

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

FRANCE.

It is generally understood that the Emperor's preparations for departure for the Crimea were completed, and that he would leave in April. Hopes still existed, nevertheless, that his intentions would change.

PARIS, March 20.—The Emperor has just distributed his colors to 7,000 of the Imperial Guard. In the course of his speech he said:—Soldiers! the army is the true nobility: it preserves intact the traditions of national glory and honor.

Reliable advices from Paris represent the Emperor as absolutely "possessed" by the idea of taking Sebastopol; and as incessantly studying the means, surrounded by charts, plans, and other accessories.

We (Daily News) understand that there is a renewed expectation of an early visit of the Emperor of the French to this country, and that the Empress will probably be the guest of her Majesty at Buckingham Palace shortly after Easter.

ALLEGED SECRET VISIT OF THE EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH TO ENGLAND.—If some well-informed people were not contending for the probability of the fact, that the Emperor Napoleon has paid a rapid visit incognito to England, we would dismiss the rumor as not worth a moment's attention.

On Lord Clarendon's arrival at the camp of Boulogne on the 3rd inst., he found before he had many minutes' conversation with Louis Napoleon, that his powers were inadequate. The Emperor felt irritated, and instantly proposed a visit incognito to England, that he might personally, from the lips of her Majesty and Lord Palmerston, know the precise feeling and intentions of England in regard to certain events of great moment to Europe.

RUMOR.—A letter from Berlin, says:—"On the occasion of the Universal Exhibition of Paris, there will be held in the French capital, a meeting of the representatives of all the Protestant confessions in the world."—There won't be room for them all.

GERMANY.

The Augsburg Gazette says:—"Austria has declared to the Western powers (par une note obligatoire) that if the conferences should not result in the re-establishment of peace, the situation provided for by article 5 of the treaty of the 2d of December would be in force," that is to say, that Austria should declare war against Russia.

Religious Communities multiply in Germany. In the diocese of Cologne we count already fifty-four, of which ten are convents of men and forty-four of women. One only of these convents—that of the Carmelites at Cologne—is devoted to contemplation, the rest are occupied in active works of charity, as the education of youth or care of the sick.

The Rev. Jesuit Fathers are now established at Tyneau and at Presburg. The Daughters of St. Vincent of Paul multiply greatly. They have convents now at Szathnar-Pinkafeld, Pesth, Szegedin-Szegsard, Wesprim, Guns, Stuhl-Weisenbourg, Eunkirchen, Totis, &c. Mgr. Emeric de Palugyay, Bishop of Neutra, is about to build them a convent.

A distinguished writer, M. Augustus Lewald, and the Pastor of a free congregation, M. Giese, have been received into the bosom of the Catholic Church, the latter at Munster.

The German papers inform us that Mgr. the Archbishop of Freiburg has, by a recent circular, permitted the Curés of his archdiocese to communicate with the high Ecclesiastical Council at Carlsruhe upon questions relative to the Ecclesiastical endowments. Except in this case, all communication with the excommunicated body remains interdicted.

PROTESTANTISM IN GERMANY.—The German correspondent of the Christian Times says:—"Our friends abroad do not understand why religious liberty makes no progress among us, but we must repeat, again and again, that it is impossible under the present order of things. As long as the National Church is a privileged corporation, governed by the State, which maintains for that Church an exclusive exercise of worship, and a monopoly of souls, all dissent assumes the character of revolt, and Government regards it as a State within a State, eluding their control. They have the same fear of religious as of

political liberty, the one will only flourish with the other. Unhappily, the ministers of the National Church, to whom this monopoly is not displeasing, are nearly all in favor of the national system.

The Scottish Ecclesiastical Journal thus speaks of the state of religion in the Duchy of Nassau:—"The established 'Evangelical Church of Nassau' consists of a Bishop, thirty Deans (analogous to our rural deans), and about two hundred Pfarrers, or parish ministers. These are all appointed and salaried by the Ducal Government. The Bishop is permitted to recommend on a vacancy; but the patronage is absolutely in the Government, and not unfrequently exercised without reference to the Bishop. The latter, having no episcopal consecration, nor, consequently, any other spiritual functions than the rest of the clergy, is merely a church officer, removable by the secular power, to which exclusively he owes his authority. It does not even appear that the Bishop can withhold ordination from the nominee of the Government, since this office, as well as the consecration of churches, though ordinarily assigned to the Bishop, may be performed by any other minister. In fact the Bishop is only the Duke's 'Minister of Public Worship,' and his Highness is at once head, middle and tail of his thoroughly Erastian establishment. The Grand Duke of Baden, in a proclamation issued in 1824, boldly styles himself 'Bishop and Sovereign of the Evangelical Church.'

The visitations of the clergy are held by the Deans, who report to the Bishop. There is no synodical action, but a Church Senate is nominated by the Duke (three of its members being ministers), and by this court a minister may be suspended or deprived for moral offences, or for violation of Church discipline. This tribunal, however, has no cognizance of doctrine, nor is there any authority professing to make laws in matters of faith. The ultra-Protestant maxim is thoroughly maintained, that no man may judge another in respect to his faith. The New Testament is acknowledged as the sole rule of faith; but the voice of the Church on this subject is weak and hesitating in the extreme. No catalogue of the canonical Books is authorized; and their inspiration is very imperfectly asserted. It is open to any minister to dispute the authorship even of the four Gospels, as well as to impugn the genuineness of particular passages, and introduce new interpretations of others. All this is extremely unsatisfactory. The door is plainly left open for the return of the Rationalist heresies: and in point of fact there would seem to be no guarantee for the orthodoxy of the ministers beyond public opinion, and the summary authority of the Duke. His highness, it is clear, may cashier any minister, from the Bishop downward, at a moment's notice. This is the real, and in its measure, no doubt, a very efficient guarantee for the maintenance of the authorized views.

ITALY.

A REVOLUTIONARY PRIEST ACCUSED OF MURDER.—A trial of some interest, from the fact of both the victim and his suspected murderer having been men in holy orders, is now going on in Genoa, and likely to last for many days more. The prisoner, a priest, named Filippo Maineri, is accused of the murder of another priest, of the name of Bartolomeo Bottaro, who was proved to have died from the effects of poison on the 23rd of August, 1853. The accused seems to have long led a disreputable life, and to have been mixed up in political movements since 1821. He was at Milan during the five days, and excited the people by his harangues. He was equally active in Genoa in 1849. He accompanied Garibaldi to Rome in the capacity of military chaplain, and, being suspected there of treason, he suffered nearly two months' imprisonment. After the restoration of the Papal Government, he again visited Rome, and was arrested by order of the Cardinal Vicar as a follower of Mazzini, but was soon released. Returned to Genoa, he affected a total reform of habits and political opinions, by which means he gained the friendship and pity of many respectable persons of different classes and parties; but, having written some pamphlets incurring the ecclesiastical censure, he once more fell into disgrace with his superiors in the Church.

SARDINIA.—The Morning Post correspondent states that in its progress through the senate, the Convent Suppression Bill is, according to the latest news likely to be subjected to a modification. It is proposed that the present members of those religious retreats shall be allowed to remain, but that in future a limit shall be put to the number of the various sacred orders. The Opinione of Turin states that a new proclamation of Mazzini is being circulated at Genoa. It is addressed to the Piedmontese army, and recommends it, though in obscure language, to betray its duty.

SPAIN.

The report is, that Mgr. Franchi, Nuncio of the Pope, is about to present to the Government a protest against the basis of the Constitution relative to religion and the projected sale of ecclesiastical property.—La Espana.

RUSSIA.

On the 7th of March the corps diplomatique waited upon the new Emperor at the Imperial Winter Palace. The Emperor advanced into their midst, and in a firm and expressive voice first thanked them for the sympathy they had evinced on the occasion of the terrible calamity which had befallen Russia. He then said that in ascending the throne he was animated by the same sentiments as the Emperor Nicholas, his father, and the Emperor Alexander, his uncle. He added, that the views of his father were not always well understood, and that latterly wrong conceptions had been formed at times of his policy; that policy was a Conservative policy. "If the Holy Alliance," he said, "no longer exists, I

hope that the principle upon which it rested may still prevail, and serve as a link of union between the different states. For my part," he said, "I am disposed to give peace to Europe, if honorable conditions are offered to Russia; but if the conditions offered are not so, I prefer perishing to accepting them."

The New Prussian Gazette reports that a speech made by the Emperor Alexander II. in the Senate had produced a great sensation at St. Petersburg. The Emperor had communicated to the senators that he had for the last ten years taken a part in the government, and had cognizance of the plans of his father, according to which there could be no expectation of a change being made in the policy or in the administration.

The following information, which comes in a letter from St. Petersburg, is dated the 9th:—"The acts of the Government, and especially the official words of the new Emperor, tend to show more and more clearly the line of conduct which he purposes to follow. All these speeches, addressed at the present moment to the representatives of the different bodies and administrations of the state, may be condensed in these two words, 'Je maintiendrai;' or in other words, 'I am firmly resolved to march in the way traced out by my father.' The evening before he addressed the diplomatic corps, the Czar appeared at the Council of State. There, for more than half an hour, he spoke on the present situation of affairs with an eloquence and precision of language which struck every one present. His warlike address to the officers of the Guards, who assembled to take the oath of allegiance to him, was also much remarked; and the deputation of the nobility having presented themselves, in order to render an account to his Majesty of the election of the chiefs of the militia, were harangued in their turn with much warmth. This discourse terminated thus:—"I solemnly declare that I will not give up a single inch of Russian territory to our enemies. I will take good care to prevent their penetrating further on the soil of our country—and never, never—may my hand wither first!—I will affix my signature to a treaty which shall bring the slightest dishonor on the national honor." These words were spoken with a tone and energy of vehemence which excited among all present the most rapturous applause.

The Patrie publishes a despatch from Posen of the 17th March, stating that the grand recruitment, decreed by the Emperor of Russia, had been enforced throughout Russian Poland with extreme rigor during the night of the 12th.

The Prussian Correspondence contains a letter from Warsaw, which states that the forces intended for the occupation and defence of the Russian coasts of the Baltic are to be raised to 140,000 men, and that the regiments last ordered to the north are already on their way there. A great number of men are employed, the letter states, in fortifying and arming Riga.

A grave event has just occurred at Moscow: The large bell of the tower of Ivan-Velik, in the Kremlin, fell to the ground at the moment when the ceremony of swearing allegiance and fidelity to the new Emperor was going on, and by its fall crushed nearly 100 persons. For people so superstitious as the Russians, this disaster has appeared a most sinister omen, and the letter which gives an account of the event states that the effect on the public mind has been that of great consternation.

SEAT OF WAR.

THE PORTE THROWS OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF PEACE.—According to unreliable intelligence from Constantinople, of March 12th, further complications may arise from the attitude taken by the Turkish Government. It is stated that Arif Effendi has received instructions to maintain the undiminished sovereignty of the Porte over the Dardanelles. He is also to protest against the Christians of the Empire being placed under any foreign protection. The Porte desires the participation of Prussia in the Conferences of Vienna.

Ali Pacha, Minister of Foreign Affairs, has been summoned by telegraph, to Vienna.

MORTALITY AT CONSTANTINOPLE.—A new and fatal disease has made its appearance here. The cause of death is said to be cholera; but it appears to be a painless malady, which carries off the victim in a few hours. Many persons have lately died of this somewhat mysterious disease, and rumors have spread abroad that the plague has once more visited Constantinople, but that the authorities and the doctors do not wish the truth to be known. But this is only one of the reports which the present excited state of men's minds leads them to credit without examination. If there be anything new in the disease, it will probably be found to resemble the fever which carried off the Turks in such numbers at Balaklava. The blackness of the body, and the suddenness of the death, seem to denote some connection between the two maladies.

AUSTRALIA.

The steamer ARGO arrived at Plymouth on Thursday night, with dates from Sydney to January 2nd, Adelaide 3rd, and Melbourne 9th. She brings specie and gold dust to the value of £310,914. By this arrival we learn that business affairs at Melbourne are anything but satisfactory. The riots at the Ballarat diggings had ceased. There had been no fresh outbreaks. Those who had taken up arms against the government were the lower classes of diggers.

THE PEACE CONFERENCES.

The principal topic of interest at the present moment in Europe is, of course, the Peace Congress assembled at Vienna, for the purpose of negotiating, if possible, peace. As will be seen by the extracts given below, the hinge point of the negotiations will prob-

ably be the third point, relative to the Black Sea. If the Allies abandon their pretensions that the fortifications of Sebastopol must be demolished, there will be an end of hostilities, and if not, Russia will probably not yield, and the war will continue. Although it appears probable that the first point has been virtually settled, and that Russia has consented to give up the exclusive protectorate of the Principalities, nevertheless it cannot with certainty be known, as the members of the Congress have solemnly pledged themselves to observe the strictest secrecy respecting everything that may occur during the Conferences, and the Vienna papers have been requested—and in such matters a request is equivalent to a command—not to give any information relative to the Conferences; and, in order that the world may be left in the dark as long as possible, it has been resolved that incorrect news which may appear in the foreign organs of the press shall not be refuted. The Times, therefore, warns its readers that the "Western world is likely to be inundated with incorrect news;" and the Morning Post says:—"We have already warned the public against too ready a belief in peace as certain to be the result of the Congress of Vienna; and we would now also put them on their guard against the false reports circulated—both at home and abroad—with reference to the proceedings of the Congress. Yesterday, for instance, it was announced that 'The first of the four points was on the 17th, definitely settled and adopted by all parties.' This is quite erroneous, as are the pretended accounts that have been published of what passed, and who spoke, at the various conferences. The first of the four bases on which a peace is to be negotiated, runs thus:—

"Art. I. Abolition of the exclusive protectorate of Russia in Moldavia and Wallachia, the privileges accorded to these provinces by the Sultan being placed under the guarantee of the five powers."

The second relates to the free navigation of the Danube, and the third to the destruction of Russian naval supremacy in the Black Sea. On these points will the difficulties arise. The Vienna correspondent of the London Times says:—"It is probable that the second point—the free navigation of the Danube—will be entered into at the next Conference, and it is not likely to present any insurmountable difficulties. When you hear from me that the third point—that relative to the Black Sea—has been definitely settled, you may safely conclude that peace is not far distant—but not until then. A person who has a perfect insight into what is passing behind the scenes states that the representatives of the Powers are anxious to postpone the discussion of the third point as long as possible, because they have a presentiment that it will present difficulties which it will be impossible to overcome—at least, with the pen.

(From the Times' Paris Correspondent.)

There are, among influential persons here, a war party and a peace party; that is, a party who believe that peace may be honorably made without the taking of Sebastopol. Those who are for bolder measures declare that it would not only be an indelible stain on the nation not to take that fortress, but that even the authority of the Emperor of the French could not bear up against the obloquy which its abandonment, under any circumstances would produce. Nothing could convince the public that to quit the Crimea without the fall or surrender of Sebastopol, after the immense losses we have sustained, and the immense labor we have undergone, would not amount to a defeat or an avowal of our impotence. The war, they say, must be carried on at any cost, and Sebastopol must be captured and destroyed. I can perceive, however, that persons who were some few weeks ago vehement in their opposition to any compromise, are somewhat more moderate. Whether it arises from a conviction that the real difficulties have not diminished, but on the contrary, increased, I do not know; such however, is the fact.

(From the London Times, March 24th.)

As far as the European powers are concerned, the second and third points, relating to the navigation of the Danube and the abatement of the preponderance of Russia in the Black Sea, are the most critical; and, although the second may readily be conceded, the third is the turning point of the whole negotiation and of the war itself. It is obviously indispensable to obtain from Russia a solemn engagement that she shall no longer maintain in the Black Sea a vast naval armament, permanently threatening the existence of her weaker neighbor, and existing for no other purpose but that of premeditated aggression, since, by the nature of things, and by the Convention of the Straits, the Russian possessions in the Black Sea are secure from attack. On that point—the reduction of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea—we trust that the plenipotentiaries of the Allied courts are prepared to take their stand, and the result of the conferences for peace probably turns even more on the question of the fleet than on that of the fortress. Our diplomatists cannot determine the reduction of the place—that duty rests with the army; but in no case can we assent to terms which would suffer Russia to reconstruct a squadron, to be absolute mistress of the Euxine.—It only remains to be added that in these conferences the Prussian government has taken, and is likely to take, no part. The attempts which have been made by Prussia to place herself on the same footing as the great powers of Europe, without contracting the same engagements, have entirely failed; the negotiations for that purpose are at an end; and we readily leave her in that isolation which is the natural consequence of the policy she has pursued.

(From the Daily News.)

We cannot but look upon peace as a remote and improbable event. The demolition of Sebastopol is the only material guarantee that can be afforded for the diminution of the undue preponderance of Russia in the Black Sea. Upon the success of the attempt to reduce Sebastopol, our ally, the Emperor of the French, may be regarded as having staked his throne; for failure in that attempt might awaken a spirit in the French army that would be fatal to him. But to the demolition of Sebastopol no Russian government can or will submit, unless under extreme pressure. The Russians would prefer the destruction of St. Petersburg to that of Sebastopol. The possession of the latter they regard as ensuring to them the indefinite extension of their empire towards the south. St. Petersburg, on the contrary, is a cul-de-sac, which leads nowhere; and the Russians know well that it is pretty certain to be destroyed by natural causes before another half century passes over their heads. Here, then, will be the stumbling-block in the Vienna negotiations. With many a grimace Russia may swallow the conditions of the Allies relating to the free navigation of the Danube, and the renunciation of the ex-