

administration with possession of the seals of the duchy. After the arrangement had been, as it was thought, finally concluded, a prerogative veto was placed upon the appointment by some members of the cabinet. It is confidently stated that Mr Gladstone and Mr Sidney Herbert remonstrated in the strongest terms against it. They assigned as their reason the incompatibility of the well-known opinions of the noble earl upon religious questions with their own views upon such subjects, and threatened resignation if the appointment were persisted in. Lord Palmerston was compelled to yield; and after the appointment had been actually made, it was cancelled, in obedience to the Puseyite tendencies of the two right honourable gentlemen who now rule the cabinet over which Lord Palmerston has condescended nominally to preside. We do not feel justified in withholding this statement one hour from the protestant people of the United Kingdom. It comes from a quarter that makes it impossible for us not to give it credence; and we leave the rejection of Lord Shaftesbury, when chosen by the Premier, together with the nomination of Mr Frederick Peel as under Secretary-at-War, as conclusive proofs of the influences to which the government is handed over in the new cabinet arrangements.

From the Morning Herald.

#### THE VIENNA CONGRESS.

We warn the public not to be sanguine in their expectations of success in Lord John Russell's mission to Vienna. We entertain a confident opinion that none of those who have sent him are sanguine, or have any other intention than securing a formal cessation of the miserable shilly-shallying which has been going on so long at our expense, and for the Czar's advantage. This we believe to be the view of Lord Palmerston, and, it may be, of Lord John Russell; and if even that little point be gained, we must be thankful for small mercies. But let not credulity or connivance burst forth again into full Aberdeen bloom. If it do, it will be the death-flower of the national honour. What is the state of the case? The war has horribly and fatally mismanaged from first to last; the English people have been looking on with an apathy, or, if the word be more agreeable, forbearance, quite new to the English character, and if it continue, of evil omen. They have tolerated an old man crying peace! peace! when there was no peace, but there was kindled a war blazing round us at this moment like circle of fire. That old man has been got rid of, and pitched into privacy after a convulsive effort; but he left his mantle over his representatives in the cabinet, and they, with war on their lips, are in reality crying peace; while our giant foe is ordering a levy en masse, calling every available man to arms, and already far advanced in a campaign where the watchword is victory or destruction! Our attack on Sebastopol is an arrow quivering in the very eye of the enemy or rather, we are aiming at the very heart of his colossal power. If we fail, we are ruined, as he is if we succeed; and at this precise moment, with our forces in so dreadful a condition before Sebastopol, one of our leading statesmen starts off post-haste to Vienna, again to talk about—peace! While Lord John is pottering with Gortschakoff, Nicholas is pushing on with life and death exertion, reinforcements on a tremendous scale; and doubtless, by this time has placed his own construction on the motives that could have led us to send Lord John Russell on such an errand at such a moment. We do not want to be told that Nicholas will not do what we ask; we know it already that he will as soon listen to a proposal for dismantling Sebastopol as a man to the proposal for cutting off his right arm. It is mere madness to suppose that he will do anything of the kind; and that madness in the ministry if they seriously entertain such a supposition. The country is in a stern humour, and will not tolerate trifling any longer. Our brothers blood crieth from the ground: while we are fooling, they are perishing—perishing gloriously, and with them the renown of old England. While the country looks at Lord Palmerston with an anguished face he jauntily flaunts it with a bit of red tape, saying "Pooh! be quiet! I will put your War-office into good keeping—that of an elderly invalid and a young incapable!—Pamure and Peel!" We believe that Mr Gladstone will have the temerity to propose to parliament to go on as he did before, and starve the war abroad by quaking us at home. If he do, there will be a sudden storm of national fury, the like of which England has not seen for a century. Yet such is Mr Gladstone's infatuation that we are prepared to see him make the attempt, and the country is waiting sullenly to see whether he will. We hope that ministers will be sternly questioned to-night about this singular move of Lord John Russell, which seems to us exceedingly suspicious in every aspect in which it can be looked at. We had our misgivings on first hearing Mr Gladstone's mawkish twaddle concerning Lord John the other night; and we shall not be surprised to see the latter quickly resume his seat on the front bench, instead of cowering on the fourth back. We shall, however, have more to say on this subject, and in the meanwhile exclaim, "Mr Roebuck! Mr Roebuck! your committee! your committee!"

## Incidents of the War.

CAMP BEFORE SEBASTOPOL, Jan. 28.

Notwithstanding the fine weather, the transport of clothes, fuel, and provisions entails considerable hardships on the men. The sick make little progress towards recovery, and the number of men sent down every day is a sad proof of the unsatisfactory condition of our army as regards its sanitary state. Ponies have been lent to some regiments to bring up their clothing. The Second Division has been ordered to take part of the night duty of the hard-working and hard-fighting Light Division, and the men of the latter have now sometimes three nights out of seven in bed. The coffee is now issued to the men roasted, with few exceptions. Vegetables, however, are greatly needed. Picks and spades, billhooks and axes, are in much request, and are very much needed. Requisition after requisition is sent in, and returned scratched out. In one company of a regiment I know there are three pick-heads and no handles, two spades, one broken in two, and all the billhooks worn out, yet these must be used to clean the camp, dig graves, and cut wood. The Board of Ordnance certainly deserves great credit for the care they have taken of their men. The artillery offered a great contrast for a long time to the rest of the army. They were well shod, well clad, and decent-looking. The officers here had a splendid stock of long boots to choose from. They have waterproofs, fur caps, fur coats, &c. &c. The infantry have two suits of warm underclothing. Some have watch-coats and sheep-skin jackets; but the men generally have no waterproofs or long boots, though they have to wade about like cranes in the trenches.

It is said that Lord Raglan had another escape when he visited the trenches of the left attack on the 26th. With his usual contempt of danger, the Field Marshal rode out from the trench upon the open ground in front. Two Russians at once came forward, and took a steady aim at him; but, ere he could fire, a sharpshooter of ours shot him, and the other was hit an instant afterwards.

January 29.

The weather keeps up, but we are to expect a change very soon, and to be prepared for a dreary February and a terrible March. There was a council of war to-day at Lord Raglan's headquarters, at which General Canrobert, General Bosquet, and several French officers assisted or were present. Subsequently, Lord Raglan had a little levee of his own generals, and received visits from the generals of division, who also had interviews with the quarter-master-general at headquarters. There was very heavy firing last night, principally on the French.

There was a serious sortie on the French last night, and some desperate fighting in the trenches. The Russians were repulsed with loss. Among the dead was an officer, richly dressed and covered with orders. He was thought to be a general, but it is now believed that he was a staff officer of the Naval Brigade; his body was sent back to the enemy. There can be no doubt, from the statements of the prisoners, that the Grand Dukes have returned. A Polish officer is said to have warned us to prepare for an attack, and stated that the Grand Dukes had addressed the soldiers, and called on them to make one more attempt to save Sebastopol. If they failed they were assured they would not have to fight again, if they succeeded, they would be the saviours of their church and of their city, and would be rewarded by both. This may or may not be true, but it is certain that great and unusual animation exists in the town. The men work busily at the defences, and the thin streaks of smoke from the camp fires indicate the arrival of considerable masses of the Russians over the Tchernaya, or the table land above it. The new battery they have established on these heights is fired at our right and at the French pickets incessantly without much effect.

January, 30.

Admiral Boxer has arrived, and will assume the command of the harbour of Balaklava. The harbour and town are much better than they have been.

February 1.

The marines of the Algeria and Agememnon re-embarked on board the Sanspareil to join their ships to-day, and 100 supernumeraries of the fleet will take their place in the front. It is beyond doubt that whenever the assault takes place the fleet will run in to draw off the effects of the fire of the north forts on the south side of the town. As the southern forts will be in the hands of the allies there will be no cross fire on the ships, but it is somewhat difficult to foresee the real action and effect of the fleets on the place, inasmuch as the entrance to the harbour is sealed by the boom and the sunken vessels. It is believed that the large screw line-of-battle ships can break the boom and force their way through the *chevaux de frise* of amputated masts and spars by running at them full speed, but any failure in such an attempt would lead to the most serious consequences to the vessels, whose progress would be necessarily arrested at a fixed point under the fire of the northern forts.

If the southern forts are siezed rapidly at the first rush of the assault, the allies may avail themselves of their very heavy armament to aid the fleets, to cover their own position, and to reply to the guns of the northern forts, but it is more probable that the Russians will destroy the guns, and that the forts are mined, so that they may be at once sent into the air, when the outer batteries are forced. Two of these forts have hollow casemated galleries towards the land side, and are perfectly open, so that the guns cannot be turned from the sea face by the enemy, and brought to bear on our attacking columns. Fort Alexander and fort Nicholas can scarcely bring a score of guns to bear on the place, as their embrasures all look seaward, and the casemates are open in the rear, being accessible by long galleries of solid masonry. The fort at the extremity of Cape Paul at Karabelnair, which mounts 78 guns in three tiers, can fire on the French side of the town, from one angle and one face, and it is covered by the formidable works of Malakhoff and by the Redan and Garden Battery, and by a long line of earth works. Should these works and the lines of Malakhoff not be speedily forced the fire of the Paul battery would be very annoying to any troops in possession of the town at the other (the western) side of Dockyard Harbour, and would take fort Nicholas in reverse. It is not at all probable that the Russians will overlook the importance of destroying all the southern forts, in case they intend to defend with obstinacy the northern side of the place. We know indeed that the magazines of these forts form most effectual and powerful mines, and there is not much reliance to be placed in the stories we hear respecting the want of powder in Sebastopol. Should the ships be able to subdue the fire of the northern forts, nothing will remain for the army to do but to invest the citadel and to meet any army which may threaten it in the rear from the south, or advance to raise the siege on the north. Edmund Lyons has declared the fleet shall not be idle when the assault does take place, and if energy, skill and courage can carry our wooden walls to victory, we may be certain he will win it. The success of the fleet would relieve us from serious difficulties in the reduction of the north side of the place, for the dangers of crossing round by the ravines and marshes at the head of the valley of Inkermann, over scraped and broken paths swept by the fire of very heavy artillery, are not to be slightly estimated. There is no other way of getting round except by the mountainous road and forest track towards Mackenzie's Farm, and there is no doubt that the enemy have prepared the route for our reception in the event of our undertaking so difficult an operation. From the Inkermann ruins down to the road to Mackenzie's Farm the inaccessible cliffs which overhang the course of the Tchernaya in sheer slabs of many hundred feet in height, close up the flank of the Russians completely on that side, and only leave two roads open to the north—that by the marshes and over the defiles close to the sea, and under the Lighthouse Batteries of Inkermann, and that round towards the south of the Belbek, by Mackenzie's Farm. The disappearance of Liprandi's corps from the valley of Balaklava has relieved us for a time from uneasiness, and leaves our rear open; but at any moment—at the period of the assault, for instance—the same force, or one in still larger numbers, may re-appear, and paralyze the action of the allies, who must maintain their present position till they have actually reduced the whole of the south side of the place. I presume some reconnaissance in force will be made ere the assault takes place, to ascertain the exact force and position of the enemy in that direction. They still hang about our rear—the eternal Cossack is ever on the watch on the mounds and hill tops towards Komara, Tchernogoum, and Caidar. It was but yesterday I saw three mounted officers evidently making a quiet reconnaissance of their own, under shelter of the ruined church of Komara, and examining the position of our army. The enemy in our rear are not in strength certainly, but it is quite practicable for them at any time to march over from Bakshi Saria or from the Belbek in considerable force, and we can have no intimation of their arrival till they are seen streaming down the sides of the mountains by the paths from Khutor Mackenzie almost into the very valley of Balaklava. The road from Baidar is impracticable, and our position on that side, if properly defended, is capable of resisting any force that can be brought against it. There would be considerable difficulty in marching any large number of men from Bekshi-Saria towards Balaklava, if the country is in the same state along the roads as it is around our camp. The mud, trodden by innumerable feet and hoofs it has been worked up here into a sticky, tough nasty compost of the most determined character, and of the greatest tenacity, and it would be no easy matter to move artillery, ammunition, or stores until the ground becomes in better order.

From whatever side the attack may come, if it be made at all, our troops will meet and repel it with unabated courage and vigour, unless they are led into some trap or are sadly mismanaged, and I own I have little doubt of the result of any effort the Russians may make to dislodge the allies from their position as long as this weather lasts.

That an attempt of some kind or other will be made very shortly no one can doubt, after

the information we have received and the demonstration of last night. A sortie from the town is the most likely shape for the attack to assume, as the Russians can collect their columns, and make their dispositions for the assault under cover and also under the protection of their guns. They have the shelter of deep ravines during their advance, and a rapid run on the heels of the pickets brings their men right up to the trenches. But there the advantages they possess terminate very abruptly. The parapet, and the guns, and the men are before them, and the only chance the enemy has lies in vastly superior numbers, which would enable them to overlap our batteries, and sweep round into them by the flanks, to work their wicked will till reinforcements arrived to expel them. The Grand Dukes made reconnaissance of our front yesterday.

This morning early the French made a demonstration on our right, and two divisions were marched down towards Inkermann, consisting of about 16,000 men, but the Russians who had been cheering loudly all along our front did not meet them. I regret to say our gallant allies suffered severely in the sortie which took place on them this morning and last night. About 300 men and several hors de combat, and the loss is the more melancholy, inasmuch as a considerable amount of it was occasioned by an unfortunate mistake, which led one French regiment to fire upon another in the obscurity of the night. The firing all last night was incessant, and the French were so anxious as to the nature of the Russian movements in our front, that ere day-break General Rose rode to our camp to enquire if anything unusual had taken place. We are still expecting an attack. The guns ordered up to the hill over the road outside Balaklava have not yet been mounted, but the work is all traced out, and the guns are lying ready to be hoisted up and placed upon their carriages. The weather is beautiful; in fact, it is almost too warm for the time of year, and makes our men, who will insist on wearing all their warm clothing at once, unpleasantly hot and oppressed. Our pickets have the strictest injunctions to be on the alert, and our cavalry have a little more duty in the way that cavalry are accustomed to act than they have had for some time back. The preparations for laying down the electric telegraph from headquarters are going on rapidly, and with success.

February 2.

Nothing unusual last night. Many of the regiments were held in readiness for immediate action. The cavalry were under arms all night. About 200 sick came down and were sent on board the Ribon. Many of them were covered with vermin, and their blankets were not sent down with them. The weather has changed. It is cloudy and overcast, and it blew hard last night, but the thermometer is still up to 42 degrees. The Russians have not moved. Two more ships full of navvies have arrived at Balaklava. The St. Jean d'Acre is still outside the harbour. The roads are all covered with shakoos, which have been thrown away by men of the various drafts and regiments recently landed on their way to camp. Colonel Eld, of the 90th, was under arrest for five days, because it was thought he had not acquainted his men with the orders he had received not to throw away their shakoos on pain of severe punishment, but it was owing to the detention of the letter at headquarters ordering his release that he was under arrest for three of those days.

February 3.

A very sudden change in the weather, quite characteristic of the climate and of its extreme variations, occurred about 1 o'clock this morning. A bitter cold wind sprang up and blew with violence the thermometer fell to 18 degrees. A deep fall of snow took place, and the whole landscape is once more clothed in white. It is now freezing intensely. This will put impediments in the way of our railroad making. The navvies are hard at work picking and growling and fighting among themselves. There was a regular battle on board one of their ships last night, and the Provost-Marshal will have to give a few of them a taste of his quality ere they are brought to a sense of their responsibility in a state of martial law.

There was little firing on the trenches last night. The French had as usual a couple of smart fusillades during the night. Our third parallel, in front of Chapman's battery, is to be strengthened at last. Every day strengthens the correctness of Sir John Burgoyne's homely saying about Sebastopol—"The more you look at it, the less you like it." Three months ago that officer declared his "opinion" to be that the place ought to be assaulted. Now General Neil comes, and we hear that he laughs at the notion of our reducing the place by the fire of artillery.

However, we shall have a tremendous fire for them, and a shower of 13-inch shells, each of which weighs about 200 lbs, will be an extremely unpleasant addition to the storm we shall direct upon the Russians. The French are extremely anxious for the assault. Our army has long been in a condition which induces it to prefer anything to the trenches. It may easily be imagined that General Canrobert is becoming less popular among his soldiers than he was. General Bosquet, who commanded the French movement at Inkermann, is rising in favour, as he is known to be in favour of the bayonet