

News Department.

From Papers by R. M. Steamer America, Jan. 5.

NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE.

The *Morning Post* of Monday states on authority that on the 27th ult. Count Esterhazy communicated to Count Nesselrode the Austrian ultimatum. The Vienna correspondent of the *Times* makes a similar statement, with the addition that three weeks has been allowed for a reply. The *Post* says "In a few days" we shall hear of its acceptance or rejection by Russia, evidently anticipating the latter:—

"The choice of peace or war now lies before the Czar, and Europe awaits the decision with anxiety. If the Emperor Alexander consent to accept the issue of the war as it now stands—if he consent to the annihilation of Russian maritime power in the Black Sea and to the obvious measures which are necessary for the security of Turkey and Europe—we shall have peace. But we fear that these questions involve points of pride and dignity which the Czar may feel it as yet impossible to concede to the victorious arms of an enemy. Now, in the instance of the all-important neutralisation of the Black Sea, we have reason to know that Russia is ready to consent to that if pressed upon her by the voice of Europe; and with respect to other demands, they would probably be acceded to if urged by a great coalition of nations, to whose will and to whose verdict she might, as it were proudly yield—even as the houses of Austria and of Bourbon had to yield in their time of power, and give pledges to the nations that they would not abuse their overwhelming force to effect universal empire."

Prussia it is that is in the way, and is to be treated accordingly:—

"The demands of England and France are known and are distinct. Austria approves them, and presses for Russia's acceptance. Half Germany follows Austria. The other half follows, or rather stands still with, Prussia; and Prussia—does nothing. Were she our friend, she would back our terms; were she Russia's friend, she would advise her to accept them, and yield now to the general demand what later we should enforce at the point of the sword. But the wretched diplomacy of Prussia is an obstacle to all. One day she pretends to lend an ear to our cause, and the next her Generals, in full uniform, their breasts glittering with Russian decorations, are to be seen at the Russian Embassy, at Berlin, swelling the chorus of *Te Deum* in honour of the fall of Kars. The vacillating King—who has not the courage to act, on the one hand, as becomes the father of his people; on the other, as becomes the uncle of his nephew; who is deaf now to the behest of his heart, now to the voice of his duty—wavers as a feeble cunning dictates, and aims only at achieving a contemptible impotence—a dishonourable neutrality.

"But this must and shall have an end. Such power as Prussia has, she shall exert on one side or the other, and if she will not voluntarily quit, she must be forced from her neutrality. There is now in England such a fleet as the world never before saw. "There is in France," said the Emperor Napoleon to his Imperial Guard, as they made, on Saturday, their triumphal entry into Paris—"there is now in France a numerous and veteran army ready to show itself where circumstances may demand," and we tell the King of Prussia that 'circumstances demand' that end shall be put to the traffic of Russian commerce which enriches his kingdom, and the traffic of contraband of war which enables Russia to continue the war. The vastness of Russia is her great protection; it is otherwise with the realm of the Hohenzollerns. It is easier to reach Berlin than Moscow; and in the coming campaign, so vast is now our strength that the greater our enemy the greater will be our victory. We will rather fight and conquer two open foes, than have to contend with one enemy aided and supplied by a hostile neutral. This is how matters stand now, and we like to look them in the face. From the first we have been open—our purposes as plain and open as our determination firm. And thus, too, it is with the ally with whom we have stood 'shoulder to shoulder' in this great contest, and who acts with us in all things in a spirit worthy of the noble nation of which he is the head. We believe we may state, without indiscretion, that M. Von Seebach, the Saxon Minister in Paris, who has recently gone to St. Petersburg, bears thither the words which were addressed to him by the Emperor Napoleon, in an audience recently accorded, and in which the Emperor told M. Von Seebach that the Emperor Alexander might rest assur-

ed that under no circumstances whatever would he ever abandon the English alliance, to which he was firmly wedded, and from which no intrigue should ever divorce him.

"Russia may, therefore, abandon the hope she has even yet entertained of separating the allies, who have been, are, and will be, as one.

"The Emperor Napoleon has well chosen this moment to make to his troops a speech whose warlike tone will thrill to the heart of the nation. If Russia can abate her pride and yield to our terms, we shall be glad for peace sake; but if she cannot agree to the conditions which she knows as well as we do to be necessary, we shall face the coming campaign with the more ardour that we shall obtain, we are convinced, a success transcendently great; and conjointly with this, we shall have an opportunity of teaching Prussia a lesson she will not forget, and of showing her not only the danger, but the penalty, which a first-rate Power incurs when it abandons its position, and that bolder views are not more fatal to their owners than hypocrisy and cowardice."

The Vienna correspondent of the *Times* says that—

"By the cession of so much of the territory of Bessarabia as is necessary to secure to all nations the free navigation of the Danube, is meant the cession of that part of Bessarabia which lies between the Fortress of Clotyn on the north, the Salt Lake Sasjk on the south, and the Pruth on the west."

"The Vienna *Presse* gives the following as the proposals—"the result of a perfect understanding between Austria and the Western Powers." The proposals contain—

"1. The relinquishment of the Russian Protectorate over the Danubian Principalities and the conditions essential to a securing of a new order of things there. This difficult point, which is already in process of being carried out, is drawn up so decisively and so clearly, that in case of its acceptance every prejudicial influence on the part of Russia, on the deliberations as to the regulation of the affairs of the Principalities, is excluded at once. Russia is required simply to give her assent to the arrangements about to be made, without participating in any deliberation on the subject.

"2. Cession of a portion of Bessarabia, to such an extent that Russia would be not only removed from the delta of the Danube, but would have to give up her entire position on that river. The geographical line for the future Russian frontier is traced on a map appended to the papers, according to that the Russian frontier would be considerably thrust back.

"Neutralisation of the Black Sea, without any Russian fortresses and arsenals on its coasts: at the mouths of the Danube, however, there is to be a station for vessels of war of small burden, for the purpose of marine police.

"4. Common protection of the Christian subjects of the Porte.

"All the above points have been proposed by Austria; the following having been added by the Western Powers:—Admission of Consuls into the harbours of the Black Sea, and an undertaking on the part of Russia never for the future to erect any fortifications on the Aland Isles. The term allowed to Russia by Count Esterhazy, who is expected to arrive in St. Petersburg on the 24th or 25th, is very short, and in ten days the decision must be made. Should the proposals be rejected, the immediate breaking off of diplomatic relations between Russia and Austria would ensue."

The *Journal de Francfort* has the following in a letter from Berlin, Dec. 25:—

"After Count Esterhazy had left Vienna, the Emperor Napoleon, at the request of a mediating Power, decided to modify the conditions laid down relative to the neutralisation of the Black Sea. This is the cause of Baron Seebach's journey to St. Petersburg. In political circles it is considered that the hopes of peace have now acquired a firm basis."

In copying this paragraph, the Vienna *Bourse Gazette* says—

"Baron Seebach is not charged to transmit propositions modified on second thoughts, but to enlighten Russia as to the sincerity of the pacific dispositions of France. As to the propositions which are the object of Count Esterhazy's mission, they are the result of an understanding between the contracting parties of the treaty of the 2nd of December, and could not be separately modified by any one of the three parties."

The *Globe* says—"We need scarcely warn our readers against accepting as correct this German gossip as to the object of Baron Seebach's mission."

The *Nord*, of Brussels, publishes the following tele-

graphic despatch, dated Berlin, Sunday evening, Dec. 30:—

"A circular emanating from the Imperial Chancery of St. Petersburg, dated the 10th (22nd) of December, announces that the Emperor consents to the third point of the guarantees formulated at the Vienna Conference, regulated in the following manner.

"1. The principle of the closing of the Straits is to be maintained.

"2. No flag of war shall be admitted into the Black Sea, except that of the naval forces which Russia and Turkey may think it advisable to maintain there by common agreement.

"3. The amount of these forces will be fixed by a direct agreement between Russia and Turkey without the ostensible participation of the other Powers.

"The news of an armistice is false."

It will be seen elsewhere that Friday's *Gazette* announces that Major-General Sir Colin Campbell, G.C.B., serving with the rank of Lieutenant-General in Turkey, is to have the local rank of General in Turkey.

The same *Gazette* contained two important announcements respecting the war—one, that "the blockade of all ports, roads, havens, and creeks belonging to the enemy was entirely raised on the 10th instant;" and the other, that the Lords of the Council have been pleased to prohibit the exportation of saltpetre and nitrate of potash (articles extensively used in the manufacture of naval and military stores) "to her Majesty's colonies and plantations in North America, including the West Indian islands, as well as to all to reign countries."

THE CRIMEA.

A despatch is published in the *Paris Moniteur* from Marshal Pelissier, giving full particulars of the late skirmish in the valley of Baidar. Acting, probably, on information received from the Tartars, the enemy conceived the idea of carrying off one or more of the French outposts. With this view, a Russian column, composed of 2,500 foot and 500 horse, moved from the valley of the Upper Belbek into the Baidar valley, and, surprising an outpost of twelve men, placed at the junction of the Baga and Ourkust roads, fell, before daybreak on the 7th, upon the grand guard of the French stationed at Baga. They were steadily resisted by the French under Chef de Bataillon Richebourg; the latter reserved their fire until the enemy were near, and imposed upon them by their steadiness. Turning to their left, the enemy attempted to penetrate between Baga and Savatka, but met with no better success. In the meantime, their right wing had moved upon Ourkus, the left post of the French; but finding two companies of Chasseurs-à-pied posted on a hillock on their right flank, they hesitated:—

"On perceiving this indecision the charge was sounded along the whole line, and from Baga as well as from Ourkust our troops (two companies of the 7th Battalion of Chasseurs-à-pied, under Chef de Bataillon Maurice) threw themselves against the enemy, who were compelled to beat a retreat, and were pursued through the woods nearly as far as the ridges which encompass the valley. At the same time that the Russians attacked Baga and Ourkust 200 infantry and about 150 Cossacks, descending by the Caden-Otar road, attempted a diversion on the left of Ourkust, but they found two companies of the 8th Chasseurs-à-pied to stop their advance, and, after two or three bayonet charges they turned heel. Captain Pichon, who commanded those companies, and who killed three Russians with his own hand, displayed on this occasion his usual vigor. On the first musket-shots General d'Autemarre had sent General Niol, with two battalions and a squadron, to reinforce the line attacked. But on the arrival of these reserves on the scene of action the enemy was already completely routed; at 9 a.m. all was over.

"Our troops and their commanders, Monsieur le Maréchal, did their duty well; they were full of resolution and intelligence, and this is what made the success so quick and so decisive, even against superior forces.

"The Russians left in our hands 150 killed, wounded, or prisoners. The number of the latter is twenty-eight; that of the wounded taken to our ambulance is seventeen, two of whom are officers. Yesterday morning eighty killed had been buried, a search was going on for those that might have fallen among the brushwood. Our loss, even including the twelve men of the outpost that was surrounded, and four Chasseurs d'Afrique captured between Baga and Ourkust, is much less than that of the enemy. We only had two men killed and eleven wounded, one of whom is an officer.