

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE

CONVERSATIONS AT ROME.—The Rev. Dr. O'Bryen, now resident at Rome, has had the happiness of formally receiving into the fold of the Church, two converts of note—Mr. Robert Piercy, C. E., of London, and the Countess Christiana d'Eschery, of Paris.

HAPPY ALSACIANS.—The Alsace Journal reports two soldiers of the garrison of Strasbourg as having outaged a number of citizens. They descended from the ramparts in a state of drunkenness, and while going towards the Rue Militaire they met a woman carrying a child, whom they struck on the face without the slightest provocation.

A GERMAN EDITOR IN PRISON.—The editor of the Bergisch-Marischchen Zeitung got fifteen days imprisonment for daring to criticise an address of the Freemasons. The day he was confined three other convicted persons were placed in the cell with him. One was a young man condemned for an immoral offence; the second was a needle-maker, punished for some misdemeanour, with six months; the third, a workman, had been guilty of assaulting his family. The needle-maker was soon transferred to better company, and his place supplied by a publican convicted of keeping an indecent establishment.

The Chapter of St. John Lateran have been to the Vatican to thank the Pope for his munificence in providing for the restoration of the chancel of their cathedral, which was in a precarious condition. It will be rebuilt at the expense of his Holiness, and the apse is to be prolonged so as to form a Latin cross, the basilica being at present only in the form of a T. It will be a vast undertaking, and the idea is not altogether new, having been originally proposed by the lamented Cardinal Altieri when he was archbishop of the said basilica.

The Pontifical Academia dei Nuovi Linei has recently held several interesting and important sittings. At one of these, presided over by the celebrated Father Secchi, a paper was read by a countess on the flora of the Colosseum, and another, by the Prince Boncompagni, on microscopical observations. Papers have also been read by Professor Azzaruli, containing solutions of some problems on the tetrahedron, and by Professor Armellini, on some hydraulic phenomena observed in the Roman aqueducts.

The Fall Mail Gazette has the following:—"The strength of the German navy has been increased by the launch at Stettin of another torpedo-vessel called the Uhlran. This is the second vessel of the kind which Germany possesses, the Zithen having already been constructed in England; but the latter vessel is of a different type from the Uhlran, the torpedo being discharged by mechanical force from the mouth of a cannon projecting from its bows. The Uhlran carries immediately under its bows a torpedo which will explode within the vessel at which it is directed, and the force of the charge of dynamite which will be exploded by the collision is calculated to be sufficient to blow the other vessel to pieces, though the torpedo itself is no bigger than a football. The most remarkable point in connection with the ship is the enormous power of its engines as compared with the vessel itself. They are of 1,000 horse-power when at high pressure, and take up so much room that there is little space left for the coal-bunkers and the berths of the officers and men. This unusual proportion of steam power has been given in order that the vessel may be able to travel through the water very rapidly."

FRUSSIA AND ITALY.—MISSION OF VON MOLTKE.—The Monde gives currency to a curious story regarding the mission of Von Moltke to Rome. It is set forth that the German commander went thither to back up a circular sent to the Italian Government, prescribing an armed neutrality for Italy in the event of any troubles arising in the East and leading to war. Prussia desires to pursue her designs against Austria, while Russia swallows some slices of Turkey; and if Italy keep on her good behaviour while this goes on, her good friend Bismarck will help her to absorb the Tyrol, Illyria, and Dalmatia. The Monde goes on to say that the organs of the new Italian Ministry are very reticent on this point; but the organs of the late party of power, having obtained an inkling of the negotiations, have not hesitated to speak out plainly. The Opinion, for example, has set itself to exposing the extreme delicacy of the position of Austria, and to advising that empire to "take the bull by the horns" by an immediate occupation of the Ottoman Principalities in insurrection. A fact which to some extent confirms the rumours afloat is that General Cialdini—the only commander who retains any prestige in the Italian army—has gone to San Rossore, he had long conferences with the King. The official journals asserted that his only mission was to make arrangements for assuming supreme command of the army, in the event of hostilities breaking out. In any case there is likely to be fire somewhere, when so much smoke is ascending.

St. Vincent de Paul.—The Courier de Bruxelles comments on the late celebrations of the tercentenary of St. Vincent de Paul, and after eloquently describing the wonderful triumphs wrought by the members of the confraternity, concludes as follows:—"St. Vincent de Paul is the great master of the 'hierarchy of souls,' and of the Christian order of the hearts, the intelligence, the marrow, and the life of society. To him was confided by God a mission of regeneration, the importance of which is beyond measure. To him it has been given to combat without resting for the overthrow of Liberalism and its congeners—free thought, free pleasure, and free morals. St. Vincent de Paul has almost covered the world with his missionaries, his devoted daughters of charity. Measuring his efforts by the necessities of the times, he has inspired for our day the conferences which bear his honoured name. These conferences are the great Christian reservoirs from which are drawn, hour by hour, the elements of salvation from the miseries of the age; and in this sense St. Vincent de Paul can be justly proclaimed as a promoter of all the great works of modern times. He is the bond which unites us all to Jesus; and there is no act of devotion or abnegation, and of renunciation which it is possible for us to make, that does not add a fresh wreath to his crown of glory. Therefore the joyous celebration of the third centenary of St. Vincent de Paul opens a new era for the holy Church of Christ. His disciples multiply as the stars of heaven, forming a sacred line against the brutal excesses of Liberal systems, and saving society from the overthrow which menaced it through the imbecile arrogance of Liberalism.

The cry of "war in sight" is again passing from mouth to mouth, and as the Government press, instead of calming popular anxieties, observes an ominous silence on the subject, people like this as a sign that this time the wolf is really coming. What makes a new German war not only possible but probable in the year 1876 is the favourable opportunity offered by the Eastern complication of the full realisation of Bismarck's political programme. It would be a great mistake to think that the Chancellor's task had been finally crowned by the creation of a German Empire; that was only a step towards the great aim. The final triumph will be one Germany under one Emperor, to the exclusion of all other sovereigns, and the union into one nation of all the German lands from the Baltic to the Adriatic, from the Vosges to the Vistula.

"So welt die deutsche Zunge Klingt, Und Gott im Himmel Lieder singt," Where'er the German tongue resounds, Singing Songs to God in heaven.

Such a political result cannot, of course, be brought about without a new war ending in the dismemberment of Austria. This is exactly why people suspect Prince Bismarck of having advised the blind Austrian rulers to embark on their present fatal course of hostility to Russian interests, whereby they are to a certainty digging poor Austria's grave. For during a war between Russia and Austria, Germany would find the longed-for opportunity of offering her help to the Northern power, for which assistance she would be allowed to annex the German-speaking Austrian provinces. To crush the House of Hapsburg completely and for ever, Italy, urged on by Prussia would attack Austria from the South, and receive Istria for her services. In common with a great many of my countrymen, I fear that if the situation in the East should in the least become favourable to the plan attributed to Bismarck, we shall have a new war before the Turkish question is definitely settled. Several facts, which in ordinary circumstances might not have been suggestive of warlike intentions, now greatly tend to strengthen popular suspicions. I mean Bismarck's haste to get all German railways at his command, Prince Charles and Moltke's sojourn in Italy, and the completion in this year, of the German armaments, which are said to be more formidable than they ever have been. However—Qui ritu verba.—German Correspondence of the Liverpool Catholic Times.

PROGRESS AND PROTESTANTISM.—The Paris Univers criticising the principles of M. Laveleye—principles very commonly held amongst those whose only object of worship is worldly prosperity—writes as follows:—"He (M. Laveleye) complacently points to the light shed upon the world by America, England, Prussia, and Holland. We search in vain for this resplendent radiance. America so far has only shone in the fires of her machinery, and Prussia in the flash of her cannon. What has either one or the other done for civilisation? What intellectual conceptions have they promulgated—what works have they produced? This much-vaunted Prussia, despite the enormous pillage of her recent victory, reveals nothing but misery out of the Catholic provinces. Has she done anything in the domain of letters and of arts except to place disciples of Voltaire in the academies? Where is her glory? Where are her annals, her monuments, her titles to nobles amongst the people? France alone—even the France of to-day, fallen though she is—has a history more grand than those of all the Protestant and schismatic States put together. To better establish his theories, M. Laveleye will only recognise history as far as it suits the convenience of his argument. He closes his eyes perversely to the influence which Catholicism exercised exclusively up to the sixteenth century, during which period it converted the hordes of barbarians, established the freedom of Christianity, and studded the soil with institutions for the preservation and spread of science and morals. This was true progress, arrived at by a path along which the Church, up to the sixteenth century, had travelled alone. Protestantism then came upon the scene, borne aloft on a spirit of revolt which Catholic influence had hitherto been able to subdue; it changed the conditions of the true civilisation, and set up a human standard where it had dethroned the Catholic ideal. The new religion undoubtedly developed an unprecedented ardour and activity in the advancement of material progress; and fuller scope was thus given to the spread of that material civilisation which M. Laveleye admires so much in the counting-houses of England, and the mechanical industries of America. In one sense, he is right. A nation may have a period of prosperity, under the influence of Protestantism, or of religious indifference. Possibly it is more easy to make a fortune with religions so accommodating as those of Luther and Calvin than with the religion of Jesus Christ. The evangel, has it not said in effect: 'The children of the century are more expert in the conduct of their business than the children of knowledge?' Is it not necessary also to recognise that Catholicism has no place in temporal felicity? But when M. Laveleye boasts of the spirit of enterprise which distinguishes England, Holland, and the others, and when he sees in their Protestantism the secret of their wonderful aptitude for commerce and finance, he ought logically to place Judaism above even Protestantism, for the very reason that the Jews excel all other peoples in the faculty of acquiring wealth. So that the conclusion to be deduced from his own premises destroys the aim of his argument. But it is not necessary to conclude that Catholics are inferior to others in business aptitude. France and Spain have rivalled the world in colonising. Nowhere does there reside more genius, more restless activity of commercial life, than in the little Italian republics. Is it nothing that Christopher Columbus and Vasco da Gama, both Catholics, by their grand discoveries, gave a new field for the propagation of the faith, and a new direction to the path of commerce? Certainly, if all progress is to be industrial, if all civilization is to consist in the transformation of

the world into a vast manufactory, if all the strength and majesty of the nations is to be summed up in the counting of their batteries of artillery, if the degree of a people's culture is to be appreciated only according to the number able to read and write, then, indeed, the Catholic nations remain inferior to the others, for they have a higher ideal than this society without faith, and a destiny far beyond the concerns of a mere terrestrial existence. If France is deprived now of her military glory, and apparently fated to vibrate between despotism and anarchy—if Austria has come to have neither force nor unity, if Spain is but the plaything of revolutions, if Italy presents the image of impotence, it is because they have, in ceasing to be truly Catholic, lost the real source of their greatness, the true basis of their progress.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS. In answer to "Alphabetical," in your last issue, for a remedy for consumption in its first stages, I can recommend Dr. Pierce's "Golden Medical Discovery," if taken according to directions, for it has been thoroughly tried in my family, and the results were glorious. "Alphabetical" must not expect one bottle to do the work—my wife took three bottles before she could discover any change, but after the third bottle every dose seemed to strengthen the lungs, and now she is well and hearty. If "Alphabetical" will write to me I will get witnesses to the above. HENRY H. M. PATTON. Lawrence, Marion County, Ind. Cincinnati Times, Feb. 4, 1875.

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