locusts, eating up everything, and reducing the inhabitants to the greatest distress; while the male population, who generally earn something considerable with their horses during the winter, in transporting merchandise from one fair to another, was engaged on the main road in the transport of artillery and tumbrils, which, by the wise arrangements of the Russian government, had to be dragged over a country covered to the depth of six or eight feet with snow, upon wheels; so that tumbrils, which could have been drawn easily by four or six horses if placed upon sledges, required twelve or fifteen to move them with their large wheels imbedded in the snow. During a journey I was obliged to make in February, 1854, I met more than 500 tumbrils transported in this laborious manner. It made my heart bleed to see the treatment both horses and peasants received at the hands of the soldiery who were with them. When they came to a hill, they were frequently obliged to use double, and even treble, the number of horses required on the level ground. Roads had to be cut in some places through the snow, to admit of the passage of the heavy artillery. The peasants are seldom kept at this work for more than a fortnight together; but they are frequently a hundred miles from their homes; so that after an absence of a month they return only to find their homes swept clean by the hungry warriors whose fighting materials they have transported with so much difficulty. That many died of the artificial famine caused by these preparations for glorious war, I have no doubt. The Russian soldier, too, is much imbued with a strong propensity for thieving, and there is nothing he will not steal if the opportunity of so doing should present itself. Finding all the houses where they were billeted without the master, of course many of the little articles of furniture were missing after their visit. These things were generally taken to the next halting-place and sold for brandy — only, perhaps, to be stolen again by the next party. It frequently happened that soldiers and recruits met in the same villages, and the number billeted in one house was so great that the master and his family were obliged to sleep out in the sheds with cattle, or upon the snow, for *slujba* (as the peasants call the soldier) must have his lodging. Nor were the sufferings of the troops themselves less acute, marching as they did at such an inclement season of the year. They strive, however, to enliven their dreary marches by songs and jests, for in every company there is always a certain number of singers, who march in front, led by a man with a tambourine or an old violin, who dances, sings military songs, of which the other singers take up the chorus, or else he cracks jokes at any one's expense. It is a curious sight to meet a party of soldiers in the midst of a snowy desert, where nothing is to be seen but snow below and above; for the very air is impregnated with it. These armed men are wending their way to destroy, or be destroyed, as the case may be.

The immense amount of misery the present war is causing in Russia is little imagined; but that country cannot boast of its *Times.* Everything is hidden from view; and only those who actually take part in these scenes, or are involuntary spectators, can know what is the real state of affairs. Even at St. Petersburg nothing is known but what appears in official reports; so that in many instances far less is known in that magnificent capital of the state of the interior of the country, than in England, where such excellent works as the *Englishwoman in Russia* are, or ought to be, universally read. Everybody is afraid to speak on these subjects, except to laud all the measures of the paternal government. I remember an anecdote that was current in Russia in the spring of 1854: A Russian who had attained the rank of general in the civil service, spoke in the theatre of the absurdity of the returns of killed and wounded published in the Russian papers. The police master, who was present, over-hearing what he said, observed that he should be obliged to report his words to the Count Orloff; for if he did not, somebody else present might, and he would fall into disgrace. The next day the general received an intimation that it was the Emperor's pleasure that he should join the army on the Danube immediately, in order to satisfy himself of the truth of the returns, by counting the killed and wounded after each battle, and that his military rank should be that of major. The same day there appeared in the official gazette: "Le conseiller d'etat actual, ———, was received, by his own wish, into the army with rank of major!" It is extremely probable that, had these remarks been made in private, and reported, the consequences might have been worse.

Among those who feel the pressure of the war in the towns are the working tradesmen, such as tailors and bootmakers. In all regiments there are a certain number of men who work for their comrades in time of peace, making for them their clothing, boots, &c.; but as now all are called upon to bear arms, they have to quit the needle and awl for the rifle and bayonet. The duty of providing the troops with their grey greatcoats falls upon the tailors, who are suffering enough from the depressed state of all trades. They are supplied