HASZARD'S GAZETTE.

FARMERS' JOURNAL, AND COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER.

Established 1823. Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Saturday, January 6, 1855. New Series. No. 203.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

OF THE RUSSIAN WAR.

FROM ITS COMMENCEMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME.

ACTIVE ENTRANCE OF ENGLAND AND FRANCE INTO THE WAR.

With this brief but necessary glance at the general condition of the respective belligerents, we may continue our record of the actual events. And here we are obliged to say that, having landed the English and French expeditionary forces in Turkey, and, as it were, set them down within reach of the enemy, we shall find little to justify any minute journal of their proceedings for the next four months. The war proceeded; and, indeed, one very remarkable part of the struggle—a truly memorable transaction—soon engaged the attention of all Europe; but we miss, in the story of it, the action or presence of the Allied forces. They were near, and took no part. In short, though dispatched in spring, they were not destined to engage the foe till autumn. During that long delay, sufferings formed a greater part of their history than actions, and these sufferings were of the saddest kind in the soldiers' estimation—the visitation of a dreadful pestilence, not the hardships or catastrophes of a glorious campaign. With the exception of one vigorous blow struck by the fleet, our remarks apply to the general attitude of both services. On the other side of Europe, however, something was to be achieved (though even there not much at first), and the reader will perceive that many of the adventures of the Baltic expeditionary force were contemporaneous with the occurrences which we now proceed to mention in their order.

BOMBARDMENT OF ODESSA.

Trustworthy information having come that between Sebastopol and the various Russian stations, from Anapa to Odessa, there was a constant and active passage to and fro of troops and stores, the Allied fleets issued forth and patrolled the whole Euxine, forcing the Russian ships to take refuge in Sebastopol after which, Admiral Dundas and Admiral Hamelin, with their squadrons, approached Odessa on the 22d of March. There, the squadrons shortening sail about three miles out to sea, sent a small vessel with a flag of truce, to summon General Osten-Sacken to deliver up to them all the ships, &c., in the harbour, failing which, chastisement should forthwith be inflicted for the massacre of Sinope.

Before anything was attempted against Odessa, some shots from the batteries had been aimed at an English flag of truce (borne by the *Fury;*) and it was indispensable to teach our barbarous enemies, by a severe lesson, to respect the laws of nations. Next day, the 23d, twelve war-steamers of both nations were detached from the fleet, and sent within range of shot; the order being to spare the town, if possible, but to destroy the batteries, the magazines, and the vessels in the harbour. The order was scrupulously obeyed in the first particular, and executed with brilliant effect in the second. The detachment of steamers approached, accompanied by rocket-boats; these ventured further in, being a smaller mark for the land artillery, which dared not besides waste its fire *short* of the covering frigates and steamers. The boats having taken their station, the attacking detachment began a most singular and beautiful movement in file, tracking one the other's wake with exquisite precision, along an ever-repeated circle; and as each vessel touched those points of her orbit which were nearest to the Russian batteries, she delivered her broadside, passing onwards, and made way for her successor in the revolving chain, until her own turn should come again. To borrow a most graphic and striking expression used by an eye-witness, the ever-returning evolution of these graceful ministers of a memorable act of vengeance seemed, in the distance, to be performing a sort of wild waltz together, as they laid low the fortifications of the proud Russian seaport. In the middle of the action, one of the French steamers, struck by a red-hot shot through the hull, caught fire, and returned for a brief space to the fleet, to have assistance in extinguishing the flames. This was very soon effected; and the wounded falcon hastened to take again her destructive place in what may be said to have resembled also the wheeling flight of some beautiful birds of prey swooping at intervals, each in its turn, upon the quarry.

The defence from the shore was at first very spirited, and the Russians are described as having stood well to their guns; but in range these were inferior to the artillery of the ships; and, by sensible degrees, the fire of the garrison became slower. At length two great powder magazines of the Russians blew up in quick succession, while most of the batteries were dismounted, the forts knocked to pieces, and the ruins strewn with the bodies of the artillerymen. When the defences were shattered into a shapeless ruin, and the resistance of the Russians had evidently ceased in despair, and when thirteen of the enemy's ships, laden with munitions of war had been captured, the Allied detachment drew slowly off, and rejoined the fleets. Their comrades who had, from the yards of the distant men-of-war, witnessed the action, descended now and welcomed them, with shouts that might have been heard on shore. What the Russian loss was in slain and wounded we have not, of course, the means of ascertaining with exactitude. The officers engaged have estimated the number of the enemy killed at about eight hundred or a thousand soldiers. The Allies had ten sailors wounded and five killed. Such was the bombardment of Odessa on the 23d of March.

Shortly afterwards the loss of the *Tiger* (16 guns) occurred. She grounded at the Campagna Costazzi, near Odessa, in such a position that she could not use her batteries against the field artillery on shore. After a short fight she surrendered, and her crew (250) were all made prisoners, and carried to Odessa, where they were well treated. The Captain's (Giffard's) wounds proved mortal; and he told the officers and sailors around with his last breath, that to his death they owed their own lives; for he was going to fire the powder-magazine when he was struck down. The Russians blew up the *Tiger.*

PASSAGE OF THE DANUBE BY LUDERS AND GORTSCHAKOFF.

It was about this epoch that Prince Dolgorouki, sent to Teheran to involve Persia in the Czar's quarrel, struck the Sedr Azim, or Prime Minister of the Shah, with a cane to punish his reluctance. The most imperative instructions had now come from St. Petersburg to the Russian Generals in the Principalities, to effect some great exploit *at whatever cost.* The frightful significance of this order delivered Prince Gortschakoff and his coadjutors from certain natural scruples and hesitations. Long since, the Czar must have perused the report of General Schilders, announcing, so early as the month of January, a loss of thirty-five thousand Russian soldiers, although active hostilities had then lasted only abont ten weeks. There could be no illusion in the Imperial mind, and yet this order is sent to the Generals, enforced by the awful addition, "*at whatever cost.*" To hear was to obey.

We have seen how, on the 15th of March, Prince Gortschakoff had been frustrated in a bloody attempt to seize the island between Oltenitza and Turtukai, losing 2000 men, and yet failing to storm the place. Luders had five days before this crossed the Danube at Galatz. He was in force, having 24¼ battalions, 8 squadrons, 6 sotnias, and 64 guns. Gortschakoff, learning the fact of the passage so far down the river to the rear of his own left, determined to abandon for the present his disheartening operations against Turtukai and Rustchuk, and to fly to the support of Luders; thus imparting, he hoped, a decisive character to the advance of that enterprising General. By a retrogade circuit, he passed even beyond the rear of Luders' left flank, and threw himself across the river a little above Tultscha, with 14 battalions, 16 squadrons, 6 sotnias, and 44 guns. He brought with him more cavalry than Luders, though a smaller general force; and their united columns amounted to nearly 50,000 men. The reader is aware, that Omer Pacha had decided not to dispute possession of the Upper Dobrudscha; and it is, therefore, nearly incomprehensible, though stated in all the contemporary accounts of these operations, that Prince Gortschakoff should have there taken eleven guns and 150 prisoners. His capture of the guns is more unintelligible than his capture of the prisoners, who might have been the unarmed or half-armed ordinary inhabitants—for the guns must have belonged to Tultscha, which the Turks still held as an outpost, and which was the only place they retained in all that region. This event took place about the 23d of March, the day of the bombardment of Odessa, and five days before the Emperor Napoleon, who, on the 2d had, in person, opened at Paris the Legislative Session of 1854—joined Queen Victoria, in a common declaration, purporting that the rupture between them and Russia, and that their alliance with Turkey for the purpose of active and direct operations of war, were now *accepted facts.* Redschid Pacha, General Baraguay D'Hilliers, and Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, soon afterwards signed the tripartite treaty to this effect, at Constantinople; and, still later, it was solemnly ratified at Paris.

On the same 23d of March, as we have seen, the Danube was forced by the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian army of occupation; the fortifications of Odessa were laid in ashes, and the Governments of England and France agreed, that they would at last publish in all form their acceptance of the Russian challenge. These are among the amusements, and this is but the mysticism of history; we will therefore add, at present, only one more such coincidence, or, as the French term it, "*rapprochement.*" It is not, indeed, in private life alone, that these strange juxtapositions of events may be observed which have suggested throughout all countries a number of well-known wonder-breathing proverbs. The very day on which the long-prepared Greek conspiracy exploded, was the day when, at the other extremity of Europe, by an equally striking and curious *obviam fit* the declaration of war, in pursuance of the tripartite understanding just mentioned, was issued by the Maritime Powers. Dates are the chords and the discords in the great music of human annals.

The perilous success of the Russian divisions, who had now burst into the Northern Dobrudscha, was soon counterbalanced by a misfortune, the news of which reached the ill-starred commanders in the midst of their exultation. Fokshani, where they had piled up the richest part of their laboriously-accumulated munitions of war and general stores, was burnt. The loss to a struggling military treasury must have been extremely serious; though we cannot specify its amount.

The divisions which had crossed the Danube continued their advance, taking Babadagh on the sea, and Hirsova on the river. All the Upper Dobrudscha, except Tultscha, was now occupied by the invaders; and by April the 3d their Cossacks patrolled as far as Kustendjeh, which the Turks kept, and which was their grasp upon the sea, at the east of Trajan's Wall. On the north shore of the Danube, the Turks retained nothing except Kalafat, two hundred miles to the west.

Before we pursue the Russian enterprises of April, and their results, in the Danubian war, it may be interesting to our readers to cast a glance over the general circumstances of that period. The first object which strikes us is another of those curious historical coincidences already remarked. On the 7th of that month, the alliance defensive and offensive between Austria and Prussia was concluded, the overtures (made too late) of Russia were rejected by the indignation of the Maritime Powers; and our Baltic fleet had left Kloge Bay, and was patrolling every creek and inlet, not still frozen, of the Scandinavian seas. The two Princes of the Blood Royal, who belonged respectively to the English and French expedition to the East, were among the latest who set forth. On the 9th of April Prince Napoleon left Paris, with Vely Pacha, the Ottoman Ambassador; and the Duke of Cambridge, still more dilatory, was on his road from that capital nine days later—and then, not by so direct a line to their common destination, but *via* Strasbourg; and, indeed, when the Danubian campaign had reached its very crisis, he was at Vienna. But it was destined that the Allied powers of the West should be excluded from the triumphs, as they were excluded from the heat and the labours, of the Danubian campaign. The troops, both French and English, were all this time incessantly forwarded; and, *on the 12th of the month* only three battalions of our Guards, remained at Malta, awaiting their conveyance. The pride of the Czar amidst this clash of arms, was still unbending; and, dating from the 19th of April, six weeks were by him proclaimed free for English and French vessels to clear out of the Russian ports. On the 20th of this memorable month, the Queen in Council ordered *a National "Day of Humiliation;"* and, to complete our present digressive and discursive glance at the more general, and sometimes very distant, occurrences to which we should not wish to turn aside in the narration of the ensuing Danubian campaign—it was in the midst of this warlike incandescence of all Europe, that Mr. Pease and the other members of the "Peace Conference" proceeded to St. Petersburg, and (almost literally) requested the infuriated Autocrat—to be a good boy. Generals Canrobert, Bosquet, and Martimprey, who had arrived on the 2d at Gallipoli, began, by their presence, and even by the noise of their very names, amid an Eastern population, to impart a new gravity to the whole Western movement—the character of a great Crusade *inverted.*

We may mention here—for fear of omitting it—a circumstance which exemplifies the truth of the inspired intimation, that the utmost wisdom of man is only folly before Him who knows and foresees everything. Of all the measures adopted by the two leading Powers of Europe in the beginning of this contest, that which united the most suffrages in praise of its wisdom, was the Emperor Napoleon's expedient of sending to the scene of action some of his Algerian army; not only as starting from a nearer point of departure, but, still more, as having been tried in a similiar climate and in a not dissimilar warfare. And again, of all the troops in his African dependency, *the Zouaves* were, in every sense, considered to be the most eligible for such a service—European in discipline, and to a great extent in blood, Mahometan in experience—the very men, in short, to teach the rest of the mixed expedition how to avoid the imprudences incidental to such an enterprise, and how to secure its success. Now, of all the corps brought together by this great adventure, the Zouaves have suffered, beyond comparison, the most, in sporadic sickness and in general ill-fortune. Moralists or physiologists may speculate on the doubtful lesson: we have only to note the certain fact.

It was on the 16th, that Admiral Plumridge sent home the *premices* of the war, the first Russian prizes, five vessels of commerce; and on the 17th four more such vessels followed. They were laden chiefly with salt. The first division of our Baltic fleet—consisting wholly of steamers, 17 in number, carrying nearly 10,000 men and 107 guns—was speedily followed by the second; this last brought 25 ships of war, of which twelve were line-of-battle. The united divisions constituted a noble fleet of forty-two vessels, 2200 guns, 16,000 horse power, and 22,000 sailors and marines. The only additions desirable to this splendid armament were a military force (which arrived too late for any but a partial and disproportionate exploit), and a sufficient flotilla of steam gun-boats drawing but little water, which were equipped too late altogether to be of service during the year 1854.

We return to the war on the Danube. The Russians, having seized Hirsova, spent some time in preparing for a great attempt to pass Trajan's Wall; but, though their Cossacks scoured the country down to the very ramparts of Kustendjeh, they found that they had selected a most difficult part of the Turkish line to force; and at Czernavoda, on the 25th of April, more than five weeks after General Luders crossed the Danube at Galatz and, nearly a month after the second Russian column had followed near Tultscha to his support, their united divisions were taught a severe lesson. The Turks, at that place—which is some five miles to the south of Trajan's Wall—once more checked the Russian advance; and, in a sharp action, repulsed the enemy with considerable loss. On the whole, the avenues by which the Russians endeavoured to penetrate from the Dobrudscha were defended for about seven weeks; during which time, the invaders—being locked up amid the marshes of the worst district of the whole Turkish territory in Europe—suffered incomparably more from ague, fever, cholera, and privation than they suffered in the field. It must not be supposed that this advance along the coast against Omer Pacha's right wing was an isolated movement. In the country, it was part of a very large combination which Marshal Paskiewitch, Prince of Erivan, was, on the 8th of April, summoned from Poland to superintend in person, and in which the famous General of Engineers, Schilders, was to take an eminent part. Marshal Paskiewitch had long since expressed an opinion, that Prince Gortschakoff was conducting the campaign injudiciously; and, just about the time of which we speak, there was an immense change in all the Russian dispositions. Their right was drawn back; their left, as we have related, occupied the Dobrudscha, and was thundering vehemently, at the north-east gates, so to say, of Bulgaria; while, now, the various columns which had been countermarched from beyond the Aluta, were massed in apparently irresistible strength all around Bucharest and Slobodzie, and in front of those towns, bearing fast upon the Danube, between Oltenitza and Czernavoda. With General Luders' army, these concentrated troops maintained their communications through Hirsova; and his instructions were to press forward at whatever cost *and to interpose between Varna and Silistria.* It was evident that the recent peremptory and dreadful orders from St. Petersburg were impelling the Russians to their last and truly desperate exertions.

SIEGE OF SILISTRIA.

We approach the siege of Silistria. In the history of that great operation there is one mysterious and sombre particular, which the reader will notice. The subject is more than delicate; and we will not, in our present uncertainty, say anything beyond what the duties of a historic narrative imperiously require. How is it that from the 1st of May to the 15th of June the besiegers were allowed to press forward their scientific approaches, and their sanguinary assaults, *unmolested by any serious or regular attack from without?* A very great Anglo-French force was by this time mustered at Varna; and, allowing for all the windings of the road, not more than seventy miles interposed between that maritime station and the very walls of Silistria, while a much shorter march would have precipitated the irresistible soldiers of the West upon that army of many sufferings which beleaguered the gallant fortress. But several replies may be given, even if unsatisfactory ones, on behalf of our own and the French troops. We accordingly repeat the question, with more direct reference to the Turkish host which Omer Pacha held at Schumla. He had, at the least, seventy thousand men accumulated around that impregnable position, or within easy summons; and *his* march for the relief of Silistria would have been still shorter than that of the Allies. It was the general opinion in Europe, it was the impression among our officers in Bulgaria, and, *we have reason and warranty for adding, that it was, for about three weeks, Omer Pacha's own conviction* that Silistria, unassisted, must fall; and when we say "unassisted," we mean without some strong and combined effort to assist it. It was, also, not for a moment denied, that the beleaguering army would have to abandon their enterprise if that effort were made, and they were thus attacked. It was, in the end, found that, although not externally assailed in the manner we have described, they were yet obliged to raise the [illegible] then, be any doubt, what the result would have been, if a powerful force had disturbed their operations?

We speak not of any wild advance, or attempt to advance, up the Dobrudscha; nor do we refer in any manner to a general effort to carry the war across the Danube; what we say is specific; it relates to one and only to one, manifestly practicable movement, which, it is acknowledged, would, if made, have delivered the most important river-fortress in Turkey; and without which, it was supposed, that fortress must surrender; and this movement *was not made.* We wish the reader to fix the true case in his mind; it is well worthy of his attention. This, then, it is: The general expectation was that Silistria would fall, if the forces in Bulgaria did not move—Omer Pacha, like the rest, entertaining that expectation; on the other hand, it was the unanimous conviction of all concerned, that, by a move of the troops in Bulgaria, Silistria could most certainly be saved. And with this expectation on the one hand, and this conviction on the other, the troops in Bulgaria remained quiescent during the whole time of the danger. The very style in which the progress of the siege was adverted to by the journals of Europe is most remarkable, *ex. gr.:*—"Silistria had not fallen at the departure of the last advices." "It is rumoured, that the besieged made a great sally on the—, and de-