

## FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

## FRANCE.

The *Moniteur* has at length published the Czar's reply to the autograph letter of the French Emperor; its tone is such as to preclude all idea of an amicable arrangement. The following passage is significant:—

"Whatever your Majesty may decide, menaces will not induce me to recede. My confidence is in God, and my right; and Russia will prove herself in 1854, what she was in 1812. My conditions are known at Vienna; that is the only basis upon which I can allow discussion."

M. Drouyn de L'Huys, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, has issued a circular, in which the pretensions of Russia to the exercise of a Protectorate over the Greek subjects of the Turkish empire, and in the interests of Christianity, are ably disposed of.

"Russia is too oblivious," says this document, "in the reproaches she makes against others, that she is far from exercising in her own empire, in reference to the sects not professing the dominant faith, a tolerance equal to that to which the Sublime Porte has a good right to lay honorable claim; and that were she to display less apparent zeal for the Greek religion beyond her frontiers, and more charity towards Catholics at home, she would better obey the laws of Christ, which she now so pompously invokes."

By the end of March upwards of 40,000 men will have left the different French ports for the seat of war. The choice of the Commander-in-Chief has not yet been made. The government has abandoned the idea, once entertained, of appointing Prince Napoleon as a sort of honorary Commander-in-Chief, with a strong staff of experienced officers under him. Prince Napoleon will command the reserve, which, though not precisely the place nearest to the enemy, is a very important position.

The prospects of war seem much to have increased the popularity of Louis Napoleon, and the proposal for a new loan of 250,000,000 francs has been favorably entertained.

## SWEDEN.

Some movements of the Russian marine having led to an apprehension that a *coup de main* was intended against the island of Gotland, the Swedish government has sent a considerable detachment to the defence of that important position. Sweden still proclaims its intentions of perfect neutrality much to the displeasure of the Czar who, it is said, is determined not to acknowledge such a neutrality. The Northern Powers may therefore soon be compelled to join the Western Alliance.

## RUSSIA.

The authorities of St. Petersburg are indefatigable in their exertions to inflame the warlike passions of the people. The aid of religion is invoked, and the clergy loudly call upon the faithful to take up arms in defence of the orthodox faith. The Russian government has prohibited the exportation of grain from the Black Sea ports.

The Czar has published the following Manifesto:—

"We, Nicholas I., &c.

"We have already informed our beloved and faithful subjects of the progress of our disagreements with the Ottoman Porte.

"Since then, although hostilities have commenced, we have not ceased sincerely to wish, as we still wish, the cessation of bloodshed. We even entertained the hope that reflection and time would convince the Turkish Government of its misconceptions, engendered by treacherous instigators, in which our just demands, founded on treaties, have been represented as attempts on its independence, and veiling intentions of aggrandizement. Vain, however, have been our expectations, so far.

"The English and French Governments have sided with Turkey, and the appearance of the combined fleets at Constantinople served as a further incentive to its obstinacy; and now both the Western Powers, without previously declaring war, have sent their fleets into the Black Sea, proclaiming their intention to protect the Turks, and to impede the free navigation of our vessels of war for the defence of our coasts. After so unheard-of a course among civilized nations, we recalled our embassies from England and France, and have broken off all political intercourse with those Powers.

"Thus England and France have sided with the enemies of Christianity against Russia, who is combating for the orthodox faith.

"But Russia will not betray her holy calling; and if enemies infringe our frontiers, we are ready to meet them with the firmness bequeathed to us by our forefathers. Are we not the same Russian nation of whose exploits the memorable events of 1812 bear witness?

"May the Almighty assist us to prove this by deeds. With this hope, combating for our persecuted brethren, followers of the faith of Christ, with one accord let all Russia exclaim—'O, Lord, our Redeemer! whom shall we fear? May God be glorified and his enemies be scattered.'"

**ALLIANCE BETWEEN RUSSIA AND DOST MAHOMED.**—The intelligence of the establishment of a Russian army on the Oxus is confirmed; also, that an alliance, offensive and defensive, has been concluded between the Russians and Dost Mahomed, the Khan of Khiva, and the Khan of Bokhara.

**RUSSIAN TOLERANCE.**—The kind of tolerance that prevails in the Russian empire, the government of which has now drawn the sword on behalf of the privileges of the "Orthodox Church" in the East, may be judged from the fact that the Catholic Missionaries in Transcaucasia have only recently been

most peremptorily again commanded to make no proselytes. Only a short time ago a large number of Suanetes and Abchases, nearly all of which tribes are still heathens, applied to the Prior of the Convent in Kutais requesting to be baptised. The Prior was obliged to decline and to send them away, for transportation to Siberia awaits any Priest that dares to convert a worshipper of idols into a Roman Catholic Christian.—*Daily News.*

## TURKEY.

We have nothing authentic from the Danube.—The report of the fall of Kalafat, and the massacre of its garrison by the Russians, has not been confirmed; but from the concentrations of troops, an attack from the Russian army was expected, and Kalafat is not supposed to be impregnable. The rumor had caused much painful excitement in political circles.

Amongst the fighting intelligence, we read the following, which does not say much for Russian military discipline.

For several days a Turkish corps of 4000 strong had been posted in front of the village of Cuperceni, a mile distant from Kalafat. On this corps the Russians determined to make an onslaught during the night of the 16th. For this purpose two Russian columns were brought up, each 4000 to 5000 strong, one by the road which leads to Kalafat, from the village of Scribezi, and the other from Poiso, to advance unexpectedly on the Turks, surprise and cut them to pieces. The Russian column reached this position by 4 o'clock, A.M., from whence they were only half an hour's march from the Turkish pickets. The second column seems to have missed the direction by missing the road, or to have come to this point long after its time. At any rate, the columns, led in the obscurity of the foggy night, each concluded the other to be a body of Turks and instantly opened a fire with the most deadly effect, pressing on towards each other, it came soon to a close. This ill conducted combat lasted for an hour and a half when day dawned, showing the combatants the error they had committed. The loss is reckoned by the Russians themselves at several hundreds. The Turkish corps soon started to arms, ready for action at any moment, but did not advance being unable to account for what was going on in their neighborhood. The Russians drew off as speedily as possible, carrying off their wounded.

## THE WAR.

From his sick chamber in St. Petersburg, the Czar has despatched a reply to the overtures of Napoleon III. He peremptorily rejects the conditions, and declares the acceptance of Prince Menscekinoff's ultimatum indispensable.

The German Powers still hesitate; but circumstances appear to be insensibly drifting them into the whirlpool. Prussia speaks indignantly of "the late proceedings of the Czar;" Austria dreads that if she separates from France on the Danube, she will have to cope single-handed with the revolutionary spirit beyond the Alps. England and France continue their military preparations on a scale which anticipates one of the bloodiest struggles in history. The British contingent is said, will be increased to twenty-five thousand men; for which regiment after regiment is daily drafted from Ireland; while that of France will amount to eighty-thousand of her best soldiers.

In the meantime, defensive operations have been resumed on the Danube. The Russians have met a signal defeat near Rostishonk; and a later despatch announces the commencement of another battle at the celebrated fortress of Oltenitz. But, on the other hand, the intrigues of Russian emissaries have at last excited a formidable insurrection throughout Greece. Upwards of four thousand men, it is affirmed, have banded together for "the promotion of the Orthodox faith;" and the Government seems to be utterly paralysed. And so the movement marches. *Ca ira.*

From their dream of security the ambition of one colossal despot bids the Kings to awaken and fight for crown and life. And this is not the sole argument of strife. Eating into the very heart of the menaced kingdoms is the popular disaffection which long misrule has provoked and intensified. Once the sword is drawn in the quarrel of the Princes, revolution will raise its hundred armed bands and threaten the life of the Sovereigns who have so long made the people their footstools. For Russia, for France, for Prussia, is the danger of domestic revolution added to the tremendous peril of general war.

"My soldiers," says the Czar, "will do now as they did in 1812." They then penetrated beyond the Alps, and discredited Napoleon, the Master of Europe. It seems the boast of a maniac to threaten the world in arms. But it proclaims and forebodes gigantic efforts and incalculable issues. It is spoken in all the arrogance and confidence of giant ambition and giant resources.

Who can tell how the dominions of the Jailors of the People may be shrunken? Who can tell whose shall be the Sovereignty of India—or how soon the allied Monarchs may find cause of quarrel in the incidents and issues of the tremendous battle?

Mark it—the world has never seen a war so immense and fierce as this of which the year Fifty-four shall witness the first campaigns. Russia has been in earnest from the beginning. She is only realising the policy mapped out to her by the founders of her huge and insatiable power; and no dozen battles will drive back the legions nursed upon the milk of the Hyperborean Bear, once they have gazed upon the dazzling beauty of the East.

And who may tell what England shall achieve, or what she may suffer? Here lies our interest in the case. She has cleared Ireland of two millions of people in seven years. She has, with blind impolicy, depopulated the island which bred her soldiers, rooted them out like vermin, and to the plague which came from God adding the famine fostered and organised by her own hand. And now she expects that we will bear the real weight of the contest by furnishing the men who are to fight. But she expects it in vain.

Her work is on her head.

If she be wise, she will give to this Island yet a national interest in the war. If we be wise and brave she shall.—*Nation.*

## PENANCE.

PRINCIPLES OF LUTHER CONCERNING PENANCE.—PRINCIPLES OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.—CONTRITION. (From the *Western Tablet.*)

Nothing sounds so ill in the ears of the world as the word Penance. Why has not an attempt been made to efface from the Gospel this unfortunate expression? But certainly this is not an easy thing to do. What do we find in Scripture, if not the obligation to resist the impure tendencies of the heart, and to crucify it with its immoderate desires! Of the seven thousand and six hundred verses of the New Testament, there are three thousand, at least, which make penance and mortification the indispensable conditions of salvation for the sinner.

If the law of toilsome expiation were not so frequently and clearly laid down in Scripture, would not the life of Jesus itself, which was only a protracted martyrdom, impose on the Christian the obligation to chastise himself, and follow the footsteps of the *Man of Sorrow*? How could he hope to share the glory of his chief, if he remained a stranger to his sufferings? Yet, it is upon the sufferings of the Mediator that the authors of the Reformation rely, to free sinners from the obligation of sufferings. Christ, according to them, has given satisfaction for our iniquities; why should we afflict our minds and hearts by penances, which would add nothing to the merits of the Redeemer, and would even be injurious to them?

If it was objected, on the other hand, that the object of Christian penance was not alone to expiate sin committed, but to prevent the recurrence of it, and that there is a certain demon, according to the words of Jesus Christ, which can be conquered only by "fasting and prayer." "Leave these fine recipes," answered Luther, "to the stupid Papists; and if you wish to put the devil to flight, always do more than he suggests to you." Let us listen to the Apostle of Wittenberg instructing his followers in his admirable asceticism:—

"Poor Jerome Weller," he writes to a friend who asks him for arms against the devil, "thou hast temptations; they must be overcome. When the devil comes to tempt thee, drink, my friend, drink freely; make merry, sport and sin, in hatred of the evil spirit and to torment him. If he says to thee: Will you not stop drinking? answer him: I will drink glasses full, because you forbid it; I will drink great draughts in honor of Jesus Christ. Imitate me; I never drink so well, I never eat so much, I never enjoy myself so much at table, as when I am vexing Satan. I should really like to find some good new sin, that he may learn, to his cost, that I ridicule everything that is sin, and that my conscience is never oppressed by it. Away with the Decalogue, when the devil comes to torment us! When he breathes into our ear: Thou sinnest; thou art worthy of death and hell! Ah! my God! yes, I know it only too well; what would you tell me? But you will be condemned in the other life. It is not true; I know some one who has suffered and given satisfaction for me; he is called Jesus Christ, Son of God; where he is, there I shall be." The remaining words are too vulgar and indecent to translate.

Let us compare with the vile prescriptions of the apostle of taverns, the salutary remedy which the Catholic Church offers to the Christian who has had the misfortune to violate seriously the engagements contracted in baptism. To free him from the chains of sin, she prescribes for him three things, contrition, confession, satisfaction; of which we shall speak next week.

## GREAT BRITAIN.

The following extract from the "Lenten Indult" from His Excellency the Cardinal Primate of England, shews that the rumors of his not intending to return to England, are without foundation. Some time however might yet elapse before his return:—

NICHOLAS, by the Divine Mercy of the Holy Roman Church of the Title of St. Peter in Vincoli, Cardinal Priest, and Archbishop of Westminster: To our Dearly Beloved Brethren and Children in Christ, the Clergy Secular and Regular, and the Faithful of the said Diocese:

Health and Benediction in the Lord.

Although absent in body, Dearly Beloved in Christ, we are ever present with you in spirit, daily entreating God, at His Holy Altar, for your welfare, and the prosperity of His Holy Church in our diocese and country. But still more especially do we unite ourselves to you, at those periods, when we should be more actively engaged among you in the exercise of our episcopal duties. Such beyond any other is the coming season of Lent, wherein we have been accustomed to take part in your religious occupations, when we have gladly joined you in adoring our beloved Saviour unceasingly exposed upon our Altars: when we "have not spared to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts xx. 27) by preaching His Word; when we have administered, usually to our largest congregations, the Holy Sacrament of Confirmation; and when we have endeavored to celebrate, with all the dignity which our confined limits permit, the mournful and joyful festivities of this time of Grace. To be removed from you at such a period is to us a cause of grief; nor did we contemplate it, when we took our departure from among you. But although we consider it our duty, and it will be great joy to us to return to the exercise of our ecclesiastical functions at home, and labor to the utmost for the spiritual good of the flock committed to us, still we fear that at least a considerable portion of this penitential season will have elapsed, before it is in our power to obtain the parting benediction of the Holy Father, for our journey.

The "Protestant Reformation Society" in a letter signed by its secretary, laments that "its funds are entirely exhausted." A clergyman of the Church of England, the Rev. Mr. Roberts disgusted with the proceedings of the society, recommends it to adopt the following plan for replenishing its exhausted coffers:—

"If the Committee of the Protestant Reformation Society will act according to my suggestion, they will get plenty of funds to meet what they call in their circular 'many urgent appeals.' My suggestion is this: Let the Committee take a room, and let their actors—Dr. Cumming, Mr. Clemenison, and Mr. Miller—exhibit to the public view twenty converts that they have made with many thousands of pounds which have been expended in converting the Romanists. Let the tickets for admission be 5s. each. Let them exhibit these very fortunate converts from Pophish idolatry in a similar manner as Mr. Catlin exhibited those fortunate North American Indians whom

he rescued from the barbarism found amidst the American woods. Let them allow me, and seven other clergymen of the Church of England, to put twenty questions to the converts relative to their conversion, growth in knowledge since their conversion, their conduct towards their neighbours, their landlords, the tradesmen with whom they have dealt since—such as their grocers, bakers, butchers, shoemakers, &c.; and when they have proved themselves to be persons who answer the description given, in 2 Peter, i., of a true convert to Christ, and when they prove themselves to be possessors of the fruits of the spirit spoken of in Galatians, v., I will take certain steps in order to secure for the Society £1 upon an average from every parish in England and Wales—that will bring in to their treasury at once £10,000."

The Secretaries know Mr. Robert's address.

It is gratifying to see that at last the brutal treatment to which the emigrant is exposed from the sordid brutality of ship owners and masters—a treatment which can be compared to nothing save the horrors of the "middle passage"—is attracting general attention on both sides the Atlantic. A late number of the *London Times* has a powerful leader on the subject:—

"The state of emigrant vessels to North America remains in spite of laws and inspectors, in spite of the best measures and best intentions, a disgrace to the civilization of our age and the humanity of our country. Certainly, the figure at which the article in question—a passage to the New World—is offered for sale is not unreasonable. To be carried three thousand miles for £2 10s. or even £3, is not an instance of expensive locomotion, even though the fortunate passenger be required to find his own bedding, and something towards his stock of provisions. But, if the passage be cheap in general possesses that concomitant which a vulgar proverb ascribes to cheapness. We have lying before us at this moment a large number of extracts from a New York paper, in which the newly arrived emigrants, with such skill of penmanship as they may command, display the miseries—we should not exaggerate, if we said the horrors—of their passage. There is a disgusting and repulsive uniformity in the process by which sordid avarice extracts its booty from helpless poverty and ignorance. The emigrant is shewn a berth, a shelf of coarse pine-wood, situated in a noisome dungeon, airless and lightless, in which several hundred persons of both sexes, and all ages, are stowed away on shelves two feet one inch above the other, three feet wide, and six feet long, still reeking from the ineradicable stench left by the emigrants of the last voyage, which no fumigation can remove, no perfume overcome. Still he dreams that this plank, which he has bought and paid for, is his own, and only finds when the anchor is up, and complaint unavailing, that he must share his six feet by three with an unwelcome but fellow. He finds that cleanliness is impossible, that no attempt is made to purify the reeking den into which he has been thrust, and that the thirty days' voyage which he was promised will not, from the rottenness of the rigging and the unsoundness of the hull, be completed in less than sixty. He is lucky indeed if the provisions correspond to sample, if the water be served out according to contract, or if he can prevail upon the cook, selected from among the emigrants, to dress his meals in such a shape that he can eat them without mortal loathing. A system of favoritism, based on corruption, seems to prevail, and the emigrant who cannot satisfy the cupidity of these culinary harpies is often condemned to wait weary hours, or to go without altogether.—Thus it is found that many of the emigrants on landing in America are worn down by abstinence, even if they have escaped the more violent and pressing danger of disease. But lucky indeed are those who do escape? A ship may leave the land without any indications of disease, having satisfied the vigilance of the inspectors under the *Passengers' Act*, and complied literally with the stinted and niggardly provisions of that most narrow and paltry measure; but after a few days have been spent in the pestilential atmosphere created by the festering mass of squalid humanity imprisoned between her damp and steaming decks, the scourge that every day more and more constantly wait upon the uncleanness of crowded, unwashed, and unventilated dwellings, bursts out, and to the miseries of filth, of foul air, of crowding, of darkness, and ceaseless din is added the dreaded presence of cholera. Amid hundreds of men, women, and children dressing, undressing, washing, quarrelling, fighting, cooking, and drinking, are heard the groans and screams of a patient in the last agonies of this plague. This is no imaginary picture: so constant a concomitant has this disease become of the voyage of an emigrant ship to America—so uniformly does it break out after the first three or four days at sea, and so relentless are its ravages, that it has come to be a received theory among persons who feel the necessity of accounting for the fact in a manner as little disgraceful as possible to the proprietors of these floating chamber-houses that the cholera is domesticated in certain degrees of latitude and longitude, that the atmosphere which broods over the waters of the Atlantic is loaded with death, and that between us and America is raised a barrier more formidable than dreaded winds or stormy waves—a barrier of pestilence and infection. It is no time to make theories for the facts multiply fast upon our hands, and demand an explanation of some sort. We have before us a list of twenty-eight ships which reached New York in the month of November last past, all of which on their arrival had cholera on board, and several of which had lost one-ninth of their passengers on the voyage. On board these ships embarked for America 13,762 passengers. Of these 1,141 perished on the voyage, and between four and five thousand were attacked by the cholera, but recovered. No doubt many more would have fallen victims to the scourge had it not been for the enlightened humanity of the American Government, which receives the emigrants on their landing in a building, which, though rude and homely, is a palace compared with the pestilential prison from which they have emerged, refreshing those for whom such treatment is proper with abundance of wholesome food, and transferring those with whom the system has more effectually done its work to a hospital where their constitutions may recover from the treatment of a British or American shipowner."

Lord John Russell has postponed the second reading of the Reform Bill to the end of April, and the ministerial papers openly declare that he has shelved it altogether for this session. A curious fact, indeed, since at the beginning of the session the Cabinet was fully prepared, notwithstanding the threatening political aspects, to go on with the Reform.