

News of the Week.

EUROPE.

SIR CHARLES NAPIER IN RUSSIA.—We extract the following passages from a private letter just received from a gentleman whom the attraction of the Emperor Alexander's coronation has drawn to the Russian capital:—

"Judge of my surprise on going down to Cronstadt a few days since, at meeting our old friend Sir C. Napier, on board a steamer specially provided for him by the St. Petersburg agents of the North of Europe Steam Navigation Company, in whose splendid steamer Oscar he had arrived a few days previously from London. The worthy admiral was taking a survey of the redoubtable forts which protected the Russian fleet during the war, and concerning the impregnability or otherwise of which to the attacks of British seventy-four's such various opinions have been offered. Since then I have seen Sir Charles in many places, and have witnessed the cordiality with which he has been everywhere received."

Another letter, dated St. Petersburg, August 4, gives an amusing description of Cronstadt, its fleet, and Admiral Napier:—

"This morning the thunders of artillery awoke all Petersburg, and the sea-coast towns within many miles, to witness a grand review of the Russian mortar boats, off Cronstadt. Yesterday evening, as our steamer approached Cronstadt, we had the Russian fleet some fifteen or twenty miles east of that fortress. There were twelve (I think) line-of-battle ships, and about eighteen or twenty frigates. When we came to the guardship, we had to moor there for the night, as our vessel, the Gothenburg, a fine screw steamer, drew too much water (eleven feet) to pass the bar till she had discharged part of her freight, and we could not obtain a small boat till daylight. At first we were disappointed at this delay; but next morning we had every reason to congratulate ourselves that a reader despatch had not deprived us of a very animated and striking spectacle. We were immediately boarded by a semi-civilian, and very civil officer, who talked any language that happened to come uppermost; a naval or military, or both naval and military, officer, whose business was not to talk at all, but in silent obesity to represent the martial power; and lastly, a scrivener, with a leather bag containing a seal as large as the dial of a timepiece. The captain of our boat produced the requisite documents, and some champagne and capital cigars. To my surprise—for I know that such articles are appreciated in Russia—the principal officer of the three who visited us almost immediately lost his gay appearance. He declined the champagne (a second glass, that is); he threw down his cigar; he leant his forehead on his hand, one of his companions, the representative of the Cronstadt military authority, laughed, urged him in Russ to take off his glass, and asked him what was the matter. 'This stupid vessel,' replied he, in the same language, 'ought to have let two anchors down; she rolls so that I am quite sick already.' He thought this was not understood. Yet for three months this gentleman had never once been on land. He lived entirely in the guardship. It is well that the Russian navy can now take exercise. Had the blockade lasted much longer, a short row in an open boat, and twenty minutes on board of a steamer riding at single anchor, would have sufficed to make the greatest veteran in the Russian navy sea-sick. The whole of Cronstadt was alert at daybreak on the 4th, and we passed through the whole line of steam-mortar boats. They were seventy-five in number, extended along a diagonal front of ten miles English within Cronstadt, and from that place to the shore of Peterhoff. Every one of these boats was furnished with the screw propeller. More than two thirds of them carried three mortars each—one in the stern, one amidships, and one in the bows—the rest carried only two pieces. They were very large. The crew of each boat numbered from forty to fifty. The boats were hastily got up; they are very light in motion, and of very shallow draught. They offer scarcely any mark, and are considerably lower in the water than the French boats or ours of similar construction. The reason of this is, that ours were built for offence, and intended to cross the German Ocean, or any sea. These Russian boats would not live in a heavy sea, nor could they safely venture far from shelter; but in these land-locked waters, to seize their time to creep about, or to aid in the defence of an assailed port, they are perfectly sufficient in quality, although not in number. The Emperor appeared on the water at eleven, and after the boats had manoeuvred he steamed back to Peterhoff. This was the great naval review not only of the Russian Baltic fleet which has lived through the war, but of the new fleet of Russian mortar boats which may be said to have been born of it, and which having silently and rapidly come into existence, made their first grand, open and avowed appearance on the morning in question. It was a remarkably lucky day for a sight-seer to arrive.

"To this review, Sir Charles Napier, inasmuch as he was on a visit to Russia and in the neighbourhood, received a special invitation from the High-Admiral of the empire, the Grand Duke Constantine. Before mentioning more particularly the imposing demonstration, through the midst of which our steamer happened to have its way to take, I may mention that the kind of attention which the Russian court and authorities showed to Sir Charles Napier (whose visit, in the first instance, took

them completely by surprise) was, while perfectly courteous, acidulated with a fine and delicate flavour of irony, which seems to have been quite lost upon the perceptive power of the gallant admiral. Your readers can judge for themselves; and I will mention one or two incidents of Sir Charles's visit and sojourn, because they are characteristic of other persons as well as that well-known officer, and because the whole style in which he brought himself into contact with Russia on this occasion is curious. The very first direct intimation conveyed to him after his presence in St. Petersburg had been notified to the higher powers, was couched in phrases which would have made many a man wince. He was told that orders had been given at Cronstadt and elsewhere to receive him, should he desire to look through these places; and he was politely assured that he would not now experience any difficulty in entering the various fortresses. At the same time the Grand Duke Constantine ordered a steamer to be stationed in the river, just under Sir Charles's rooms, on the English quay, and a Russian officer informed the visitor that this vessel was for his especial behoof and accommodation; but, first, he was begged to repair at once to the Grand Duke's residence, 'the Marble Palace.' Sir Charles forthwith donned his Russian Cross of St. George (received long ago from the St. Jean d'Acre hit), and waited on the Grand Duke. The manner in which the gallant admiral had notified his presence, in the first instance, outside Cronstadt was droll. The steamer, according to custom, had dropped her anchor about a mile or two beyond that fortress, abeam of the Russian guard-ship. On board this last it happened to be dinner-hour; and, therefore, no attention was paid to the English vessel, which was obliged to tarry thus until she had been visited, and her papers had been inspected by the proper officers from the guard-ship. Sir Charles became dreadfully impatient after having examined all he could see from that position of the Russian fleet. He had steamed through a large division of it some ten or fifteen miles further seaward, where about a score of line-of-battle-ships and frigates had gone out, and where they have been every day, for some weeks, exercising and manoeuvring in the Gulf of Finland. The sight produced a high state of mettle and excitement in the gallant admiral, who exclaimed, 'Ah, if those chaps had only come out that far when I was in command, perhaps they wouldn't have caught it!'

"Finding that the guard-ship continued absorbed in dinner, Sir Charles called up the chief officer, gave him his card, and told him to board the Russian vessel with that in his hand. The result answered his wishes. A boat came alongside immediately, and the aerial telegraph of the guard-ship began to fling about its arms in a style which quickly set those of the Cronstadt semaphore in motion. Thus the gallant admiral literally sent up his card to Russia, and found her at home. When the officers came aboard they were attacked forthwith by Sir Charles by a thick discharge of questions—a fire which they promptly returned by the most astounding declarations. Sir Charles pointed towards Oranienbaum, the beautiful groves of which came down to the water's edge, close on the right hand—'Have you any guns there?'—'Yes—some fourteen batteries.'—'And there?' pointing to Peterhoff. 'Oh, yes, about a hundred guns there.' These batteries are wonderfully well concealed, for at least at Peterhoff, I defy any visitor to detect them. Sir Charles, however, seemed to believe the answers he thus obtained. 'At the quay in St. Petersburg a crowd of people were collected to see the gallant admiral disembark. When he went to Peterhoff he proceeded in his off-hand way straight to the Emperor's palace, and demanded of a servant in the grounds whether his Majesty was there? The man could not speak any language that Sir Charles spoke (or rather vice versa), but an English gentleman translated the answer, which was that Alexander II was not there, but at his farm, a little distance off. No appearance of mystery or reticence was observed towards Sir Charles in any of the warlike establishments."

RUSSIA.—Officers of the English commissariat who reached the Turkish capital by the last packet stated that the Russian clergy had celebrated at Balaklava a high mass, at which everybody attended barefooted, as a sign of mortification. A grand procession afterwards took place, when holy water was poured forth in profusion in order to purify the town.—Colonel Stamati, commander of Balaklava, had issued a proclamation, recommending his men and the inhabitants to respect the funeral monuments of the allied armies. He had likewise invited the families of Balaklava and Kamiesch to return there, in order to recover possession of the lands and rebuild their houses on a new plan, under the direction of a commission of civil and military engineers, which had left Odessa for the purpose. Colonel Stamati had also assized articles of consumption, which were sold at exorbitant prices by the foreign traders who remained there after the departure of the allies. A camp of 6,000 men had been established on the heights of Inkermann.

A letter from St. Petersburg, dated the 30th ult., and published in Paris, says:—It results from a report addressed by the Minister of War to the Emperor that the Militia is now everywhere disbanded throughout the whole of the Russian empire. This important operation only occupied three months. At the period of the battle of Traktir, the number of the Militia under arms was 350,000. They had never been brought into action, but they did good service in replacing the regular army in the

interior service of the country. Had the war continued, the Militia would have been increased to 800,000 men.

Russian influence in the Principalities.—The Cologne Gazette says:—We learn from Vienna that the cabinet of St. Petersburg is making great efforts to regain the preponderating influence it at once possessed in the Danubian principalities—that it spares no means to accomplish its object and acquires the sympathies of the people. Several more boyards, devoted to Russian interest have again decorations and orders; the union of the principalities is preached up by their agents, and a diminution of the annual tribute is prospectively held out.

Reconstruction of Sebastopol.—A letter from Sebastopol of the 23rd ult., in the Austrian Gazette says:—The Archbishop of Cherson and Taurida, Innocent, arrived here two days ago, to bless the southern portion of the town, which the emperor has ordered to be rebuilt. The churches being destroyed, divine service was celebrated in the chapel of the virgin, which alone stands entire, on an altar made of wood. The archbishop compared the town to the fields of death of Ezekiel, and remarked that even if Sebastopol were not rebuilt, it would still remain grand and immortal. The south side being still uninhabited, the only spectators present, besides the admirals and authorities, were a few sailors, two battalions of infantry, and some people drawn by curiosity from Simpheropol. In the place where existed the six bastions which defended Sebastopol there will now be constructed hospitals and residences for invalid soldiers. The communications between the north and south shores will be established by means of a bridge of boats, placed between the former forts, St. Nicholas and St. Michael. In the Karabelnaia, good houses, on a uniform plan, will be constructed in place of the miserable huts, which formerly existed there. These will be let out to soldiers, or sailors families at the rate of 3 per cent, on the money expended.

GERMANY AND DENMARK.—A letter from Vienna says:—The great German Powers are firmly resolved to carry the question of the domains of Holstein Lauenberg before the Germanic Diet in spite of the objections of Denmark; the Powers which signed the protocol of London do not share the opinion of Denmark that it falls within the jurisdiction of the five great European powers. France is said to have made a satisfactory declaration to that effect. It is certain that a second note had been sent from Vienna to Copenhagen, and that the reply to it, which arrived last week, is not considered more satisfactory than the first one; it is, so to speak, only an acknowledgment of the receipt of the Austrian note, and an announcement that Denmark is about to discuss the question fully in a note to be presented to the five great powers.

SWEDEN AND FINLAND.—Stockholm, Aug. 6.—The last post from Finland confirms the report of Russia's intention to establish a new first-rate arsenal on the Kasko, in the gulf of Bothnia, where she will be able to carry out the designs originally formed for Bomarsund. The island lies so close to the main land that it is connected to it by a wooden bridge 200 feet long. The little town on Kasko contains about 900 inhabitants, who carry on a thriving trade with their fisheries, and have enjoyed the staple ever since 1785. The harbour is considered the second best in Finland, only yielding the palm to Helsingfors. This intelligence has not failed to create a gloomy feeling here, as the execution of the design would become a standing threat to Sweden.

STATE OF SICILY.—A letter from Naples says:—The great event of the day, however, is the news from Sicily—coloured most highly no doubt—and still of such an uncertain character that I hesitated to say anything about it. From all I can gather of what is probable the following statement appears to approach near the truth. On Sunday the 27th, it had been resolved by the Palermians to make a demonstration where the band usually plays, and so well known was it that arrangements were made to put down any movement. Notwithstanding, at the appointed time a crowd assembled and cries were uttered of Viva la Costituzione. During the following night sixty arrests were made. On Monday morning General Pellissier arrived with his staff adding of course, not a little fuel to the fire. They were received with great enthusiasm I am told, and left after a visit of twenty-four hours. On the following night forty arrests were made. Their report adds to this statement that, on the Sunday, some of the 1st regiment of Swiss trying to put down demonstration were set upon by the people, and a portion of a Neapolitan regiment—either the 13th or the Regiment della Morte. It is added that the Swiss were sadly mauled, and between 200 and 300 put hors de combat.

I receive these reports with great reserve, but it cannot be concealed that there is a very bad feeling existing on the part of the Neapolitans, both civilians and military, towards the Swiss, and that Sicily is in a state of great ferment. Again, we come to the positive when I inform you that within the last few days as many as six steam frigates have been put in commission, and a variety of destinations assigned them. The report circulated by the authorities is, that they are to be sent down to change the garrison of Palermo. This is evidently false as so many would not have been wanted.—Others assert that his Majesty is continually haunted by the ghost of Italian Legion; but it is more probable perhaps, that they are held in readiness for any events in Sicily, which is

heaving and tossing in the throes of political agony.

ITALY.—The amount of the Sardinian cannon and troops moved towards the Sardinian frontier by Austria is incredible. Sardinia is making efforts on her side, which are backed by the whole population. Both parties are ready for war, if the Western Powers will permit it. Some disturbances have taken place in Naples and Sicily. The following proclamation has been issued by the liberal party in Naples:—Neapolitans.—We have counselled you to be peaceable and dignified in the grave crisis in which our country is situated. You received the counsel well. We expected nothing different from you. Eight years have passed, during which you have imposed silence by your firmness and constancy on the wicked herd who calumniated you by saying that you desired only disorder, and that you placed the Government under the necessity of chaining and lashing you. The prisons contain the bravest and most virtuous citizens, who form our dearest pride; and the Government, to avenge itself has been obliged to organize false conspiracies and urge its satellites to the utmost extremity of corruption. Thus, by restraining the holy anger of virtue herself, you have almost completed that moral revolution which, only initiated in 1848, has obtained a solemn European judgment between the country and the Government. Let not, however, prudence and faith be mistaken for pusillanimity and Torpor. An illustrious man, so far back as the 23rd of May last said to the Italians, 'Agitate and agitate.' Agitation is not exactly a revolution, but precedes it and prepares it. Agitation in its manifestations must be manifold and of many forms; circumstances of time of place, of opportunity, give it inspiration, an impulse a physiognomy. It has a wholesale exercise which reveals, educates, invigorates the moral and intellectual powers of future combatants, and especially their courage. It does the duty of the muster-roll, and displays on our part the soldiers of the country, and brings forward the most worthy, the most capable, the boldest. It molests the enemy with punctures of thousands of pins before he is pierced with the deep wounds of swords. It reminds Europe that she never can have peace as long as the undying aspirations of Italian nationality are not satisfied. All this exists, and it produces agitation and agitation, accordingly as it is skilfully and energetically directed, is always more or less valuable and is very injurious. Our opinion is, that the facts of agitation, according to the time in which they take place, are in an especial manner, facts of resistance to the breaches which the authorities commit against their own laws. Pressing forward continually on the path of violence and of terror, they must succumb at length. That which the law does not forbid the will of a functionary can never efficaciously prevent. We are not bound to respect the private attitudes and desires of those who govern, much less to know and to investigate them. You have morally triumphed by bringing into the broad light of public opinion those aspirations which before struggled for existence in the darkness of sects.—Well, then, these aspirations, this participation in the history now passing before your eyes, let them become a free and public fact. No longer suffer admonitions on the arrangement of person or of dress. Do not conceal your eagerness to read the journals, and your opinions on them; speak openly of the acts of the Government in a becoming manner; unite too, with this, and openly declare your sympathies with those who have deserved well of the country whenever the occasion presents itself—show yourselves strong in your faith. True it is that this will increase hatred and persecution against you, and will open to you the prison doors; but, besides that these sufferings will be brief, we ought not to fear them, though they would be our deserts were we to show cowardice or division. This will make you feel that you are a nation, not a sect, for a sect is the creation of our enemies only. In the restoration of our rights, of true order, and public morality, we especially invoke the assistance of the clergy and the army, the chief nerves of the State; the one with the word will give life to the spirit in its new direction; the other with its type of energy, of discipline, and of order, will prevent any deviation; and perhaps at no distant period, this our army, having become the true expression of national strength will be our pride, and will acquire a noble page in living history.

"Faith, union, perseverance!"

GREECE.—The *Moniteur Grec* of the 31st July contains full details of the destruction of the combined remnants of four robber bands headed by Davelio Zaphiris, Beloulas and Phountoukis. The brigands, closely pursued from mountain to mountain turned to bay at last, and fortified themselves on a small hill said to be the very spot where Oedipus slew Laius. Surrounded by troops and armed civilians, they defended themselves with great courage. Night approaching, a lieutenant named Meegas, who had been under a suspicion of conniving at their misdeeds, and who to dissipate this suspicion, had devoted himself to their pursuit; and had been the first to get upon their track, saw the necessity of putting an end to the contest, lest the darkness should favour the robbers' escape. Sword in hand, he sprang into the entrenchment occupied by Beloulas, but was wounded in the act, and quickly despatched. His example, however, stimulated the others, who swarmed over the brigands' defences, and put the whole 23 to the sword, with the exception of four, who were wounded, and made prisoners. There was great joy at Athens in consequence of the extermination of these formidable banditti, and