

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

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Literature.

A POET'S HOME.

A poet's home! On earth what spot
Is that where lodge the Muses?
A tropic isle, a warm south plot
Round which fresh sunlight cruises.

Walks which a sleeping ocean bounds
With hints of worlds hereafter;
Rare scents of wild flowers, and the sounds
Of Bacchant girlish laughter.

A hill that hides a drowsy town,
A great cloud sauntering by it;
A streamlet poured in sunshine down
In almost visible quiet.

Ah me! I fear Greek tales are lies;
We live a life too real
To daily 'neath Arcadian skies,
And list to sounds ideal.

A poet's home! What prospect hath
His eye—what sights Elysian?
A rough highway, a dusty path
Where brick-kilns blur the vision.

A want of light, a want of air,
A want of poet-neighbour;
A wooing of all wishes fair,
A winning but of labour.

Sing on, O poet! Time is just,
Sing, 'mid the city shadows:
A flower that beautifies the dust
Shames blooms that droop in meadows.

Better than poet-friend to thee,
And dearer, is employment;
Thy duty is an Aready
More glorious than enjoyment.

Where common eyes nought rare can see
Thou findest angel faces,
And in each highway trod by man
Greatest holy places.

[Household Words for July, 1855.

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

INTERNAL SUFFERINGS OF RUSSIA FROM THE WAR.

(Continued.)

Since the beginning of the present year there has been a great scarcity of gold and silver coin in the southern provinces of the empire, though gold was very plentiful last summer. This scarcity may be accounted for by the merchants withdrawing their capital from trade. As few of them have any confidence in the paper circulation, they availed themselves of the gold, then very plentiful, which all disappeared in this way in a very few weeks. A friend of mine, who was in Simpheropol in February, wishing to change a hundred-rouble note into notes of one, three and five roubles each, was obliged to pay ten per cent. for the exchange; and he assured me that, if any small article was purchased, the value of which did not amount to a rouble, the merchant would rather lose the sale than give coin in exchange, though he was perhaps making a profit of a hundred per cent. upon the article. This state of things is gradually travelling northwards. In Ekaterinoslay it was the same in April; and in Kharkoff, in May, there was a great difficulty in procuring coin, especially gold and the smaller silver money. Kharkoff is a large commercial town, and the capital of the Ukraine. The issue of notes has recently been very great. All this tends to prove that every sinew is now strained to bursting to carry on the war.

Many persons have expressed surprise at the smallness of the returns of killed on the part of the Russians after an engagement; but, to any one who understands the Russian system, this will not appear strange at all. The practice is to send in returns of only a small proportion of the killed, while the remainder are supposed to be in the field, and receive pay and rations, to the benefit of the colonels. As a great personage, to whom I related this in England, remarked, "the colonels eat the dead men's rations!" Nor is there any danger of detection, for the greater part of the generals have done the same thing before, and are practising something similar at all times, while the subalterns hope some day to become colonels themselves. I know an instance of a man commanding a regiment, who, from the time of his regiment taking the field in the summer of last year up to the end of last November, was in the habit of sending two or three thousand roubles every week to his family, while he is known to possess no private fortune. All this money was of course squeezed out of the soldiers' rations and forage, for it is a cavalry regiment. The life of a Russian soldier is so miserable, that I think half of them would prefer to be killed to dragging on such a wretched existence. They are torn from their homes by the arbitrary hand of despotism, and made to form part of an immense machine called a regiment, which again forms part of another called a division; but they have not the remotest idea why they are made to execute certain movements. The English officers who were taken prisoners at different times admired the severe discipline of the Russian army, little thinking that it was purchased at the expense of every moral feeling; for the soldier is brutalised by the treatment he receives, every officer having the right to buffet and cuff him as he may think proper. An old cavalry officer once told me, that, if a horse died, there was a rigid inquiry into the cause of his death; and if the least thing appeared to show that it had been neglected, the subaltern in command of the squadron was placed under arrest; but if, on the other hand, a man died, on his death being reported to the colonel he would say, "Poor fellow! I hope he is in heaven!" This may be accounted for easily enough. The colonel receives an annual sum to provide horses for his regiment, so that every loss affects directly his pocket; whereas the men cost him nothing! The men are allowed meat by the government three days a-week, except during the fasts, and brandy on Sundays and great holidays. The officers generally propose to the men to accept, instead of meat, the money,

and to provide themselves. To this, of course, the poor fellows agree, as a proposal from an officer is tantamount to an order; but they never see more than one-fourth of the money, which is disposed of as follows: The colonel takes one-fourth, the majors commanding battalions another, and the captains of companies a third, while the other goes to the soldiers themselves! This may account for the finding only black bread in the knapsacks of the killed and wounded. I have given these examples in order to show the system under which these men fight so desperately, and which prevails throughout the whole empire,—one vast system of fraud, peculation and pillage.

Notwithstanding the immense establishment for the education of military men that exists in Russia, great difficulties are experienced in obtaining officers for the new levies. All the officers must be nobles, and undergo an examination in various branches of science. A colonel, sent to obtain officers to a certain town in the south, persuaded a number of copying clerks from the government offices to enter the army. These men, though of noble birth, only knew how to read and write. As they were earning a miserable pittance, they were glad to embrace the offer, which opened to them a prospect of advancement; but they expressed their fears of not being able to pass the required examination. They were, however, reassured by the colonel, who said that he would examine them himself. This he did in the following manner:—"Col. 'What is geography?' Ans. 'I don't know; I have never heard of it before.'" Col. "Nonsense! you must know! On which bank of what great river is situated the town of E?" (the town they were in). Ans. "On the right bank of the river D." Col. "There, I was sure you knew all about geography!—you are passed." Another time the subject was mathematics. Col. "What are mathematics?" Ans. "I never saw them." Col. "Add two to two." Ans. "Four." Col. "There, that will do—you are passed!" Of course I was not present at either of these examinations, but I had the facts upon good authority. These are the men who are to replace those polished gentlemen, whose knowledge of the European languages and *suave* manners have been the admiration of all who have met them.

The militia is chiefly officered by those who have been in the army before and are retired; but if in any of the governments there should not be enough of these, the nobles choose them from their own body. There is in general a great reluctance to enter this service, as well as military service generally, for the majority of the Russian people is anything but warlike, notwithstanding their boasted martial prowess.

The want of proper medical aid is much felt in the army now. The students of medicine from all the universities are forced to enter the army before they have completed their course of study, which ordinarily occupies five years, but is now curtailed to three and a half years. It may be objected that I use the term forced, when they are only invited to join the army; but, with few exceptions, the invitation, if not accepted, will speedily be followed by an order. Many surgeons have lately arrived from America and Prussia, who are at once despatched to the seat of war. In Simpheropol nearly all the wounded English prisoners were attended by Americans.

As illustrative of the difficulty experienced in Russia in transporting their armies, may be mentioned the journey of the Sisters of Mercy from St. Petersburg to the Crimea last year. They left the capital about the middle of November, and as far as the chaussee extended, travelled without any mishap; but from Koursk—where the chaussee finishes—to Kharkoff, they met with great difficulties, as they travelled in large diligences like those of France. It was on leaving the latter town that they experienced all the pleasures of a Russian autumnal road. They left the town with fifteen horses to each carriage, and reached in safety the first station, situated in a valley, about ten miles from the town; but on attempting to ascend the mountain, the wheels stuck fast in the mud, and the 15 horses could not stir it; the number was increased to thirty, but without moving the vehicle. Eventually oxen were procured that dragged them out, and in this manner they proceeded on their way to the Crimea, to attend the sick and wounded, at the rate of two miles an hour! This was a case of the most urgent necessity. With such a state of things, would it not be better and wiser for Russia to employ those means in improving the internal state of the country, which she is now wasting on a ruinous war?

The English prisoners of war will be able to give a good account of the evils of Russian travelling. I saw them all, poor fellows! as they passed through the town I was then residing in, and can say that their sufferings were more intense than those of their comrades who were left behind. Those who were taken first, and who arrived at their destination before the severe colds set in, suffered comparatively little. Then they were still a novelty, and excited a great deal of curiosity, which in a Russian is never without compassion. Of this the first parties who passed reaped the benefit. Besides, they were all fine men, taken at Balaklava and Inkermann, about which battles every one was eager to get what information he could from persons who had assisted at them. Still these suffered severely from deprivation of all the comforts they had been accustomed to, and which they were unable to procure in the villages they passed through, even when they had the means; for tea and coffee are unknown luxuries to the Russian peasant, but would have been very acceptable to the prisoners after their long march of fifteen or twenty miles through the mud reaching to their knees, with the prospect of a miserable billet in a mud-bur, in which so many were placed that there was scarcely room to lie down, and a piece of black bread washed down with a little brackish water, or *kras* (a sour liquor, much used in Russia). But those who left Simpheropol in December and January underwent hardships that were heart-rending to listen to, for then they experienced all the severity of a Russian winter during a march of about six hundred miles to Voronege, the depot. They were about seventy days upon the journey through the snow, and frequently subject to the most vile treatment at the hands of those to whose care they were committed. They are allowed by the government 20 copecks a-day, (about 8d.) This would be amply sufficient to supply all their wants, for provisions are very cheap,—the best meat 3 and 4 copecks per pound, bread about 1 or 1½ copeck per pound; but the soldiers who served as their guard usually set the prices in the villages at about three times the ordinary rate, out of which they made their own profit; while our poor fellows, not understanding the language or the prices, were obliged to pay whatever was demanded of them, or go hungry to bed. They were even made to pay for the very water they drank. This happened always in the prisons of small towns. Once they refused to pay for it, and two men offered to fetch water for the whole party, if

a soldier would show them where to procure it. The soldier, not wishing to lose his perquisites, took them to a distance of about three miles, to a well of brackish water, while there was plenty to be had within two hundred yards of the prison. After this they always preferred paying to fetching it themselves. In the large towns they are generally well-treated, and allowed a certain liberty. They may go out to the market to buy themselves provisions, alone if they know the way; or if not, one soldier is sent with them as a guide. They are even allowed to sleep out of the prison, if some inhabitants of the town will become responsible for them. I have had several staying with me; and two, who were ill, lived with me three months till their health was perfectly established, and the warm weather rendered travelling no longer difficult. One circumstance I cannot help mentioning, if only that it might be known to the Russian government by this means. In December a party of prisoners, of all nations, numbering either seventy-three or seventy-five—I am not quite sure which—left Simpheropol in charge of a captain, a Greek, with the usual escort. He, *kind, humane man*, proposed, through my informant, an English soldier, who spoke a little Greek, to provide the whole party with provisions, alleging that the country they were about to pass through was nearly exhausted, so that, with their ignorance of the language, it would be next to impossible for them to procure anything. To this proposal they all agreed without hesitation. Instead of giving them good food, he gave them little more than black bread; so that out of the entire number only nineteen reached Ekaterinoslay; a distance of about 270 miles from Simpheropol, the remainder being left sick at the different hospitals, or perishing miserably on the road! I do not vouch for the truth of this; but the man, who was one of the sufferers, appeared to be intelligent, and told his story clearly, and without hesitation. I know that this can be possible, for there are such men, who, in order to gain a few roubles, will inflict any amount of misery on their fellow-creatures. The English inhabitants of Moscow and St. Petersburg have nobly come forward to assist their poor fellow-countrymen; and Mr. Grey, the English clergyman at Moscow, has exerted himself greatly on their behalf; but unfortunately there are few English on the line of march, so that it is very difficult to render them assistance where most it is wanted, although all is done that humanity could dictate by those who are able to see them. I cannot omit this occasion of speaking of the kindness shown by the authorities of the town of Kharkoff to all the prisoners. They never refused any prayer of which they saw the justice, and tried all they could to help the poor fellows; and had the same spirit been shown by all parties, there would be little to complain of in the treatment with which these unfortunates met. Many of the Russian families received them into their houses, and at their own tables. When remonstrated with by the would-be patriots, they replied,—“These men are no longer to be looked upon as enemies: they have fought for their country, and by the fortune of war are our prisoners, only that we may treat them as our guests.” To sum up all, the prisoners are well-treated by all the higher classes, and suffer only from the cupidity of those who have an opportunity of making a few copecks by them, and from the natural evils imposed upon them by their ignorance of the language, manners and customs. I do not speak of the treatment the officers have met with, as they will be able to speak for themselves when they recover their liberty.

It will be seen, by a careful perusal of the foregoing statement of facts, that all classes in Russia must ardently desire peace, as the only means of preserving them from ruin, to which the serf-owners are more exposed than any other class, from the continual drain upon their resources, already much diminished by debts. They are an improvident race. Many of the lower orders hoped for a great improvement in their position from the success of the allied armies; but they are disheartened by the length of time they are obliged to wait. They cannot define what they expect; but that they hoped for great advantages, I have no doubt, from several conversations I have had with intelligent men in the peasant class—men who can neither read nor write, but who, by the force of their natural shrewdness, can understand that a change must and will come. They looked upon the French and English as the heralds of this change. Had the war been pushed with sufficient vigour from the beginning, there is no doubt but that the power of Russia would have been humbled effectually by defeats on the frontiers and internal dissensions; for all the south would have risen had the Allies taken possession of the Crimea when they first landed, which might easily have been done,—at least this is the opinion of all the Russian officers whom I met, and who were there at the time. But this is no place for the discussion of the merits of military plans. There have been great faults, of which the price is now being paid in the blood of our brave countrymen on the heights of Sebastopol. Nothing remains but to push the war with all the vigour that the Allies, with their mighty resources, are able to do, and to let no "puny wise and pound foolish" policy interfere with what they have in hand. Even what has been done has caused great suffering to our enemies, and what is undertaken will cause yet greater, till Russia, humbled and conquered, is brought to sue for peace at the feet of the British lion and the Gallic eagle. The time is gone by to hope for any co-operation in the interior of the country. As I said before, the people are disheartened by the length of time they have had to wait, and are excited by the reports spread so assiduously of the barbarity of the English to their prisoners, and the taking of the monastery of Solovetzki. The Russian government is never slow to improve its advantages; this has been proved in the manner the fortifications of Sebastopol have been thrown up, and it has improved the breathing-time given by the long duration of this too celebrated siege. There is now telegraphic communications from Odessa to the capital, through Kief, so that news from the seat of war arrives in two days. When the news of the descent first reached us, everybody was filled with consternation, and said we have now lost our Italy, as they call the Crimea; but when it became known that, after the battle of Alma, Sebastopol did not fall, and that it withstood successfully the bombardment of the 17th October, hope again revived, and, by a re-action of popular feeling, everybody expected to see the invaders driven out of the country, which the brilliant victory (?) of Liprandi seemed to prognosticate. What is more feared by the Government, though less spoken of, than the war itself, is its results upon the population, as ideas of liberty and civilisation may be introduced with coin balls, and at the point of the bayonet, that will destroy the whole fabric of despotism erected by the Czr and his subalterns, and that in its fall must crush, and bury beneath its ruins, all those who helped to erect or support this monster of injustice. So be it!

Gleanings from late Papers.

UNITED STATES.

BALTIMORE, August 20.—*Yellow Fever*.—Intelligence received via Pittsburg, from Norfolk and Portsmouth, down to Sunday evening, states there is no decrease of the yellow fever in those cities. Twenty new cases had occurred at Portsmouth on Saturday. The collection in Baltimore for the sufferers now reaches \$9,000.

MILWAUKEE, August 20.—*Sympathy with the Louisville Sufferers*.—A large Democratic meeting was held here on Saturday, to sympathise with the sufferers by the Louisville riot. Hon. A. J. Upham presided. Resolutions reflecting severely on the Know-Nothings were passed.

UTICA, August 20.—The Kirkland Cotton Mills at Manchester Village, nine miles from this city, were totally destroyed by fire yesterday morning. Loss \$30,000. Insured about two-thirds. They were owned by E. S. Brayton of this city.

PHILADELPHIA, August 19.—*Riot in Philadelphia*.—A sanguinary riot occurred here on Saturday night, between the Newmarket and Mount Vernon fire companies. Three of the rioters were shot, two of whom are not expected to live.

NEW ORLEANS, August 20.—*Yellow Fever*.—The yellow fever is rapidly increasing here. The deaths for the last week were 517; of which 394 were from fever.

HORRIBLE RIOT AND MURDER AT LOUISVILLE.—At the election on Monday a riot commenced in the first ward, and extended to the 8th. Twelve buildings were burned by the Know-Nothings; about twenty persons were killed, and many were wounded. One Irishman was hanged by the Know-Nothing mob, and several were killed; and the telegraph says the Irish fired from the windows and killed three Americans. The mob dispersed in the evening after violent demonstrations in front of the "Times" office. On Tuesday, parts of human bodies were dug from the burnt ruins and carried to the Court House, where a large crowd collected. All this is the legitimate fruit of secret midnight politics and religious proscription.—*Boston Post*.

The Boston papers announce the death of the Hon. Abbott Lawrence, one of the wealthiest and most enterprising merchants in the United States. His worth may be gathered from the fact that on his death becoming known, the shipping in the port displayed their flags at half-mast, and at many of the public buildings were similar demonstrations. A meeting of the citizens was held to determine upon a proper testimonial of appreciation of the distinguished character and services of the deceased.

A CASE OF ALLEGED FRAUD.—Once in a while there appears in the papers an advertisement for agents to whom a good chance will be given. In answer to such an advertisement a few days since a young man from the country applied, and found that the advertiser was about establishing a store, and wanted a clerk. A money guarantee for honesty was demanded, however, and finally the applicant put into the hands of his employer one hundred dollars, his little stock, receiving a note for the same. He was placed in the store, which was partially filled with bottles containing a liquid for exterminating bed-bugs, flies, cockroaches, &c., &c. His employer soon after announced that he was going to New York, and should in a short time send for him there; but the new clerk, growing suspicious that the whole thing was a cheat, got out a writ for debt, and attached all the property in the store, which will probably cover a portion of his claim. It turns out, however, that there are several other young men who have given similar guarantees for their honesty, and who, from present appearances, are minus the money which they have deposited. The respectable owner of the bed-bug exterminator had, it seems, two names—one for his store and one for his boarding-house; at one he was single, at the other married. Just at present he is "not at home," but is supposed to be somewhere about the city.—*Boston Traveller*.

THE FISHERIES AT THE NORTH.—A correspondent of the *Miramichi Gleaner*, writing from Bathurst under date of the 15th August, says:—

Although the Salmon Fishery proved sadly deficient, the Cod Fishery has proved abundant and highly remunerative. The quantity caught in the parishes of Carquet and Shippegan up to the 5th of August, exceeds that of any year since 1848 and 1849. Since that date bad weather has much interrupted the labors of the fishermen. Mackerel has been tolerably abundant, and herring are now striking in thickly. Altogether the inhabitants have reason to rejoice at the abundance of their harvest both by sea and land.

The business of shipping coal has been proceeding briskly during the past week at South Point. On Monday, 1,029 chaldrons were shipped, being the largest amount ever shipped in one day. The whole amount shipped during the week is 4,630 chaldrons. There is now a larger number of vessels in port than at any previous date the present season, about one hundred of all sizes having arrived within the past eight days.—*Eastern Chronicle*.

A MONSTER ENGLISH SNAKE.—The most extraordinary example of the snake species ever discovered in this country was found dead on a farm in the suburbs of Colchester by a labourer named Willis, in the employ of Mr. Folkard, on Tuesday morning last. It appears that Willis was going to work across the fields about five o'clock on Tuesday morning, when, coming to a gate at the end of Clay-Lane, adjoining Highwoods, his attention was arrested by an enormous snake, lying quite motionless with his head and neck crushed, and firmly fixed underneath the gate. Willis carried the reptile to his master, and on its being measured it was found to be 9 feet 5 inches long, 11 inches in girth at the thickest part, and was found to weigh 14 or 15 pounds. Its back was a kind of dark brown colour, with large black spots, its belly of a yellowish cast and beautifully speckled. The head of the reptile is flat—its formidable jaws, armed with two rows of very sharp teeth, which fully distended, would certainly be capable of swallowing a good sized young rabbit. Willis sold the snake to Mr. Ambrose, naturalist, of Colchester, who has since flayed it, preserving its skin and head entire, for the purpose of stuffing.—*Chelmsford Chronicle*.