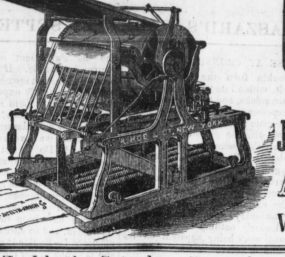
HASZARD'S GAZETTE,



FARMERS' JOURNAL, & COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER.

PUBLISHED ON EVERY WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY.

Established 1823. Charlottetown, P. E. Island. Saturday, September 1, 1855. New Series, No. 270.

NEWS BY THE ENGLISH MAIL.

DESTRUCTION OF SWEABORG.

ADMIRAL DUNDAS'S DESPATCH.

OFF SWEABORG, AUG. 11.—Sweaborg was attacked by the mortars and gunboats of the Allied Squadrons on the morning of the 9th instant. The firing ceased early this morning. Heavy explosions and very destructive fires were produced in a few hours. Nearly all the principal buildings on Vargon, and many more on Savarto, including those of the Arsenal and Dockyards, are burnt. Few casualties have occurred, and no lives lost, in the Allied Fleet.

DESPATCH FROM ADMIRAL PENAUD.

The French Government have received the following despatch:—

ON BOARD THE TOURVILLE, AUG. 11, 1855.—The bombardment of Sweaborg by the allied squadrons has been attended with complete success. An immense conflagration, which lasted for 45 hours, has destroyed nearly all the storehouses and magazines of the Arsenal, which is a complete ruin. Various powder magazines and stores of projectiles blew up. The enemy has received a terrible blow, and suffers an enormous loss. Our loss is insignificant in men, and nothing whatever in material. The crews are in a state of enthusiasm.

FLEET BEFORE SWEABORG, AUG. 6.—English: Duke of Wellington, Exmouth, Edinburgh, Pembroke, Cornwallis, Hastings, Euryalus, Magicienne, Cossack, Vulture, Cruiser, Merlin, Geyser, Dragon, Lightning, Locust, Belleisle (hospital-ship), Æolus (ammunition-ship), a merchant collier filled with spare shells for supplying mortar vessels, 15 gunboats, 16 mortar vessels.—French: Tourville (flagship) and tender, Austerlitz, six gunboats, five mortar vessels. The French mortar vessels are schooner-rigged, and armed with two 10-inch mortars.

Sweaborg cannot be classed with Cronstadt for strength, or Sebastopol for importance. Its defences are not of the same character as those which protect the mouth of the Neva. The approach is by channels of sufficient depth and width, but through granite rocks everywhere covered with batteries. As to the value set by the Russians on the place, on the one hand, it appears they took advantage of the winter to convey to Cronstadt the few vessels of war seen last year at Sweaborg; on the other hand, they have employed the interval in strengthening, to the utmost, the fortifications which have just been so summarily destroyed. It was said a few months ago that, having let slip the opportunity of last year, we should find Sweaborg impregnable. It appears, however, that with a proper disposition of the fleet, and by keeping a proper distance, we have disposed of this threat, and shown that wood can sometimes beat granite. Let us hope that when a boast has been proved idle in one place it may in another. According to the programme, the mortar vessels and the gunboats were to commence the bombardment at two miles distance, and the liners were only to come in to finish the work. If this is the arrangement which has been so signally successful, it augurs well for the operation of the flotilla, promised by Sir Charles Wood, in the grander sphere of the Neva, or wherever else it is to be employed. From the scanty particulars that have reached us, it appears that the bombardment lasted about 45 hours, so that during the whole of that time the allied fleets remained in position more or less within gunshot distance of the Russian batteries; yet our loss is said to be trifling in men, and nothing whatever in material, not a ship or a float sunk or disabled. In so large an amount of damage inflicted on the enemy, and so little suffered by the allies, may be seen the result of that close calculation which will probably be our best game in this war.

SWEABORG AND THE OTHER RUSSIAN FORTRESSES IN THE BALTIC.

The fortress of Sweaborg, is the first formidable obstacle in the Gulf of Finland and does the outpost duty, as it were, for the great military *entrepots* of St. Petersburg. It is composed of seven rocky islands, and is situate about three miles and a half from Helsingfors. It fell into the possession of Russia with the Grand Duchy of Finland; but, unlike Helsingfors, which was first regularly fortified by the late Emperors Alexander and Nicholas, Sweaborg had been a place of considerable strength under the Swedes. Gen. Ehrenswald, an able Swedish officer, considering that these islands might be rendered a formidable stronghold, and might enable Sweden to maintain her power in the Baltic, in spite of the ambitious designs of Russia, projected the plan of their fortification. Previously, however, ships were built and repaired there for the Swedish navy. The works were commenced in 1748, but were not completely finished when acquired by the Russians, who have continued making improvements, and devising every means of rendering the place impregnable. They say, "the Swedes began, but we finished the Gibraltar of the North." These works are stupendous. The walls are chiefly hewn granite, covered with earth, rising in some places to a height of 48 feet. The batteries, which commence on a level with the water, and rise in tiers one above another, are mounted, it is alleged with nearly a thousand guns. In Wolf's Island, the principle of the group, there is a dry dock, capable of containing 11 or 12 frigates, which has been completely hollowed out of solid rock, the length being 300 feet square, closed at each end with sluice-gates, which serves for the entrance and exit of frigates, and for repairing and building ships. The stores and ammunition for the batteries are deposited in magazines, on the edge of the water. The harbour can contain seven ships of the line and a few frigates.

Cronstadt, which commands the passages at the mouth of the Neva, was taken from the Swedes by Peter the Great, and first converted by him from a desert island into a harbour for his navy in 1710. The most invulnerable portion of the stronghold, a rampart of granite, built in the sea for the protection of the shipping, was began and finished under the superintendance of Admiral Greig, who is styled the father of the Russian Navy. Doubts are entertained whether the guns of Cronstadt completely command the northern passage; the Marquis de Custine, a keen inquirer, declares that although he put himself to some trouble to learn as much, he could not find the Russian who would inform him of the fact. The population of Cronstadt is about 45,000; of Helsingfors, which is the capital of the district, 10,000; and of Sweaborg about 4,000.

HELSINGFORS AND ITS FORTIFICATIONS.

We hope that the success which has attended the bombardment of Sweaborg may speedily be followed up by another, which may exert even a more powerful effect on the pretensions and inflexible resolutions of the Czar. The important town of Helsingfors, is now, we hope, within the grasp of the Allies, as the island fortresses, which commanded the narrow seapassage, are now in heaps of ruins. We hope that the Admirals see no serious obstacle to following up the destruction of Sweaborg by an immediate attack on Helsingfors, a resolution which the insignificant loss in the recent action and the high spirits of their crews must eminently encourage. It is to the rapidity with which he followed up one victory by another, which associates with the name of the first Napoleon the glitter of the most splendid generalship. On the other hand, delay in taking proper advantage of a success, may too often be attended with fatal results. It was the ambition of Alexander, and especially of the late Emperor, to make Helsingfors a great and well-fortified naval and commercial port. The Government officers were removed from Abo, the former capital of the duchy, to Helsingfors. The late Emperor expended a great amount of treasure in enlarging the harbour and seaport, and promoting the importance of the town, but especially in the construction of its fortifications. An immense number of batteries, mounted with heavy artillery, confront the hostile visitor by sea; and it is quite possible that the Admirals may have more hesitation in attacking them than the stone walls of the "impregnable" Sweaborg. Helsingfors is a pretty and romantic little town, situated on a rising shore near a cluster of huge granite rocks. Its population is about 10,000. The exports are principally hemp, flax, planks, masts for ships, and salted fish. There is a university, with five academies and twelve superior schools. It is apprehended that our gallant tars will not be able to capture many Russian vessels, notwithstanding their success, as the greater portion of the fleet which last year sheltered itself behind the stone walls of Sweaborg, and, under the protection of the guns of Helsingfors, were removed to Cronstadt before the arrival of the Allies in spring. The shipping, if any, in the dock and harbour of Sweaborg, has probably been destroyed by fire.

FURTHER OPERATIONS OF THE ALLIED FLEET IN THE SEA OF AZOFF.

WHILST we await, with such composure as we can command, the result of the triumphant attack by the Baltic fleet upon the Russo-Finnish fortress of Sweaborg, we turn with satisfaction to what has been recently accomplished by the allied flotilla in the Sea of Azoff. We gather, from the despatches lately received by the Admiralty from Sir Edmund Lyons, that a squadron of light vessels and gun-boats under the orders of Commander Osborn, of H. M. S. Vesuvius, was actively and successfully engaged, during the earlier part of July, in scouring the coasts of the Sea of Azoff—in depriving the enemy of the fruits of the new harvest—in destroying his extensive fishing establishments —and in crippling his resources of all kinds.

It seems that Sir Edmund Lyons had instructed Commander Osborn "to clear the seaboard of all fish stores, all fisheries, and mills on a large scale beyond the wants of the neighbouring population, and, indeed, of all things destined to contribute to the maintenance of the enemy's army in the Crimea." These orders were executed by Commander Osborn with a skilfulness and completeness which has drawn from Sir Edmund Lyons an expression of the highest approval and admiration.

Captain Osborn commenced what he calls his "sweep round the Sea of Azoff," by destroying the extensive fisheries upon Berutch Spit, as well as all the guardhouses, barracks, and stores of forage and provisions situated upon that part of the coast to "within an easy gun shot of Arabat Fort." On the 15th of July he appeared before Berdiansk with the intention of burning the forage and corn stacks upon the landward side of the hills overlooking the town. "No inhabitants," says the gallant commander, "were to be seen; but the occasional glimpse of soldiers showed that a landing was expected, and that they were prepared for a street fight." A landing, however, was not attempted, in consequence of the surf, which ran so high as to render such a movement extremely hazardous; but a few shots fired over the town soon set the stacks and stores in a blaze, and the Commander's object was thus effected without further trouble.

From these petty exploits Commander Osborn next proceeded to one of a bolder character. On the 16th of July the Allied squadron presented itself before Petrevskoi, a fort situated between Berdiansk and Marianpol. "As I approached the place," says Capt. Osborn, "there were evident symptoms of an increase to the fortifications since the Vesuvius silenced its fire three weeks ago. A redan, covering the curtain which faces the sea, showed seven new embrasures, and much new earth led me to expect some masked works." Arrangements, however, were eventually made for an attack, and the heavy ordnance of the flotilla soon crushed all attempts at resistance, forced the garrison to retire from the trenches, and even compelled the reserved force, consisting of three strong battalions of infantry and two squadrons of cavalry, to keep a respectful distance. The light boats of the squadron were then sent ashore, under the command of Lieut. Hubert Campion, to complete the destruction of the fort and batteries. This work was gallantly and effectually accomplished. "In a short time," says Captain Osborn, "I had the satisfaction of seeing all the cantonments, guns, platforms, public buildings, corn and forage-stores on fire, and the embrasures of the earthworks seriously injured; and although the enemy, from an earthwork to the rear, opened a sharp fire upon our men, Lieut. Campion completed this service in the most able and perfect manner, without the loss of a man."

Leaving the Swallow, Commander Cranford, to check any attempt of the enemy to occupy the fort and extinguish the fire before the destruction was complete, the rest of the squadron proceeded to destroy great quantities of forage, and some most extensive fisheries, situated upon the White House Spit and about the mouth of the river Berda. "By dark," says Captain Osborn, "the work was done; and thirty fisheries, numbers of heavy launches, and great store of salted fish, nets and gear, as well as much forage, had fallen into our hands, in spite of considerable numbers of Cossack horse."

On the 17th July, in consequence of information received of extensive depots of corn and forage existing at a town called Glofira, Commander Osborn proceeded there with the squadron, and, in the face of large bodies of cavalry, quickly destroyed all the stores that the place contained. From Glofira the squadron proceeded to the Crooked Spit, where a similar work of destruction was speedily effected. "The extraordinary quantity of nets and stores of fish," says Captain Osborn, "and the scale of the works destroyed at this place, fully confirm the statements made by the townspeople that their occupation consisted in supplying food to the army in the Crimea, everything going to Simpheropol by the great northern road along the Steppe."

In concluding his report of these proceedings, Captain Osborn observes to the Admiral, "I can assure you, Sir, that from Genitchi to Taganrog, and thence round to Kamiskera, we have kept the coast in a constant state of alarm, and their troops incessantly moving. The good service done by the gun-boats in this way has been very great. The total amount of provisions, corn, fisheries, forage, and boats destroyed, has been something enormous."

This is unquestionably good and effective service, and every way worthy of the very high commendation which Sir Edmund Lyons bestows upon it.

Paris gossip says that if the Empress Eugenie gives birth to a daughter, the Emperor will repeal the Salic Law, in order that his daughter may reign.

The Government is now seeking ships to carry out 1,000 tons of shot and shell to Bala Clava.