

LATE FROM THE CRIMEA.

(From the Correspondent of the Times)

CAMP BEFORE SEBASTOPOL, Jan. 18.—Now that military operations are abandoned, and, indeed, rendered nearly impossible by the cold and the state of the ground, there is no more interesting subject of consideration than the condition of the troops thus condemned to a brief inaction. My own observation and the evidence of numerous officers, both medical and non-medical enable me to say, without hesitation, that there never was an army in the field in winter so poorly clothed, fed, and sheltered as the army of the Crimea. Disease, instead of increasing as the season advances, appears to diminish, and I have it on excellent authority that, if we deduct wounded men, the entire number of sick in the army, including the English portion of the Land Transport, does not exceed 5 per cent, which, if you take the army without the Land Transport, which has more than its proportion of illness, it will be little more than 4 per cent. This, it must be admitted is a highly satisfactory state of things, and will appear almost miraculous to persons who have been accustomed to attribute to the "pestiferous" Crimean climate a very undue proportion of the disease which arose chiefly from exposure, want of sufficient food and clothing, and neglect of proper sanitary precautions. The fact is, that we have at last learnt to profit by our dearly-bought experience, and it is to be hoped advantage will be taken of it to found a system which shall preclude the possibility in future campaigns, either here or elsewhere, of a recurrence of such sufferings and grievous loss of life as were last winter encountered. The cleanest, wisest, and most humane plan unquestionably is to spend plenty of money on the soldier, to supply him abundantly, keep him warm, and feed him well—of course without pampering him or accustoming him to luxuries. The British soldier has long wanted an article, and too difficult to replace, to be neglected or allowed to perish for want of due protection for his health and comfort. What would we not give to get back those battalions of well-trained veterans who perished in the mud and misery of last winter? Such soldiers are not to be replaced for years, and recruits, however stout and well trained, cannot fill the void left by men who have been long under the weather, and made themselves old very quickly, and, although a little more age would be desirable in many of the men out here, we have not much reason to be dissatisfied with the composition of our army in the East. Which ever way one turns, one sees strong, hearty, red fellows, their cheeks glowing with health, their step elastic and active, and their countenances brightened up with the sickly emaciated aspect of some of the French, showing better keep, and also, I incline to think, the superior stamina of our population. Without being by any means hard worked, the men have enough to do to keep them healthy, and every time which many of them might otherwise misspent. And they do their work willingly and without grumbling. There is no greater mistake than to make mere parade soldiers—to condemn them to idleness except when in action or at a drill. It is the way to foster bad habits and encourage drunkenness. As regards this latter vice, be it said *en passant*, I note a very great difference between this time and the winter months. A drunken man on the road is comparatively a rarity, and the discipline of the army has manifestly gained largely by the amendment. The men are more orderly and steady in their demeanour, more attentive in saluting their officers, in which respect they were lax last autumn that severe orders were given to enforce a usage highly necessary to the maintenance of discipline; and generally they appear to have a more soldierly bearing and increased self-respect. Although there is still a good deal of work going in the way of road making and mending, bringing up loads from Balaklava, conveyance of rations, &c., time is found for military exercise, and, when the weather permits, every day sees some of the usual drill and parade going on. There are also rifle practice, military promenades, and sham fights. The Light division is particularly active.

The sick and wounded sent away from the Crimea have this winter averaged about 2000 weekly. Just now a large shipment is taking place. The Great Tasmania sailing ship, the accommodation of which for invalids is of the very best description, is about to proceed to England, and it is said, about 400 men, disabled from various causes, permanently or for a while. Most of the men who go by her are wounded cases. It is possible she will take more than 400; but up to this time the number has not exactly been known. In the last three days the camp hospitals have been sending down 400 invalids, some in carts, some on mules. It will be gratifying to the friends of those brave sufferers to know that nothing can exceed the care and kindness with which they are conveyed from camp to Scutari, Renkioi, or England, as their destination may be. I believe the great Tasmania goes straight to England. She will be towed down to the Bosphorus by a steamer.

It is well to claim all you can of the sanitary state of the French, but it is difficult to ascertain anything on that head. Our gallant allies are very reserved upon the subject, and one is reduced to conjectures founded on what one can see with one's own eyes. I greatly fear that they are neither so well off nor so healthy as our

army, which I believe to be as healthy at this moment as any agricultural population in the United Kingdom, making allowance for the difference of race and aspect, and for the naturally salubrious complexion and spare frame of the natives of some of the French provinces. I cannot say that Marshal Pelissier's soldiers have generally the appearance of being as well fed and cared for as our men. Certainly they have not that robust look of rude health which our fellows present. They may, however, be in good working condition. But I fear their hospitals are fuller than they ought to be, and I am assured by persons who are more conversant with the frame of men than I am, these are very numerous. There have been reports in our camp that the French were underfed—that they were actually on half rations—but the inquiries I have made induces me to discredit this. I have little doubt, that they get the full rations they are entitled to by the regulations of their service; but whether that be sufficient to support them well in this climate, under canvas, and when doing a good deal of hard work, is another matter. As to the Sardinians they look a little thin, and pinched (the Crimean cold and wet must be trying to Italy's children), but as smart and soldierly as ever; their health is tolerably good, and their sick are well taken care of. Scoury has appeared among them, but as yet not to any great extent. It is attributable to the want of a due proportion of vegetable diet, also to hard work and exposure.

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

My Lords and Gentlemen;

Since the close of the last Session of Parliament, the arms of the Allies have achieved a signal and important success, which has opened the way to the great triumph of the Black Sea, has yielded to the persevering constancy and to the daring bravery of the allied forces.

The naval and military preparations for the ensuing year have necessarily occupied my serious attention; but while determined to omit no effort, which could give vigor to the operations of the war, I have deemed it my duty, not to decline any overtures which might reasonably be expected in prospect of a safe and honorable peace.

Accordingly, when the Emperor of Austria lately offered to myself and to my august ally, the Emperor of the French, to employ his good offices with the Emperor of Russia, with a view to endeavor to bring about an amicable adjustment of the matters at issue between the contending powers, I consented, in concert, with my allies, to accept the offer thus made; and I have the satisfaction to inform you that certain conditions have been agreed upon which, I hope, may prove the foundation of a general treaty of peace.

Negotiations for such a treaty will shortly be opened at Paris.

In conducting these negotiations, I shall be careful not to lose sight of the objects for which the war was undertaken, and I shall deem it right in no degree to relax my attention in respect of the result, until a satisfactory treaty of peace shall have been concluded.

Although the war in which I am engaged was brought on by events in the south of Europe, my attention has not been withdrawn from the state of things in the north, and in conjunction with the Emperor of the French, I have concluded with the King of Sweden and Norway a treaty containing defensive engagements applicable to his dominions, and tending to the preservation of the balance of power in that part of Europe.

I have also concluded a treaty of friendship, commerce, and navigation with the republic of Chili. I have given directions that these treaties shall be laid before you.

The estimates for the ensuing year will be laid before you. You will find them framed in such a manner as to provide for the exigencies of war, if peace should unfortunately not be concluded.

It is gratifying to me to observe that, notwithstanding the pressure of the war, and the burdens and sacrifices which it has unavoidably imposed upon my people, the resources of my empire remain unimpaired.

I rely, with confidence, on the manly spirit and enlightened patriotism of my loyal subjects for a continuance of that support which they have so nobly rendered to me. I am assured, that they will not call upon them for exertions beyond what may be required by a due regard for the great interests, the honor, and the dignity of the empire.

There are many subjects connected with internal improvement, which I recommend to your attentive consideration.

The difference which exists in several important particulars, between the laws of Scotland and those of the other parts of the United Kingdom, has occasioned inconveniences to a larger portion of my subjects engaged in trade. Measures will be proposed to you for remedying this evil.

Measures will also be proposed to you for improving the laws relating to partnership, by simplifying those laws and thus rendering more easy the employment of capital in commerce.

The weather has been very variable since I last wrote. We have had frost, snow, thaw, rain, two fine sunny days, and a little wind. There was snow last night; to-day the ground was soft and heavy; to-night it freezes. Doyne's road stands the test; its changeableness and trying weather very fairly indicated. The traffic on it is enormous, and it requires some care to get along it without accidents. It is crowded with all sorts of men and animals; cattle, carts, strings of mules, a French wagon train, English transport, the convenient well-made vehicles of the Sardinians, clumsy Turks contending with yokes of buffaloes, French soldiers upon mules, which they alternately tenderly caress and furiously revile, British soldiers bearing big boards, cantennemen, and all kinds of nondescript with carts and beasts of burden, and English infantry officers on every conceivable size of pony, cutting in and out of the throng at imminent peril, as it seems, to themselves and their steeds—such is the composition of the concourse that, every day, and all day, flows along the Doyne highway. The order is, that every one should keep to his right hand, but this order is not always strictly obeyed, and a little confusion sometimes arises, particularly when two or three hundred soldiers coming, by carrying huts piecemeal—some of the pieces being so large that four men carry one of them, each taking a corner. Then there is apt to be some bother, and perhaps a little hard swearing, but the men are good-humoured enough, and a row or quarrel is seldom seen. Really, however, excepting Cheapside, and the Epsom-road on Derby day, before rail-ways were, I hardly know a ride requiring more circumspection, if you wish to avoid trampling on a fellow-creature, or getting your own knees crushed, than the road from the camp to Balaklava. And in some parts, one quits the road, cuts across the country, he gets into awful holes, such as still exist, abominably deep ground, that out of consideration for his horse, he seldom repeats the experiment. As for splashing, that is a matter of course. A man turns out of his hut after breakfast, got up in the most unexceptionable style (for the Crimea)—his boots shiny, his spurs brilliant, his coat well brushed, the oilskin of his cap a very mirror to the sun. He has his horse brought quite close up to the door, that he may not carry into the stirrup a pound and a-half of that adhesive mud, which barely ceases at his threshold. He returns, after his ride to Balaklava, Kamieshe, Head-quarters, or elsewhere, with mud to his knees and splashes to his eyes. His boots are no longer boots, but pillars of clay, his serried gowns at the sight of his coat, and he carries the weight of half a brick spread in detachments over his face, cap, and beard.

A deplorable accident occurred on Tuesday last, in front of the commissariat of the Fourth Division. Lieutenant Messenger, of the 46th Regiment, had charge of the divisional roads as Assistant-Engineer, and was superintending the blasting of some rock, when he imprudently approached a fuse which had been lighted, but which he believed, from the time that had elapsed, to have gone out. He was shaking his arm powder over it, when the mine exploded, killed him on the spot, and badly wounded a corporal who was with him. The immediate disposition of the unfortunate young man had rendered him a favourite with his comrades, and his funeral, which took place yesterday on Cathcart's-hill, was attended by the General commanding the Fourth Division, by the two brigadiers, and by a very large number of officers.

Jan 19.—The Russians fire more than usual yesterday, but I have not heard that they did any damage. The weather continues fair and slightly frosty.

SWEDEN'S DISTRUST OF RUSSIA.

An article in a Stockholm journal has some strong observations on the crisis.—Few in Sweden believe in the good faith or sincerity of Russia—and who knows Russia better than Sweden? We sincerely hope that Napoleon III. may not meet with the same results from Austrian alliance as Napoleon I. Sweden hopes, that in any case she will ally herself with the more powerful of the two. She is persuaded that while France seems to rest satisfied with mere glory, England ought to wish for the continuance of the war. Hitherto it was thought, that it was England that drew France along with her; it may be seen before long, than France will be obliged to follow England. Sweden will not cease her war preparations until peace is made.