

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

FRANCE.

NEW PRESS LAW.—The following is an outline of the new law on the press:—

"It is necessary for every one wishing to publish a journal or periodical to be a Frenchman. Offences of the press are to be tried by the correctional tribunals instead of by jury. In the case of libel the evidence of witnesses will not be admitted before the latter courts. The maximum of caution-money for the daily newspapers is increased to 50,000fr. The stamp duty is fixed at six centimes, and raised to seven centimes for numbers containing a *roman-feuilleton*. Foreign newspapers may enter France after having been authorised by the government; but they will be subjected to the same stamp duty as those published in France. The fines imposed upon newspapers for publishing false news, or for giving an incorrect account of the sittings of the *Corps Legislatif* and the tribunals are to be paid within three days. One condemnation for crime, or two condemnations for delinquency or contravention committed by means of the press, will occasion the suspension of the journal. The signature of articles ceases to be obligatory. Booksellers are obliged to obtain a license."

The signature of the protest against the confiscation decree, seems to have produced an irreparable breach between Louis Napoleon and the Ex-President of the National Assembly. The *Siecle* publishes a list of opposition candidates—Dupont d'Ancre, Genl. Lamoriciere, Genl. Cavaignac, Carnot, Goudehaux, Eugene Sue, and Ferdinand Laseyrie. In support of their election, the *Siecle* says a few words, and which will not be lost upon the intelligent electors of Paris, who read the independent addresses with more avidity now that it is prevented by brute force from speaking out.

It is said to be certain that the state of siege in Paris will be raised immediately after the meeting of the Senate and the Corps Legislative. The meeting of this convention is not yet fixed—the 20th of March and the 5th of May are spoken of, but it appears, however, to be the intention of the Government not to convolve the deliberation of political bodies before having issued all the decrees which it considers necessary for the organisation of a vigorous authority and administration.

SPAIN.

THE EXECUTION OF MERINO, THE SPANISH REGICIDE.—The regicide Merino was placed in capilla. Previously, however, he underwent the ceremony of ecclesiastical degradation. The first part of this ceremony was performed by stripping the criminal of his sacerdotal ornaments; he was then led into the large hall of the court, when with his own hands he took off the bonnet carré of his order, and placed it in the hands of two singing boys, who were assisting. M. Cascallana, Bishop of Astorga, replaced the Archbishop of the diocese at this sad ceremony. His cape, stole, manipule, alb, and soutaine, were then removed from Merino, without his betraying by word or gesture the least emotion. But when his consecrated fingers and the palm of his left hand were scraped according to usage, a paleness came over his countenance, and his whole demeanor was troubled. After this ceremony he was delivered to the keepers of the prison. On the 6th ult. several priests, among others one named Esteve, visited him; and after some general conversation, which was a necessary introduction after the many vain attempts which had been made to engage him upon the subject of religion, spoke to him kindly of his condition and a future state. For a long time he maintained a stoical calmness; and when the tenderness of his visitor at last affected him, it was but to call forth a bitter complaint of his hard lot. He recounted his trials and losses, which he said had exacerbated his mind, and made him misanthropical. Esteve endeavored to divert him from this morbid indulgence of a mere self love; and with that view read to him certain passages from the gospel of John. He said to one of the priests who offered to confess him:—

"I thought some honest friar would have been sent to me for the purpose. As to you, I know you too well to have confidence in your ministry. You are as great a reprobate as I am myself. Your conduct is well known to me. Begone."

Merino at first quietly listened to the second ecclesiastic, but when the latter spoke to him of hell and his crime, he suddenly stopped him, saying:—

"Let us not talk of such nonsense. You no more believe in hell than I do. Leave me quiet. I can dispense with your sermons."

Merino refused to take any substantial food, and, under the pretext of suffering from his stomach, he confined himself to drink a little broth and wine. After this, Merino desired to be left to his own reflections. He passed four or five hours in walking up and down his chamber, lying down every now and then, until in the evening, Senor Esteve again came to see him. He now professed his penitence, and declared his desire to receive the sacrament, which was administered to him.

After the administration of the sacrament to Merino, M. Arrazola tried a last effort to obtain some revelations from him. He asked him whether, before going to another world, he had not something to unburden his conscience of? He replied, "I have already told you, and I repeat it, that the idea of the crime belongs to me alone." He then asked for a pen, and, with a firm hand, wrote as follows to the Queen:—

"MADAM—When this writing comes to your hand, the regicide will have ceased to exist; I shall not, therefore, be suspected, in writing to you, of having wished to solicit pardon or clemency. Your Majesty may live tranquilly; I never had any accomplice."

"MARTIN MERINO."

At this time Senor Ordenez, governor of the province of Madrid; Senor Lopez y Cordova, chaplain of the Duke of San Carlos; Senor Martinez y Sauds, curate of Chamberi, and several others, including the commander of the guard, and the alcade of the prison, were in the chapel of the prison, and conceiving the terms of the document to be neither respectful to royalty nor of a character to re-assure the Queen's mind, drew up the following, which Merino made no objection to sign:—

"SEXORA—Martin Merino, unworthy to count himself among your Majesty's subjects, cannot do less, in order to calm the inquietude of his conscience, than humbly supplicate your Majesty to deign, as a Christian, to forgive him the atrocious injury which in a moment of deplorable error he has had the misfortune to commit against your Majesty's august person. The infinite mercy of the King of Kings causes him to hope to have obtained his pardon; and, in order to die tranquilly, he desires to obtain, or, if not sure of this, at least to implore that of your Majesty. With this object, and in the presence of all those who surround him, whom he entreats to sign with him, he declares that he has had no accomplices, humbly supplicates that you will deign to add a new proof of your Christian charity to so many others which you have given, by casting to perpetual oblivion the horrible attempt of the unhappy

"MARTIN MERINO."

The execution took place on the 7th ult., at an hour after noon, on a high platform in the Campo de Guardias. The criminal was conveyed there on an ass, a priest carrying a crucifix walking on each side. All the city seemed to have come out to cover the road traversed by the procession, but the immense military force present was amply sufficient to ensure order. Merino, dressed in a sulphurous looking robe and a blood red cap, ascended the scaffold and said a few words, which were drowned by the shouts of the crowd, and then taking his place at the post, was executed in an instant by the same process employed in the punishment of Lopez, his countryman, not long before.

The re-establishment of the health of the Queen is so complete that the register on which the persons coming to inquire after her health inscribed their names had been removed. Queen Christina had returned to her place, all danger having ceased.

SWITZERLAND.

The alarm created in Switzerland by the threatening attitude assumed by the French government is becoming every day greater. You are already aware that, in the note presented to the Swiss government by M. Feneelon-Saligne, the French minister in that country, France demands the expulsion of all refugees, the suppression of all clubs and political associations, a strict surveillance over the newspapers, and, what is still more extraordinary, the postponement of the general elections. The ground upon which this last demand is made is, that elections at the present period would agitate the country, and give uneasiness to the neighboring governments. Upon receiving this extraordinary note, the President of the Helvetic Confederation remonstrated mildly against the unwonted harshness of the language used towards the republic, and ventured to hint that the demands themselves were not such as could be honorably complied with by an independent state. Upon which M. Feneelon-Saligne is stated by a Berne paper to have replied, in an insolent tone, that the orders issued by the government which he represented were to be executed and not discussed.—*Cor. of Morning Chronicle.*

BELGIUM.

"The Duke of Bassano, the new French envoy to the court of Belgium, arrived at Brussels on Thursday last. I am able to assure you, on good authority, that one of the demands which M. de Bassano is charged to make from the Belgian government is the removal of the monumental lion from the field of Waterloo, and the demolition of the pyramidal mound of triumph which it crowns. You are aware that soon after the revolution of July the destruction of the same trophy was talked of as a point insisted on by the government of Louis Philippe; and when the French expedition returned from the siege of Antwerp, in passing over the plains of Waterloo, it was expected that they would have taken the lion into their own hands, and hurled the offensive symbol of victorious force from his proud eminence. But they were dissuaded from this violent project by an officer, who suggested that it would be much easier to stamp the trophy with ridicule than to overturn it. Therefore, he proposed that they should knock out the lion's teeth and pare his claws. This practical sarcasm was unanimously approved, and the expressive mutilation forthwith carried into effect. The application now made by Louis Napoleon for the demolition of the trophy makes one recall his laconic declaration before the court of peers, when tried for the seditious attempt at Boulogne. He then said: 'I represent as principle the sovereignty of the people, as system the empire, and as action the retrieval of Waterloo.' The first two points have been carried, and it is certain that no means will be neglected to achieve the last."—*Correspondent of Daily News.*

DESTRUCTION OF LAGOS BY THE BRITISH SQUADRON.—LOSS OF LIFE.

The admiralty despatches, brought to Southampton on Sunday, from the coast of Africa, by the Brazilian mail packet Severn, relative to the affair off Cape Lagos, were considered so important that Lieutenant Scriven, the Admiralty agent of the Severn, was despatched to London with them immediately, in order that no time might be lost in placing them in the possession of the Admiralty.

It is understood that these hostilities were undertaken in consequence of the refusal of the king or chief of that place to sign a treaty for the effectual suppression of the slave trade in his dominions. It

was accordingly determined to attack Lagos, and, after two days fighting, the object was accomplished, and the place nearly destroyed, an immense number of the natives being killed. The chief or king has also been deposed, and another one substituted.

The total number of casualties in the English squadron was 15 killed and 75 wounded.

A PROTESTANT'S IDEAS OF PROTESTANTISM ON THE CONTINENT OF EUROPE.

The following quotation, which we take from a new work, entitled "Letters written during a Tour in Holland and North Germany, in July and August, 1851, by John Howard Hinton, M.A.," conveys a very forcible idea of the existing state of Protestantism on the Continent. The body politic seems in a similarly melancholy predicament to that of some poor patient, whom his medical advisers have bulletined, that "they entertain no hopes of his recovery," consequently his dissolution may be speedily looked for as a natural sequence. The author, Mr. Hinton, it may be necessary to state, and a Dr. Steane, were deputed by the Baptist Union, at their last annual session, to attend the Triennial Conference of Baptist Churches existing in Germany and Denmark, to be held at Hamburg, consequently his remarks may be taken as the honest opinions he formed, from what came actually under his own observation.

Throughout the whole of his tour, the impression seems gradually to have deepened in Mr. Hinton's mind, that the cause of Protestantism on the continent is in a very discouraging state. When at Dresden, the author saw enough to satisfy him that in Saxony, "the cradle of the Reformation," "Protestantism is lifeless and decaying, while Romanism is vigorous and progressive." When he was in Wittenburg, he attended public worship in the "Schloss Kirche"—the church to the door of which Luther nailed the ninety-five propositions, and in which are the graves of both Luther and Melancthon. The following letter gives a very mournful picture of Lutheranism, as it is now:—

"SUNDAY MORNING."

"Oh! most melancholy! In the Schloss Kirche, adapted with its two galleries to accommodate at least 500 persons, I have counted fifty-three. Here was an altar, and on the altar a crucifix, and two dingy tallow candles—they wanted snuffing dreadfully—burning one on each side of it. With his back to the altar, the officiating minister, in a gown and bands much resembling the pulpit dress of English clergymen, read the prayers and lessons, being responded to by the organ, and by a set of as ill-behaved boys as ever I saw in a church, or, I was going to say, out of one. The pulpit, in a manner to me not only curious, but unique, projected from above the altar in the very centre of the space usually occupied by the altar-piece, whether of sculpture or painting, and was entered from behind. The minister having announced his text, the people stood up out of reverence, as I conjectured, for the word of God. Ah! would it were truly revered! At the conclusion of the discourse, which lasted more than half-an-hour, and was followed by a psalm, standing at the altar, with the face first towards it, and then towards the people, the minister intoned two or three prayers. The Amen to these had no sooner been uttered than the boys scampered noisily from the organ loft, like rats running away from a terrier."

"And this in Wittenburg, the town in which Martin Luther attacked the Papacy, and convulsed the civilised world! It was not on such congregations as these that his words fell, nor could it have been such discourses as these that he poured forth to listening crowds. How utterly has the living impulse which he generated, and which, for a time, diffused itself so widely, departed! Verily, more formal Protestantism is dead, and hideous in death. The candles which are still kindled on its altars may be compared to lights glimmering in its sepulchre. Give me, give me the Gospel, Christ and him crucified, for whom I count all things but loss; but if you will not,—if, on the contrary, you will give the candles, and choristers, and crucifixes, then, at least, do the thing in style. Set before me, not an ugly brown crucifix, but a carved and gilt one; light not two candles, but a dozen; let me see the singing boys, not in their blue jackets, but in white and scarlet surplices; and let the organ pour out to me, not the dulness of Protestant psalmody, but the inspiring compositions of Mozart, Beethoven, and Mendelssohn. As for Lutheranism as it is, Germany seems to grow to be rid of it; or rather, the population of Germany have already turned from it with disgust, to an unbridled frivolity."—*Western Tablet.*

FRENCH SATIRE UPON THE "INVASION."—*Charivari* gives a series of letters which it asserts have been addressed to the editors of the London daily papers by various citizens afraid of an invasion. "John Richardson, Member of the Peace Congress," is made to suggest in the *Morning Advertiser*, that the French be allowed to disembark and be invited to the Crystal Palace, when they may easily be disposed of by fifty barrels of gunpowder, collected in a mine underneath the building. "Job Thompson, Professor of English Grammar and Grecian History, 95, Oxford-street," informs his countrymen, through the *Morning Chronicle*, that it is very easy to set fire to the enemy's fleet, by "placing along the coast a number of burnished mirrors, so as to concentrate all the rays of the sun upon the French vessels, and thus most indubitably ignite them." He has no doubt that our patriotic countrymen will hasten to send the Duke of Wellington all the mirrors they do not absolutely require. "I, Mr. Editor, at once place in your hands, the little mirror by which I have shaven for seventeen years. It is the only glass I possess, but I surrender it with joy. Whilst the French menace Old England, I shall go to be shaved at the barber's. It will cost me a penny every time, but I shall easily be consoled for this expense, by the thought that I have saved my country.—'Rule Britannia!—God Save the Queen.'" One Nicholas Blagson is made to write to the *Times* as follows:—"Sir—For three nights, my wife and I have contemplated the means of destroying these French dogs, and we think—my wife and I—that we have at length discovered it. When these French dogs disembark, we must starve them to death. Every Englishman knows that Frenchmen feed entirely on frogs. Their stomachs are incapable of digesting any other aliment. Well—Is there not time for the English to commence a frog fishery, to be continued until the very last which can be found in our marshes is carefully destroyed? The French, once having disembarked, will soon have consumed the millions of frogs which they will bring with them, and when they try to procure others, they will hunt in vain for them in

all the marshes of the three kingdoms. As to those among them who dare to feed on beefsteaks, they will die of indigestion in less than twenty-four hours. *Death to frogs and Frenchmen!*—This should now be the cry of every true Englishman. Mr. Editor, my wife and I present our respects to you."

Extract from a letter by an officer of the 91st regiment, to the editor of the *Times*:—"What an error is made in calling British Caffraria a nasty sandy desert. Caffraria is the finest part of the whole country, capable of great tillage in the low grounds, and thickly wooded in the high; full of high stony mountains and deep precipitous kloofs. There are but few places in Caffraria where you can go a mile without going either up or down hill. Gaiters—kop and the Hogs—back are two very high mountains, constantly covered with snow. Persons in England fancy Caffraria to be the same sort of place as Sahara. I wish those gentlemen of the Peace Congress and Exeter-hall were sent out here to form a levy. I fancy they would not be quite so fond of raising subscriptions to clothe little niggers in flannel waistcoats and such-like trash. Let them shoulder their muskets, put on their blankets, and carry three days' rations in their haversacks, and go to Caffraria, and I suspect they would not find the Caffres quite such harmless people as they imagine. Had they held their tongues, this war, in all probability, would have been over, for if a strong force had been sent out at once this business might have been settled, instead of getting worse and worse. I should like to see Bright and Cobden on escort duty, going through a road out from the solid rock, with a thick bush on either side, from which a villain can fire at you at a distance of three yards in almost perfect security. Let them toil up the side of the Waterkloof after a ten hours' march, without breakfast, and I wager they will be the first to cry out for reinforcements."

IRELAND.

POOR RELIEF (IRELAND).—A return has been presented, by order, to the House of Commons, showing the total number of paupers relieved, and the rate of mortality in the workhouses in Ireland, for the years ended the 25th day of September, 1846, 1849, 1850, and 1851, with the extent of workhouse accommodation on the 25th of March and on the 25th day of September, in the same years; also, the number who received outdoor relief during the years ended the 25th day of September, in the same years.—The number relieved in the workhouses during the year ended 25th September, 1846, amounted to 610,573; deaths for the same period, 47,756. In 1849, the numbers relieved were 552,297; deaths, 73,179. In 1850, numbers relieved in workhouses, 726,532; deaths, 47,172. In 1851, numbers relieved in workhouses, 703,256; deaths, 43,332. It will be seen from the foregoing that although the number of those relieved had greatly diminished, the deaths have increased. The mean ratio of mortality on the four years—1846, 1849, 1850, and 1851—was about seven in the 100. Total relief out of doors in Ireland, in 1846—1,419,020; in 1849—1,210,436; in 1850—338,330; in 1851—62,251.

THE POLICE FORCE.—STATE OF THE COUNTY.—The magistrates of the county of Cork assembled last week to consider the propriety of adopting a memorial to the Lord Lieutenant, for the reduction of the extra police force in the county. The meeting had been convened by the Earl of Bandon, as Lieutenant of the county, upon a requisition numerously signed. That noble lord, however, spoke strongly against the reduction, observing that intelligence had reached him that "in one or two parts of this county funds were being collected in aid of the Tenant Right League," and that "there were persons going about the country cautioning the farmers not to pay rents." Mr. F. French moved the adoption of a memorial for the reduction of the entire extra police force, on the ground of the present state of tranquillity. A protracted discussion ensued, during which, some of the magistrates expressed apprehensions that the Ribbon system in the north might yet extend to the south. On a division, there appeared twenty-five for, and the same number against reduction. The chairman gave his casting vote against the motion, which was lost accordingly.—*Evening Post.*

STARWRECK.—During the past few weeks large portions of wreck and several hales of cotton have been cast on shore at several places along the bay and coast. On Friday a gentleman, named Toole, from Liverpool, arrived here, who, on proceeding out to Barna, found an arm of a figure-head and portion of the cabins, from which he was able to discover that the wrecked vessel was the John Toole of Liverpool, his own property, bound for that port from New Orleans. A water tank, with the name of the maker on it, was also found, which left no doubt as to the identity of the unfortunate vessel. One portion of the cabin fittings which drifted ashore, had inscribed on it "Mr. O'Mara's berth." The John Toole left New Orleans about the 25th of December, with a cargo of cotton, ten cabin passengers, and twenty-five hands on board. It is to be feared that all these persons have met a watery grave, as not one of them has been heard of, nor has there been the slightest trace of them up to the present time. The John Toole was a fine ship and registered 533 tons burden. Mr. Toole has proceeded to Ballyvaughan, and along that coast, to gather what information he can regarding her. How, or when the melancholy accident occurred remains a perfect mystery.—*Galway Mercury.*

GREAT BRITAIN.

It has been stated that it is resolved to organise a powerful Channel squadron, which will be cruising between Spithead, Plymouth and Queenstown, during the summer. A gallant vice-admiral, who distinguished himself in China, will most probably have the command of this evolutionary force, which will comprise the finest sailing and steam-ships in the British navy, and will include all or most of the following:—H.M.S. *Waterloo*, 120; *Queen*, 116; *Neptune*, 120; *St. George*, 120; *Impregnable*, 104; *St. Vincent*, 100; *Prince Regent*, 92; *Rodney*, 92; *London*, 92; *Ganges*, 84; *Superb*, 80; *Boscawen*, 79; *Blenheim*, 56; *Phaeton*, 50; *Indefatigable*, 50; *Leander*, 50. The whole of the above ships, with the exception of the *Ganges* and *Edinburgh*, are already in commission. The Queen will have some time to serve on her arrival from the Mediterranean station, which it is intended she shall complete by cruising. The flag-ship of this new squadron of evolution will be the *Sans Pareil*, a new two-decker of 81 guns, and the commander-in-chief, Vice-Admiral Sir Thomas Cochrane, K.C.B.