

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

FRANCE.

The accouchement of the Empress is expected to take place between the 15th and 25th of March.—This is authentic.

The Nesselrode circular containing the Russian propositions is regarded in Paris as virtually a refusal of the western conditions. The general belief is, that the Russian government, informed of what was going on, resolved to make a diplomatic diversion by assuming the initiative.

PROJECTED CAMPAIGN ON THE RHINE.—A few days ago a decree appeared in the *Moniteur* for constituting the Imperial Guard on a larger basis.—The intention is that that select body, and the other corps which have fought in the Crimea, shall form the nucleus of an army, which can be directed to any point where its services may be required. On this subject the Paris correspondent of the *Times* makes the following important statement:—

"I have no difficulty in supposing that this point will be the Rhine, in case Russia do not accept the conditions of peace we propose to her, and in case Germany again allows itself to be intimidated or seduced by our enemy. Nay, more, if peace be not concluded this winter, if the spring still sees Prussia timid and uncertain, not to say hostile to us, and Russia still obstinate, I have little doubt that the next campaign will commence on a scale commensurate with the power of the two greatest nations of the earth, and that the war will then become a *l'outrance*."

RESTORATION OF THE BENEDECTINE ORDER IN FRANCE.—It is consoling to think that while the infidel party is endeavouring to eradicate the religious orders from Spain and Piedmont, the Government and people of France are as zealously striving to re-establish them in every part of the French Empire. One of these ancient communities—that of Cîteaux—so well known in the annals of the Church, is about to return to France, under the auspices of a pious member of the Imperial family, the Abbe Lucien Bonaparte. When the Cisterians were driven away by the revolutionary fury of the last century they retired to the monastery of the Holy Cross at Rome. From that place, in which they have lived so long in holy exile, they are now on the eve of returning to their native country, to resume those devotional exercises and learned labours which made them such useful members of society. The re-establishment of the Cisterians in France is due mainly to the influence of the Very Rev. Father Thomas Mossi, ex-General of the Order, long favourably known in Rome for his learning and piety. This excellent Religious is now at Paris, having accompanied to that capital his ancient friend and pupil the Abbe Bonaparte. The new monks of Cîteaux, invited to many dioceses and being requested to occupy the houses long hallowed by the virtues of their brethren of old, have fixed on that monastery for their present abode, to the monks of which the great St. Bernard addressed the last letter written by his holy hand and eloquent pen. We are indebted to the *Univers* of the 18th inst., for this piece of good news, which we have much pleasure in communicating to the readers of the *Northern Times*.

ITALY.

Letters from Milan state that a young lady, a native of Scotland, named Margaret Walker, has recently espoused the Catholic faith. Her conversion from Presbyterianism took place at the Malagno Church on the 7th inst., and on the evening of the following day this young lady became partaker of the holy sacrament of baptism.

A Russian convert to the Catholic Church, Father Djunkovsky, has just left Rome, decorated with the title of Apostolic Prefect of the North Pole Missions, which was recently conferred upon him by his Holiness, together with a yearly salary of 20,000 francs.

PIEDMONT.—Count Cavour, the half-Calvinist, half-infidel minister of Victor Emmanuel, finds that he is losing ground in the country over which he has for some time exercised despotic sway. The people, whom he long deceived, are beginning to open their eyes to his real character and intentions. The journey to England of his royal master, and the address presented to him there have done a great deal to show the Piedmontese that their religion and property are imperilled by the present administration, and that it is now time for them to consult their own safety by insisting on a change of ministry and of policy. The reception which the traitor met with on his appearance at Chambery, the capital of Savoy, the family estates of the Piedmontese Princes, satisfied him that he was now well understood by the public, and that he was anything but a favourite on either side of the Alps.

GERMAN POWERS.

The following article, which is from the *Augsburg Gazette*, will be read with pleasure, as it gives a detailed account of what has recently passed between England, France, and Austria.—The article, which is nominally from Frankfurt, is evidently from an excellent, if not an official, source:—

"The mission of Count Valentine Esterhazy is the result of a complete understanding between the Western Powers and Austria. Since the commencement of the Eastern crisis, the understanding between the three Cabinets has never been so clear, cordial, and perfect as it now is, and this as well in regard to the new conditions of peace as to the measures to be taken if they should be rejected. The terms of peace will be recapitulated, and such remarks made on them as appear necessary. 1. The Russians to relinquish all claim to the right of protection over the Danubian Principalities, and to agree to certain conditions for securing their future political position. This point, though difficult of execution, is expressed in such clear and positive language, that, if it should be accepted, it will be impossible for Russia to exercise any prejudicial influence on the negotiations for the regulation of the affairs of the countries in question. In short, it is demanded that Russia shall simply accept the arrangements which may be made without sharing in the negotiations or in the resolution which may be taken. 2. Cession of a part of the Bessarabian territory, of such extent that Russia shall not only be removed from the Delta of the Danube, but shall entirely relinquish her position on the Danube. (The geographical line for the new frontiers of Russia, which is given in the propositions, is drawn at a considera-

ble distance from the Danube.) 3. Neutralization of the Black Sea, without any Russian fortifications or arsenals on its coasts. At the mouths of the Danube, however, there is to be a station for the smaller vessels of war which are to do police duty in the Black Sea. 4. All the powers to protect the Christian subjects of the Porte. The foregoing proposals emanated from Austria, but the Western Powers added—the admission of consuls to all the ports of the Black Sea, and the promise of Russia never in future to fortify the Aland Islands.

"In as far as Austria is concerned, the propositions, without being an *ultimatum*, have the importance of one. The new agreement was made between the Western Powers and Austria in the most straightforward and loyal way, and a speedy decision is required from Russia, as the powers are fully resolved that there shall be no diplomatic trickery. It was only on this condition that the Western Powers consented to the terms. The tremendous armaments which England and France are making for the spring can neither be interrupted nor can the enormous outlay be made in vain. The British Cabinet is resolved to give positive information to Parliament, and this is why such a short term has been granted to Russia. In case of the rejection of the propositions the diplomatic relations between Russia and Austria will at once be broken off. It will depend on the result of Count Esterhazy's mission whether we shall learn anything more relative to the recent negotiations between the Western Powers and Sweden."—*Cor. Times*.

My political friends take a great deal of trouble to convince me that my judgment is at fault, but it is still my firm belief that Austria will not be a participator in the war next spring, unless she can previously obtain from the Bund a promise of support. It must however, be remarked that if she could calculate on the assistance of Bavaria, Saxony, and the smaller German States she might possibly be induced to bid defiance to Russia. Help from Prussia Austria does not expect, as she knows full well that King Frederick William is completely in the hands of Russia.

NORTHERN POWERS.

The Berlin correspondent of the *Times* says:—"According to a private letter I have received from Copenhagen, it is stated that the Danish government, under the twofold pressure of the partial relinquishment of neutrality by Sweden and the apparently inevitable conflict with the United States, on account of the Sound dues, has decided upon making advances to the allies in the matter of the future campaign in the Baltic. For some time the government, as is represented to me, wavered between England and France, to which of the two it should make its advances, and at last decided for the former; in consequence of which a special envoy is very shortly to be accredited to London for the purpose of concluding a treaty, by which England shall guarantee to Denmark the possession of her West India Islands. In case of hostilities breaking out between the United States and Denmark, which would naturally result from any United States vessel attempting to pass the Sound without paying the dues, it is apprehended by the Danes that the first step taken by the Americans would be to lay violent hands on the Danish Island of St. Thomas. The expedition of British naval forces to the West Indies, as explained by our government to have taken place for the purpose of protecting our own territories there from piratical invasion, will throw an appearance of probability upon the idea that our government may fall in with this view."

WARLIKE PREPARATIONS OF SWEDEN.—Preparations for war are being made in Sweden. A letter from Stockholm (December 24th), says:—"The extraordinary activity prevailing in our naval and military arsenals and other departments, points to the presumption that there is more going on behind the scene than is considered needful to make public, at least for the present. It is more especially the army and naval clothing establishments that are so exceedingly busy in preparing uniforms and other articles of dress and accoutrements. Regimental commanders have received strict orders to put their corps into the greatest possible state of efficiency. These orders are called 'private,' but are, as a matter of course, of such a nature as to prevent their being kept long secret. Officers who have applied for leave of absence at head-quarters have received flat refusals to their request. Here at Stockholm the belief is general that we are preparing to take part in the war in the spring, and although the partisans of Russia disclaim against it, public opinion in general is greatly in favour of it, and a war with Russia would be a very popular measure."

RUSSIA.

The Russian journal *Le Nord* of Brussels declares that the propositions conveyed to St. Petersburg by Count Esterhazy (if they are of the character generally attributed to them), will be inevitably rejected.

"The assertion of the *Journal de Dresden* that Russia is willing to agree to the neutralization of the Black Sea, under certain conditions, will produce no effect, as the Western Powers and Austria demand from Russia a simple acceptance or a simple rejection of their propositions. A conditional acceptance will be considered equivalent to a rejection. The best proof that the December allies are—should it be necessary—resolved to enforce peace is, that they are already agreeing on the measures to be taken if their propositions should be rejected. It may be added that the negotiations on the subject are progressing to the satisfaction of all parties."

WAR IN THE EAST.

It is rumoured that Marshal Pelissier will be nominated commander-in-chief of the allied armies, and that Sir Edmund Lyons will be appointed to the chief command of the allied fleets.

The fall of Kars is the greatest military event that has occurred since the commencement of the war.—The clear and laconic despatch of General Mouravieff, and the articles of capitulation subscribed by General Williams, on the part of the Turks and English, are at last extant. Thence we learn that the Russians have taken an army of 14,000 men prisoners, with its two Generalsissimo, and eight Pashas—that the town of Kars has "submitted itself at discretion to the generosity of the august Sovereign of Russia"—and that the head-quarters of His Imperial Majesty's Army of the Caucasus are at present in that famous fortress known of old as the key of Asia Minor. All its cannon, magazines, and munitions of war, are in the Czar's hands—and, far more important, the wide and fertile expanse of country which the old fortress commands, and the roads which, passing by its walls, strike deep among the rich fields and ancient cities of Turkey in Asia.—*Nation*.

Intelligence from Constantinople of the 24th ultimo states that many persons had already quitted Erzeroum, fearing that it would be attacked by the Russian army. Those persons had sought refuge at Trebizond. It is also stated that Omar Pacha had retired upon Souchoum Kajeji; and that he has abandoned his project of attacking Kutais.

Other accounts from Constantinople of the 24th ult. state that the Ottoman Government was seriously intent on devising means to obviate the fatal consequences that might attend the fall of Kars, should all further advance of the Russians on the Turkish territory not be immediately checked.

A despatch in Tuesday night's *Gazette* from General Codrington encloses Dr. Hall's report on the health of the army up to the 5th ult. The report is satisfactory: the commencement of a wet and stormy season had caused some variation in the comparative prevalence of various diseases, but had not increased the mortality.

The continental papers, and more especially those of Germany, are filled with disquisitions on the peace or war question; and if the opinion of the German diplomatists be entitled to any weight, their views lean to the side of peace—to the probability of Russia accepting the terms which have been carried to St. Petersburg by Count Esterhazy. But the most remarkable circumstance connected with the question is the appearance of an extraordinary pamphlet in Paris, which is openly attributed to Louis Napoleon, and said to be the exclusive production of his pen, in which the propriety of coming to terms now is strongly advocated. About the authorship of this pamphlet, which is called "The necessity of a Congress to pacify Europe," no doubt, we believe, can exist.—Private letters from the French capital do not scruple to name the Emperor as the writer, and a Paris correspondent of a Manchester paper distinctly asserts that the hand of the head of the state is visible in this brochure. The pacific views of Louis Napoleon have been no secret during the last five or six weeks, but he has gone beyond the prescribed limits of sovereigns in advocating it through the printing press. The morning journal of yesterday, which manufactures public opinion in England, has a merciless castigation of this Royal pamphlet, which shows how much more furious the war fever rages in this country than across the channel. Whole passages are described as inaccurate or exaggerated, and the reasoning of the pamphlet relative to congress is thus condensed:—"If a congress were appointed, every one would be sure of peace, Austria and Prussia would find again the importance which they have lost—Russia a return to industrial development—France and England a salutary check to a war which will test more shrewdly the union of the Allies, and the secondary States a guarantee and a security in the collective protection of Europe." The London editor does not indeed assume that the Emperor is the author; but the views are set down as the suggestions of "a timid courtier, who seeks to overcome imperial self-will by hiding the truth beneath unmeaning compliments"—"a delicate and dignified method of hitting the real offender.—How far this pamphlet will aid in bringing about peace, how far it will compromise the head of the French nation, are points which will speedily appear.—*European Times*."

THE NEXT CAMPAIGN.—Of the six months of winter three are already past. In three more the Crimean winter will be at an end, and the season when military operations may be best attempted will have arrived. It is certain that the allies will do well to form their plans early enough to execute them before excessive heat dries the wells and destroys the pasturage of the plains. If the Crimea be conquered, their armies, then probably a quarter of a million strong, must take the field before April is far advanced. A council of war will shortly be held at Paris, at which the Duke of Cambridge attended by Sir R. Airey, will be present. Sir E. Lyons, too, will join in the conference and may be daily expected at Marseilles. The object of this meeting will be to weigh thoroughly the several plans for the next campaign, and, when a decision is formed, to carry out combined operations with energy and completeness. It is reported that Marshal Pelissier has been foremost in requesting that this council should be held. September and October the French General was sanguine as to an autumn campaign and pushed forward his columns with what looked like activity. The telegraph, which, through Lord Panmure, was used to make known almost daily intelligence, became on a sudden silent: "The expectation of the two nations, and we may add of their Governments, was highly raised.—The French crossed the Valley of Baidar, seized the heights to the north, pushed forward a division to the head waters of the Belbek, and threatened the passes of Aiteder and Albat. At that time an opinion was expressed that the Russian plateau, steep as a wall towards the south, and to be gained only by narrow passes, was a position not to be attacked. The contrary, however, was urged even by military men, who held that any chain of hills could be forced or turned. The result proves that the former judgment was well founded. Marshal Pelissier is said to have given his opinion that no campaign is possible from the present base of operations. The Russians, more than two months since, held the passes with a force which could resist any assault. The roads were scarped, the hills strengthened by works. By April they might be made absolutely impregnable, or, if determined valour might force them; it would be after a slaughter from which it is the duty of a general to shrink.—What plan of campaign is resolved on will, of course, be a secret till the hour for its execution arrives. It is evident, however, that the allies have a great advantage in possessing two bases accessible to their fleets and impregnable by the enemy. Eupatoria and Yenikale are now converted into two intrenched camps, from both of which Simpheropol and the Russian rear are threatened. The country is not difficult, but the chief difficulty is likely to be the want of water. Perhaps this cause may lead to the abandonment of any operations from Eupatoria. The enemy, on the other hand, has the advantage of a central position from which he may oppose the conveying forces which operate from the points of the coast. We cannot doubt that all which military science can effect, after 18 months of preparation; awaits us in our march against the Russian positions. Though of success there can be no doubt, yet it is the duty of our generals to purchase it as cheaply as possible, and we therefore trust that the deliberations of the council will be wise and farsighted.

There is not much in the annals of the year gone by on which the Catholics of this empire may fairly be congratulated. Here the brand of social and religious inferiority is stamped upon the brow of the Catholic in lines as broad and deeply marked as though no widow wept over the untimely death of her young Catholic husband, fallen in the trenches or on the heights before Sebastopol—as though we had no orphan left fatherless on the world by the loyal heroism of Catholic hearts.—During the past year no burthens have been lightened on our shoulders—no link has been struck off our heavy chains. We are still to pay out of our hard earnings for a Church that we loathe—a Church that calumniate us, persecutes us—a Church from which we accept no service, but at the price of our souls—a Church whose existence is an insult to our manhood, the cause and the proof of our social degradation—a Church that mocks our poverty by the abundance of the wealth it took from us—and employs against us—a Church which is no Church at all, but a robber corporation and a mass of corruption standing in costly paint and gilding. Yes, the past year has left us no better than it found us. The Catholics of the fleet are counted by thousands, but never a Priest shall be permitted to bless their lives or their death on decks of her Majesty's men of war. Protestantism is the religion of the State—Catholics must die for the State, but they must die without the consolations of religion unless they accept the services of a Protestant teacher of error. Our soldiers, our sailors, and the children of both—the criminals in the English prisons and the poor lunatics are doomed to be left still destitute of the aids, and helps, and safeguards, with which the Church of God would have abundantly supplied them. No one of the objects for whose attainment all Catholics must profess to feel concerned has at all been forwarded or reached during 1855. So far from this we have nobody, no real power at work to rid us by equitable legislation of those intolerable grievances. Our representation is in the worst possible condition; it is a sham, a pretence, a mockery, and an insult, and a heavy aggravation of all our calamities. Last session Catholic interests have been totally neglected in the House of Commons; except, in so far as they were assailed and damaged by those statement who daily receive the support and the fealty of our servile representatives.—*Tablet*.

UNITED STATES.

THE AMERICAN ARMY.—The real strength of our army is 15,752 officers and men, which may be increased without further authority to 17,857. Enlistments are now going on that will soon fill up that number.

PROTESTANTISM IN THE UNITED STATES.—Our religious exchanges unite in lamenting the very general decline throughout the country of interest in, and devotion to, the church forms of the day. The New York correspondent of one of them makes the following statement:—"In Philadelphia and Boston, it is believed at least three-fourths of the people habitually absent themselves from church and the same may be said of New Bedford, Fall River, Lowell and Worcester. The religious denomination, too, have greatly decreased within ten years. The membership in the Baptist churches in New York city has decreased 362 since 1846, although the population has increased 261,961. The Presbyterians in ten years, from 1843 to 1853, had decreased in numbers 660. The Methodists in the same time had lost 461, and there was been but one self-supporting Reformed Dutch church planted in this city during fifteen years. Such are some of the statistics of spiritual declension.—*New England Spiritualist*."

*Sion's Advocate*, the organ of the Baptist denomination in Maine, has the following:—"For eleven years there has been, with one exception, a constant decrease of our numbers. The total falling off within that time is more than four thousand, as the following figures will show:—In 1844, the number reported was 23,860. In 1855, 19,792. Decrease, 4,068. Some may attempt to account for this by the fact that there has been an increasingly large emigration from that State within the time above specified. Without doubt, the result which we see is in part due to this cause. But at the same time, it should be remembered that during the decade which includes six years of the eleven, the population of the State increased at the average rate of 8,121 per annum; and that, at this rate of increase, the whole population is greater in 1855, than it was in 1844, by 89,331. Thus, while in 1844, one in twenty-two of the whole population were members of the Baptist churches, in 1855, only one in twenty-nine hold such a relation." Such facts, taken in connection with the unparalleled spread of Spiritualism in all quarters, ought to be considered a most significant "sign of the times." What can be more evident than the Old order of things is passing away and giving place to the New?

LOADING CLERGYMEN AT WASHINGTON.—The Washington correspondent of the *Cincinnati Times*, in speaking of the scramble among a lot of ministers at Washington for the chaplaincy, says:—"The most disgusting sight of all, even to worldly men and hardened sinners, is the struggles of a lot of preachers for the chaplaincy. No less than ten ministers of different denominations are here, intriguing, electioneering, and laboring for the post of chaplain to the Senate or House. This scramble after 'filthy lucre,' by these godly men, is a horrid parody on their meekness, truth, and religious pretences. It is time that this system of chaplaincy at eight dollars per day was abolished. The whole thing is a mockery of solemn subjects; as it is now carried on. Let the ministers of Washington and vicinity be invited to officiate in turn. I have no doubt they would do it cheerfully, fervently." Applicants for the chaplaincy even go so far as to recount the services they have rendered the "party," and promise future labors. They also go into bar-rooms, saloons, boarding-houses, or wherever a member is to be cornered, and there bore him for his vote and influence. This is shameful, degrading, basely hypocritical, yet perfectly true. With such pious examples, no wonder Congress is corrupt!

Can you see that your system of teaching is making any progress? Take the whole population at the beginning of this century, and ascertain the relative proportions of professional Christianity and so-called infidelity, and then follow the ratio of the decrease of one and the increase of the other, and you find that in the same ratio, the end of this century will find America destitute of a Church. You are preaching to old women and young children; you are not preaching to the energetic men and women of this generation.—*Christian Spiritualist*.