

FRENCH RHENISH PROVINCES.

The war between France and Prussia, no matter what the pretext, will be prosecuted by each party for the extension of the nation boundary. France wants certain German Provinces on the Rhine, and Prussia wishes, to use an American term, to re-annex the German Rhenish Provinces now held by France. We have already given a description of the German provinces which the French Emperor covets. Those which Prussia, speaking the voice of all Germany, proposes to recover from France, are the old provinces of Alsace and Lorraine.

Alsace lies between the Rhine on the east and the Vosges Mountains on the west, and is now divided into two States, Haut Rhine and Bas-Rhine (Upper and Lower Rhine). The two extend north to Rhenish Bavaria, and south to Switzerland, and contain 3,360 square miles. They make one of the richest and most productive parts of France. They have vast mines, and are a great manufacturing centre. They contain, among other cities, Stratsburg, Colmar and Mulhausen. At the time of the Roman conquest the population was Celtic, but the Alemanni crossed the Rhine and Germanized all Alsace. It continued part of the German Empire until the peace of Westphalia, when part of it was ceded to France. Subsequently, Louis XIV seized Stratsburg in 1681, and, by the peace of 1697, the cession of the whole to France was confirmed. The people, however, during the intervening 170 years, have preserved their German neutrality, and still speak the German tongue. All their newspapers are printed in German as well as in French.

The ancient province of Lorraine was no extensive district. Its history dates from the middle of the ninth century, and once included the territory between the Rhine, Scheldt, Meuse and Saone Rivers. The region now known as Rhenish Prussia was separated from Lorraine in the tenth century, and the remainder was divided and known as Upper and Lower Lorraine. Lower Lorraine eventually became an Austrian possession, and now forms at least one half of Belgium and two provinces of Holland. Upper Lorraine continued under the Government of its own Duke until 1736, when it was given to the ex-King Stanislaus, of Poland. On his death in 1766, it was united to France under the title of the Province of Lorraine. Since then the name of Lorraine has been extinguished, and the province has been divided into departments known as Meuse, Moselle, Meurthe and Vosges. The people are of German origin, and German traditions. They speak both French and German, except in particular places, where the German alone is spoken.

These provinces include the cities of Metz, Nancy and Epinal. Metz is an ancient and fortified city, on the Moselle, at its confluence with the Seine. The fortifications are very extensive. It has two military schools, one for artillery and the other for engineering, and schools for the practice of these arts. It has also a powder mill, extensive barracks, and one of the finest hospitals in Europe. The business of the city is manufacturing, especially of lace and brushes. The city has a population of 50,000.

Nancy is another very old town. It is a seat of learning. Manufactures are extensive, the principal of which is the embroidery of cambric and muslin goods. Charles the Bold was killed at the siege of Nancy in 1477. The telegrams from the seat of war indicate that the French army will concentrate at Metz, which is in the de-

partment of Moselle. The Prussian advance crossed into the same province at Faubach. The city of Epinal is the capital of the department of Vosges, and is a manufacturing town of 11,000 inhabitants.

Stratsburg is a fortified city of the first class, and the capital of the Bas Rhine, 312 miles from Paris by rail. The fortifications are very strong. The Rhine is bridged at this place. It has military schools. It has extensive commerce, large manufactories, and is connected by rail with all parts of France and Germany. Its population is 56,000. The citadel of Stratsburg is a pentagon. It is one of the oldest cities in Europe.

Colmar is the chief seat of the cotton manufactories of France.

The population of these French Rhenish departments was, in 1862, as follows:

Bas-Rhin	277,574
Haut Rhin	515,802
Vosges	415,485
Moselle	446,457
Meuse	305,250
Meurthe	428,643
Total	2,689,501

The present population in all probability is not less than 3,000,000.

It is probable that the first crash of arms will be along the Rhine, in these provinces or in the Prussian provinces on the other side of the river. It is understood that of late years France has been strengthening her fortifications all along the Rhine, and that at this time the following towns and cities are defended by strong works, and garrisoned with forces equal to any ordinary siege. Stratsburg, Colmar, Schlettstadt, Briesach, and Metz; Montmedy, Verdun, and Longwy, which are on the Rhine, and near Metz. Bas-Rhin and Haut Rhine are separated from the other French departments by the Vosges Mountains. The passes of these mountains are historical, having been the scenes of memorable contests in former days. They have all been strongly fortified by France; the Prussian advance will be obstinately opposed by these various fortified posts.

PRUSSIA AS A MARTIME POWER.

The progress of Prussia in her efforts to create a navy and to place the North German Confederation in the front rank of naval powers is something wonderful. In addition to the fortified ports of Wilhelmshafen, Kiel, Dantzic, Sundevitt, and Alsen, other maritime stations protected by forts are about to be created. Those at Hoerup Haaf will when finished render the position impregnable. These works will comprise three star shaped forts with double tiers of guns, and five coast batteries commanding the passage of the Little Belt. All those will be iron faced and armed with the heaviest ordnance, and will not only command the straits but also the canal of Alsensud, with the port, and maintain communication with the military depot of Sonderg, on the same Island of Alsen. The fears of France have been considerably aroused, as Prussia, which is already firmly established in the formidable position of Duppel, will, when these works are completed, have the command of the North Sea, the Baltic and the Straits.

Neither has Prussia neglected to obtain a footing in the Indian seas. The negotiations with the Rajah of Johore, in the Peninsula of Malacca, have resulted in the purchase of the Island of Kalamne for the North German Confederation. A permanent naval

station is to be established there. Until the opening of the Suez Canal there had been only one Prussian corvette in the waters of India and China, but now there are two, the Hertha and Medusa, and next year a third will be sent. An arsenal will be erected in the course of the next two years on Kalamne.

Prussia's steam fleet is being increased as rapidly as human efforts will admit of. The latest additions to the ironclads are the King William, of 5,998 tons, and the Renown, of 7,500 tons. The former, which is considered the most powerful vessel afloat, was built in England for the Sultan of Turkey, but as he could not pay it was snapped up by the Prussians. The armament consists of 23 guns of the heaviest calibre known, manufactured of the famous Krupp steel at the works in Westphalia. The steam power is 1150 horse, the crew 600 men. The Renown is less heavily armoured and has 1200 horse power with an armament of four 10 inch guns, six 96 pounders, twelve 72 pounders and twelve 24 pounders on the upper deck. The crew amounts to 1000 men exclusive of officers. The vessel was built in Kiel. On the stocks at the navy yard in Wilhelmshafen is the heavy ironclad frigate the Grosser Kurfurst, and the Frederick the Great of the same class is building at Kiel. The Hansa, another ironclad, is nearly completed at Dantzic, where the steam frigate Ariadne has been commenced, and the steam sloops Albatross and Nautilus. Completed and in commission are four more heavy ironclads—the Frederick Carl, now in London, of 16 guns and 4000 tons; the Crown Prince of same force; the Arminius of four heavy guns and 1200 tons, and the Prince Adelbert, of three, with a tonnage of 709. Of frigates there are the Elizabeth, 25 guns and 2000 tons; the Hertha, same force, now China, in the Vineta, same force; the Arkona, now in New York harbor, 23 guns and 1715 tons; the Kalamue, same force as the Arkona. Of corvettes there are the Augusta, 14 guns and 1500 tons; the Victoria same force; the Medusa, at the Island of Ralanine, Prussia's new possession, 17 guns and 1000 tons, and the Nympe of same force. All these are powerful steam vessels. There are two steam sloops, the Prussian Eagle and the Grasshopper, and about 22 gunboats, averaging together 55 tons.

To be built by 1877 are 11 ironclads of the largest size, 15 double-banked frigates, 7 sloops and 3 transports. Of sailing vessels there are 3 frigates and 4 brigs, amounting to 162 guns and 5763 tons.

The vessels in commission are manned by 4012 sailors, 737 engineers, 370 carpenters and mechanics, 192 warrant officers, and 255 officers. Besides this there is a reserve of 4156 men, which can be called upon at any time, and a second reserve which acts only in time of war, and may be called sea militia.

The naval school is at Kiel in Schleswig, and so popular has the service become that there are now 400 marine cadets at this establishment, whereas two years ago there were but 72, of whom 59 have become naval officers of the second grade.

The mercantile marine numbers from Prussia 3611 vessels and 651,000 tons; from Hamburg 461, tons 245,300; from Bremen 307, tons 244,700; from Mecklenburg-Schwer, in 449, tons 172,600; from Oldenburg and Lubec 274, tons 67,600.

The ship *Hansa*, which formed a part of the Polar expedition, was crushed by ice on the 10th of October last, off the coast of Greenland. The crew were saved, and have arrived at Copenhagen.