INTERESTING FROM MEXICO.

Our Vera Cruz Correspondence.

VERA CRUZ, Dec. 21, 1853.

Heroical Vera Cruz—Madame Calderon—Waddy Thompson—Turkey Buzzards, &c.—Postmaster General and Mexican Mails—Fillibusters—Santa Anna—Mexican Newspapers—English Lordlings—Lady Suffolk, Black Bob &c.

If your columns are not over replete with records of the doings at Washington, intelligence from the gorgeous East, with episodes of men, manners and things generally, &c., perhaps space may be found for an occasional jotting down from this not wholly uninteresting part of the world. If so, a wandering northern barbarian, now temporising at the city of the True Cross, salutes you most profoundly, and proceeds to say unto you things possibly hitherto unsaid in prose or rhyme.

Vera Cruz, like most other places, presents its points of interest. The chiefest here, however, is the romantic and rather mournful history which distinguishes this off-besieged, battered and captured town. Yet it is not solely in her warlike fame and aspect that the Heroic City of the True Cross, (Heroica Vera Cruz—the official appellation,) commends herself to notice. Sadly slandered as the town and environs have been by travelers, from Madame Calderon down to Waddy Thompson, distasteful as our army found it after revelling in the Capuan Halls of Mexico, (I would have said Halls of Montezuma, but that has been said a little too often,) your correspondent is agreeably surprised at finding it to be a perfectly clean, and remarkably well built little city. And, then, as to the environs, it is true there are a few sand hills, but it is not all sand hills. And have not we old Orizaba, the monarch of Mexican mountains, on one hand, and the illimitable Amethystine ocean on the other? The fair Calderon was particularly shocked at the appearance of the sopilotes, (Turkey buzzards,) prowling about the streets, as pigeons do in other countries. Well, the zopilote is not a turtle dove, it must be admitted, but he is certainly as agreable an object of contemplation as the porkers that once prospected about the streets of New York, Cincinnati and other well governed (Heaven save the mark!) cities. A few zopilotes would improve the condition of the streets in polished, metropolitan Gotham. It is not three months since I observed a dead dog lying for three days in the gutter in front of a Broadway hotel. Fact! Now, that couldn't have been the case here. The zopilotes would have snapped up and torn piecemeal the poor canine before the breath could have been well out of his body. But I didn't sit down to write of New York. Vera Cruz is my theme.

For the present, however, I can have but little to say touching local matters, and will defer all gossip until my next. Our regular steam packet, leaving for New Orleans early in the morning, admits me only time to treat of important matters—our commercial interests, Mexican politics, &c.

By last arrival from New Orleans we have received the President's message, and synoptical reports from one or two of the heads of departments at Washington. The message is very generally approved of by the Americans residing or sojourning here. But, on the other hand, the report of the Postmaster-General has given great dissatisfaction, and there is even some talk of an indignation meeting. In fact, nothing but a fear of needlessly alarming the authorities—who would infallibly regard it as a *pronunciamento*—has suppressed it.

You will observe that Judge Campbell, (the Postmaster General,) proposes to discontinue the mail service between Vera Cruz and New Orleans, because, forsooth, there is as yet a considerable disproportion between the compensation paid and amount of postages collected. Now, first establishing the hypothesis, or rather the axiom, that the Post Office is not a legitimate source of revenue, and, further, that mail routes which yield a profit to the department should be made to sustain those that do not, I think good cause can be shown for the continuance of the route in question.

The extent and magnitude of the trade of the United States with Mexico is, perhaps, not generally known. It amounts to millions annually—of which New Orleans has a full half—importing near $2,000,000 in silver, with mahogany, tobacco, dyestuffs, drugs, &c., to pay for Western and Southern products, chiefly cotton. The correspondence in connection with such a trade must be of proportionate importance. Well, this trade, or the greater part of it, is of recent growth, having been created and built up chiefly by the establishment of a line of steamships, the owners of these ships having been enabled to devote them to the service by receiving from the United States government a moderate sum for transporting the mails between the two points. With this increase of imports, of course the United States treasury has received an accession of revenue in the shape of duties. Now, suppress this mail, and the steam line falls through, the carrying trade goes back to the wretched little old Mexican schooners that formerly had what there was of it, and it will shortly relapse into the languishing condition in which it had been for so many years. The amount of duties collected at New Orleans will be diminished *pari passu* with the decadence of this particular traffic, and the general interests of the Mississippi valley will suffer to a certain extent.

Nor is it New Orleans alone that is interested. New York, the emporium of commerce, will feel this retrogradation very sensibly, so far, at least, as convenience goes. That city has millions invested in this country in mines and otherwise, and having but a monthly packet—sailing vessels at that—finds it a great advantage to be able to communicate with this country tri-monthly by the way of New Orleans.

Nor must we forget the very respectable mail that leaves upon the arrival of every steamer here by Ramsey's Express for San Francisco by the way of Acapulco. The United States government, too, in view of our very interesting relations with Mexico, must be interested particularly in the speedy, frequent, and certain transmission of despatches to and from the city of Mexico.

There are other matters connected with this subject of which we must not lose sight. England has a trade of $25,000,000 with Mexico, yet she has but one monthly steamer to Southampton. Yet she has a paid mail agent here, (the Consul, of course,) and sustains a courier between this place and the city of Mexico at the rate of $6,000 per annum. Now, an able Postmaster General could, methinks, manage to get the great English mail by undertaking to carry it from Vera Cruz to Liverpool by the way of New Orleans, New York, and the Collins line. John Bull has now but one mail a month, and we can beat dates of that one into London under the present arrangement. Of course, Johnny would bite at an opportunity of getting three mails for the same money for which he now has the advantage of but one.

True policy requires, not only that the New Orleans and Vera Cruz route should be fostered by a wise and paternal administration of the Post Office Department, but that we should have a postal convention with Mexico by which certain abuses might be corrected. It is not exactly clear to me by what right the Mexican post office exacts an enormous postage on letters brought to this point for delivery in American mail steamships. She also makes the same charge on letters mailed here to go by the same ships—thus subjecting correspondence to double ocean postage, the same letters paying at both ends of the route.

Strange as it may appear, the great fillibuster invasion of Sonora is yet a pretty tolerably "mixed up" sort of an affair. We cannot get hold of either the head or tail of the business from the public journals of this country, filled as they are with the wonderful operations of General this and General that against "the pirates." It seems, however, that some men did land somewhere, and, without doing anything in particular, went away again, and this is about the sum of the whole business, at least for the present.

Our old friend Santa Anna—the Napoleon of the South—who is now getting old and fat, is coming it pretty strong just now. In the last *Siglo Diez y Nuevè* I observe a decree, wherein he has himself announced by the title of "Altesa Seremissima"—Most Serene Highness—a pretty title, surely, for a democratic republican President. Day before yesterday was the day set aside for the inauguration of the most noble Order of Our Lady of Guadalupe, of which old Santy is the Grand Master. We have no intelligence as to how the ceremony came off, the mail not being due until to-morrow. But some of the knowing ones here feel assured that some of the discontented must have seized the occasion to kick up a row. Well, we'll see the end, of which these pomposities are but the beginning.

There is nothing further heard just now of General Gadsden's great treaty with the Mexican government for the purchase of Sonora, Sinaloa, Durango, &c. What are we to do with old Jemmy Guthrie's millions?

There is such a dearth of intelligence in the papers here, that it is useless to look into them for news. Journalism is in a sad condition in this country. And then the monstrous price asked for their miserable, dirty-looking little papers. The wretched 8 x 10 published here costs the moderate sum of thirty dollars per annum. Now, what can be expected of such a country, or people rather. I am told desperate efforts are being made to exclude the New York HERALD from this enlightened republic.

By the last arrival from New Orleans came a batch of English lordlings, who are doing the Western hemisphere. Ah, demme!

The condemned American slaver, "Lady Suffolk," is rotting in the harbor here, and will, doubtless, go to pieces at her moorings for all the use this people or government will put her to.

The Spanish man-of-war Alcedo, is lying at Sacrificios, looking out for fillibusters perhaps. Where is General Quitman? EL GRINGO.

Our Yucatan Correspondence.

MERIDA, Dec. 1, 1853.

Dreadful Ravages by Cholera—Travel of the Plague and Insurrectionists—The Dead in Other Cities—Effect of the Epidemic upon the Indian War—Facts regarding the Late Revolution—Its Plots and Counterplots—Kidnapping Indians for Sale in Cuba—The Craft and Flags engaged in the Trade—Santa Anna's Reward of Rebels—Engagement between the Government Troops and Insurrectionists—The Dead, Wounded, and Executed—Domestic Incidents.

The besom of destruction has been, and is still, sweeping over this peninsula of Yucatan. The ravages of the cholera have been most fatal. It is utterly impossible to ascertain correctly the number of victims taken off by that fell destroyer. It first commenced at the south and eastern part of the peninsula, near Honduras, and travelled on westward by regular stages, nearly depopulating many towns and villages in the interior. About the 28th of September it made its appearance at Merida, the capital, accompanied by an insurrectionary party of soldiers, about eighteen hundred in number. From this time the epidemic increased hourly, until at one time one hundred and seventy-five daily deaths were registered, and many more were not ascertained.

The population of this beautiful city is, or was, about thirty-five thousand, and up to this time two thousand five hundred, per register, have died by the cholera. It is now apparently gorged with victims out of this community, and has proceeded on its western travel; and by letters just received from Campeachy, about seventy-five miles west from this, it appears the traveller has arrived and began his work of death. By these letters it appears that the epidemic is, if possible, more deadly than heretofore, taking its victims off in two or three hours, and in some cases almost instantly. It is reported that sixty have been taken off in one day, and it had but just entered the city. No doubt but the ports and cities more to the west are to be called on for their quota, and Laguna and Tabasco are to suffer. May they be spared is a heart wish. Sisal, a small and miserable place, thirty six miles from Merida and its seaport, containing eight or nine hundred half civilized people, was also a great sufferer, losing over two hundred by the cholera. The poor persecuted and outcast Indians of the interior, with whom the whites have been at war since 1847, have suffered greater havoc, if possible, by the cholera than their enemies. It is thought by many that one good may arise from the great evil—namely, that if the whites will only so will it, hostilities will cease, and this cruel and unjust war be brought to an end; but the poor subdued and degraded Indian must humble himself more, still more, to his conqueror and taskmaster. The Lord pity their abject and wretched condition, and soften the hearts of the whites.

This is only a brief account of what has been experienced with respect to the cholera. Some families have become altogether extinct—not even an heir left to the property; in other families only one taken off, and all the others escaping; but scarcely a single house or family going altogether free—the rich and the poor suffering alike.

The road from Merida to Sisal passes through two villages, both now nearly depopulated. The mail coach runs up and down alternate nights, and changes beasts at each of these villages. The other night, on my way down to Sisal, I was much struck by the great change at the stage house at one of these places. The house was formerly a tavern, grocery, stage office, post office, &c., with nine persons in the family, and also a place of resort to many idlers and listeners. But now when we drove up, the only person to be seen was a solitary woman, sitting at the door on a low stool, her head resting on a chair, and not even raising it up when the stage stopped within eight or ten feet of her. Grief had taken a mighty hold on her, she being the only one left of the nine. Her husband, children, domestics, all had gone to the Campo Santo. So much respecting this awful scourge.

With respect to the mighty revolution which is now apparently put down I will state a few particulars, as perhaps you may make some use of them. Gen. Barbachano was formerly Governor of Yucatan, being voted in by the suffrage of the people, of which situation he made the most for his own good and that of his partisans, keeping the government treasury chest always empty. Some time back the principal persons hereabouts, deeming it just and necessary for the public weal, in a very quiet and summary way deposed his honor, appointed a Governor *pro tem.*, and forwarded to Mexico the facts of the case—the whys and wherefores—and from Mexico was dispatched by Santa Anna General La Vega, to rule over Yucatan as civil and military chief; and since his assuming the reins of government he has acted very mildly and judiciously. But peace, quietness, and social order are not the characteristics of the mass of any of the people, or of the Mexican race. Wars, revolutions, and *pronunciamentos*, are apparently spontaneous productions here away.

The political friends of Barbacheno and Zatene blended themselves into one party, swearing vengeance against the government party then in power under La Vega and Santa Anna. Then commenced a course of plotting and intrigue, which shortly extended to various parts of the State, which by what has recently come to light, was judicious and well planned. Money was forthcoming, and agents mixed themselves with the troops in the campaign against the Indians; and as the troops were miserably paid and fed, they were easily bought, and ready to assist when they were called on to do so. The movements of this intended revolution were on a more extensive scale than any that we have yet experienced in Merida, and many officers and men of note and character in all the eastern portion of the peninsula, and in Merida, had embarked in it, and all things went on to the satisfaction of the leaders; and the very time when the outbreak was to be, then a simultaneous rising was to come off; the middle of October; but secretly and privately as this formidable plot was deemed by its leaders and instigators to be, still Gen. La Vega had some faint knowledge that something was brewing of a revolutionary nature, and was on the watch, taking steps against it; but owing to an unlooked for transaction—which so often forestalls the devices and intents of men—the outbreak was premature, and sadly deranged the plans of La Vega, as well as those of the leaders of the revolt. La Vega was expecting a reinforcement of government troops from Vera Cruz (who have recently arrived at Merida, i. d. Nov. 22.) The leaders, on the other hand, had all their arrangements knocked into pi. This said cause I wish particularly to bring to your notice, for it should be published far and near, from Dan to Beersheba—slavery, that is, the kidnapping of the poor Indians here in Yucatan, and shipping them off to Cuba, and sold to work on the plantations of that famous isle.

Since the middle of '47 an unnatural and disgraceful war has existed on this fertile peninsula between the whites and the native Indians, and has been carried on almost as a war of extermination, the Indians practising those inhuman arts upon their prisoners that were practised by Indians in the days that your ancient Puritans landed away down East and the Spaniards landed in these regions. The whites in this war are, if possible, more bloody and cruel than the ignorant and uncivilized Indians. It is true they do not put all their prisoners to the sword, but they reap a harvest by selling them occasionally. The fact is, that within the last four years hundreds and hundreds of the Indians have been sent to Cuba, and placed in an endless servitude, or until death releases them. They are procured on this peninsula in various ways, not only by being taken in battle, but many not engaged in strife are kidnapped, and various ways are devised to get them on board some craft on the coast, and they soon find themselves in Cuba. The English flag has been used in this business on this coast; small craft from Balize, Honduras, have been used in this sort of business by reckless, lawless men, some of whom the English authorities at Honduras have taken, and I understand that they have made examples of them by severe punishment. If I am not misinformed, in the street chain gang at Balize are some of these men, and these said men, I am pleased to say, are not Americans. This sort of business has become so frequent, public and notorious, that his august honor, Santa Anna, of Mexico, has issued a *pronunciamento* forbidding and denouncing the inhuman traffic, and has also taken steps to free from bondage those who are in Cuba.

General La Vega also moved in the matter, and in order to stop it despatched from Merida commissioners to the eastern extreme of this peninsula, then and there to investigate the past conduct of certain persons reported to have been engaged in the operation of selling for the Cuban market.

On the arrival of the commissioners they commenced with an individual of high standing, and they soon were convinced of his guilt, and he was ordered to proceed (in custody) to Merida for further examination. This he refused to do point blank, and when measures were taken by the police to remove him by force he resisted, and did battle with the officers, they calling for assistance to enforce the laws, and he also calling on his partizans for aid, and very soon was got up a very pretty row, and the row became a bloody fight. The whole town was in an uproar, and he, being one of the chiefs in the intended revolution, openly declared against the government; and he was immediately supported by his party, who armed themselves and took command of the town. The commissioners had by this time fled to save their lives, and eventually arrived at Merida; but the ball was now in motion, (a month too soon, by the bye,) and soon all the adjoining towns and villages declared for the revolt, and they took up their march for the capital, (Merida,) being joined by the soldiers who had been purchased by the almighty dollar. From this time the uprising was general, as soon as it was know to the party, and an onward rush was made for Merida, to reach which was some days' march; and in the interim the commissioners had reached the capital in a very quiet way and made known to Gen. La Vega how matters and things was going on, &c. That night, in a very quiet way Gen. Barbacheno and Col Zatene, both then in their dwellings at Merida, and also ignorant of the outbreak, were made prisoners of, and, accompanied by a troop of city guard, they were sent down to Sisal and put on board a government vessel, which directly got under way and proceeded to Vera Cruz, where they were put as prisoners in the famous Castle of San Juan de Ulloa; and the general and public supposition was, that as they were the promoters and the very heads of this most formidable revolution that they would both be shot without loss of time. But truly some men are born for no other luck than good luck, for at this time these two gentlemen are at Mexico under office with Santa Anna, one as collector in the army, and the other as counsellor to the great dictator.

It was on the 15th September, at Tizimin, that the revolution broke out, and to do things *secundum artem* a mighty *pronunciamento* was necessary. The insurgents were seconded by the towns Valadolid, Zizzamel, Motul, and all the villages to the east of Merida; and by forced marches, (the distance is 120 miles,) they arrived and laid siege to the capital on the 27th, with about 2,000 well armed and desperate men, under command of Col Manuel Cepeda Perasa, nephew of the well known Col Perasa, who was in the Texas revolution and afterwards at the *pronunciamento* at Tampico, &c. The available military force that Gen. La Vega had to defend the town, including the volunteers of the city, numbered about seven hundred men; and these were disposed thus—three hundred in the citadel and four hundred in the grand Plaza, awaiting the enemy, who eventually attacked them on the morning of the 27th, at 9 o'clock. The insurgents attacked on the east and north angles of the Plaza, but were repulsed by the infantry, and the effect of two brass field pieces which were got to bear upon them and did much execution. The attack was desperate, but in an improper manner, for had they attacked all four angles at the same time they would have been victorious, as they would have taken the artillery in the rear, and made themselves masters of these loud speakers and mischief making articles; and they were without a single field piece, and La Vega was well off in this respect. The leader of the insurgents was very sanguine in his expectations, and was expecting to be joined by persons from the city. On the night of this day three hundred men were posted on the tops of houses, (they are flat,) around the Plaza, and the remainder of the troops, with the field pieces, retired to the citadel. From this time until the fourth of October, the government party was, as it were, besieged and kept within the citadel, and a few streets adjoining and the grand Plaza. The insurgents were masters of all the rest of the city. Generally, near the suburbs, and between these two parties, was a sort of neutral or debateable ground, where daily skirmishes came off, and where some courageous feats were performed, and, also, if you can so think, some Gil Blas scenes were witnessed.

At this time the cholera had got well a going both among the insurgents and also among the inhabitants, and horror and consternation prevailed to a great extent, and on the debateable ground were daily skirmishes, and many were killed on both sides; but the dead had to remain as they lay in the streets. At one time about thirty lay so for a number of days, a tropical September sun operating upon them; and something more awful was the work of the buzzards, (turkey buzzards,) which came from far and near, holding their carnival, and not waiting for *pronunciamentos* and proclamations.

In this truly horrid state of things, until the fourth of October, there arrived a government force from the south, (troops not bought over,) under command of Colonel Eulogie Rosado, from Peto. These troops, seven hundred, attacked the insurgents rather unexpectedly in their rear, when, at the same time, a sally was made from the citadel, thus placing the enemy in a bad fix, and he was much cut up and completely routed, and he lifted up his heels and fled. Three of their leaders were taken prisoners, viz.:—Colonels Ontiberos and Villamil, and Captain Gro, and all three were publicly shot the next day. The loss in killed and wounded of the insurgents is three hundred odd. Of the government, one officer killed a few wounded, and thirty odd privates killed and many wounded, and also many of the inhabitants wounded.

Colonel Sebastian Molas, one of the chiefs, was taken a few days after, being betrayed by a supposed friend, and was publicly shot. He was thirty two years of age, and of gentlemanly deportment. He marched to the cross of execution with all the resignation of a Christian and the coolness of an undaunted soldier.

Colonel Manuel Cepeda Perasa has eluded the vigilance of those who are seeking his blood. There is money bid on his head by the government; but treachery may yet be his bane, as that article is mighty abundant even here as well as at other parts, and money plays the devil with some kind of things walkings on two legs, and classed as *homo*.

Now for one little incident, and I drop my pen. In this truly beautiful city there is not to be found a single English resident, and only one American resident, who is a physician of very extensive practice. Dr. Tappan has married a lady of this country, and keeps house, all nice and comfortable, and his house is within the debateable district. He had an American flag made and stuck up on a staff to define himself. It was torn down and taken away, upon which he, at great risk, sought the chiefs, and stated who and what he was, and also complained of the affair of the flag. They expressed displeasure at the act, requesting him to go home and put up another, and he, and his flag and family, should be respected. This he accordingly did, and all due respect was manifested, and his house became a refuge for the ladies, he having at the least forty fine looking ladies to guard, &c.; but the cholera paid them a visit, taking away a single individual, viz: Mr. Tappan's brother, and then leaving the dwelling, and also leaving health behind. S. A. W.

Our Acapulco Correspondence.

ACAPULCO, Mexico, Nov. 24, 1853.

Case of Dr. Billings and the Mexican Government—Reported Outrages upon Americans—Another Version of the Story—Necessities of Travellers to the Port of Acapulco—Want of U. S. War Ships.

My attention has been directed to the article annexed, as it contains a heterogeneous mixture which, were they facts, would indeed require the presence of a man-of-war to enliven our evenings with balls and music.

This article, or extract, reads as follows:—

[From the San Francisco Times and Transcript, Nov. 1.]

STEAMER PACIFIC, Oct. 14, 1853.

MESSRS. EDITORS—We left San Francisco on the 1st of October with a tremendous load of passengers, coal and stores enough to last to San Juan, but found after coasting out the ship was unable to make her usual time, and water getting short, were obliged to put in at Acapulco, where we arrived on the morning of the 10th.

To the surprise of every one the Ramsey express messenger had arrived there two days before us, with New Orleans dates of the 1st inst., making the trip by means of relays of horses over ten miles in short of seven days from New Orleans. This is what might be termed "a powerful effort," and was rewarded by a sight of the John L. Stephens passing up without stopping. You will, perhaps, get this news by the arrival of the next mail steamer, seven or eight days after you receive this letter.

I find the feeling of animosity against everything American has increased in Acapulco to an alarming degree since I was there last, and they have now a very fair prospect of accomplishing their wishes, by driving everything American from the harbor, even the mail steamers, should not a man-of-war arrive soon to protect our interests.

The arrogance and insolence of the government and officials extends, not only to Americans as a nation, or American companies, but to individuals. A case in point: Dr. Billings, a man well known by seamen as health officer of the port for the past four and a half years, was cited before the authorities for using language in his store not deemed by them sufficiently respectful toward the government of Santa Anna, with a notice to procure bail of $20,000. This was considered by the Dr. as rather ominous, so he took French leave, on the steamer Panama, at 4 P. M. of the 10th inst. Of course what he could not carry away was publicly confiscated for the use of the government.

There are now confined in the castle 350 persons, as I was informed by Dr. Billings, many among them Americans, having remained there from fourteen months down without trial.

The army has been increased from two hundred to over one thousand regulars. These things taken all together do not look well for us, especially when we can have no man-of-war in the harbor to protect us. I ask you can these things always last? Will Americans always tamely submit to be trampled upon, or only until they can have the power to "right such wrongs?"

In reply to this, I can merely state that the United States permits no nation to trample upon the rights of her citizens; and however restringent the laws and regulations of this port may be, and repugnant to the patriotic feelings of my countrymen which they are, I have sufficient confidence in the present democratic administration to know that where the "maratime laws of nations" are not violated, not only in this, but in all countries where the United States encourage foreign intercourse, will American interests be protected, and, when infringed upon, immediate reparation demanded.

I shall merely add—the man does not exist who could take more pride than myself on seeing our proud national emblem, the "stars and stripes," majestically waving over this, a port unsurpassed for safety and beauty, as I regret being forced to admit that the officials here pay very little if any respect to Americans or American interests, yet, when an appeal is to be made through the press, correspondents should bear in mind

VERITAS.

STATISTICS OF CADDO PARISH, LA.—The Shreveport *Southwestern*, of the 28th ult., publishes the following statistics of Caddo parish, furnished by the Assessor of the parish:—

The total population is	9,499
Voters	944
Slaves	5,600
School subjects	1,206
Acres of unsultivated land in the parish	192,966
Acres cultivated in cotton	30,070
Acres cultivated in corn	18,287
Number of bales of cotton made in 1852	15,229
Number of bushels of corn raised in 1852	386,225
Value of real estate	$1,588,992

On the 7th instant, the mercury at Detroit was down to five degrees below zero.

Our Paris Correspondence.

PARIS, Dec. 26, 1853.

The Eastern War—What People Say of It—Effect of the Action of England and France—Military Preparations and Resources of the Emperor—Opinions of the Press—Addition to the Fleet—The Turkish Troops—German Emigration—Theatricals.

I will now draw your attention to matters of grave interest, for the Eastern question is daily assuming a phase which leaves the "conference" far in arrear, besides Vienna notes, as valueless as the paper on which they are written. Every fresh account of the massacre, as it is now called, at Sinope, adds fuel to the already blazing flame of public opinion in France. The Turkish vessels were far weaker, it appears, in cannon, than the Russian account represented; and tales are told of wanton destruction of the town and ramparts, and of barbarian cruelty, that have excited all the blood of the Frenchman. In every café, salon, passage, on the Boulevards, the Bourse, in the arcades of the Rue Rivoli, you hear nothing but murmurs deep and loud at such dastard truckling to the Czar. For six months, it is said, have we been negotiating, every hour of which he has been acting. Of what good, if it could be accomplished, is it to establish in Turkey a quadruple protectorate for the benefit of the Christians—a protectorate that pre-supposes eternal harmony between these Powers—that forgets that Russia may at any moment resume and enforce her present audacious plan of action?

Better far, it is said, rise up like men, and fall on this colossal power, and wring from her gripe what Sweden, Persia, Poland, and Turkey, have already lost. Millions but await the moral aid which the countenance of France and England would give to dash their chains from off them, and fall like an avalanche on their oppressor.

There is now no doubt, however, that both the Powers have felt that the time for concession has passed away. The combined fleet has positively entered the Black Sea, with orders to sweep away into Sebastopol any Russian war craft that may show its face, while the Turks are to have full freedom of the sea. Call this what you will, it is war; and the day on which M. Kisselif, the Russian Ambassador, will demand his passports is considered here a mere matter of travelling convenience. Napoleon has at last broke through the marble of his reserve, and it has been known for some days past that the paragraph extracted from *Independence Belge*, which appears in the *Patrie* of to day, was to do so.

The *Patrie* says:—"We have never doubted that the French government, which has taken into its hands, in the affairs of the Levant the cause of humanity and of violated treaties, would adopt, at the proper moment, a decision worthy of itself and of France. The massacre of Sinope, a precedent for which can only be found in the history of the pages of the lower empire, has produced throughout all Europe an immense and affliting sensation. It creates for civilized nations a new position and new duties. The *Independence Belge* publishes, on the new attitude of France, an article which, we are convinced, will be received with a lively sentiment of satisfaction. 'The government of the Emperor of the French, if my information is correct, has placed the question before the British Cabinet in terms of such precision, that every kind of evasion, every kind of middle course, has now become impossible.'"

Every one I meet with considers the whole of this paragraph, from the peculiar character of the journal, as official. And it is supposed that the lengthy cabinet councils lately held in England have had quite as much to do with this as the finding an occupant for the seat of the Home Office.

The Vauban steamer, at Toulon, has been ordered to join the combined fleet. The Minister of War has planned forty two divisions, giving an effective force to the French army of six hundred thousand men. A corps d'armee is to be ready for the relief of Turkey. The Emperor says, in all earnest, "Let the people of France have confidence in the man she has three times solemnly trusted with her honor. If there have been divisions at Constantinople there shall be no more." Frenchmen begin to think that the cogitations of Aberdeen, Buol, and Nesselrode are done with, and that the long, long waited hour of French vengeance is really drawing nigh. There is a crispness about his moustache as he speaks of the fact, and a toss of the head like that of his father's when Frenchmen spoke of Marengo and Austerlitz.

It is curious, too, to remark, that Austrian packets between Odessa and Cronstadt are warned off, and that in mighty dudgeon, payment has been demanded of the Turkish government by those packets for the conveyance of troops and warlike stores; but the Ottoman government has more blows at command than piastres just at this moment. Owing to the hearty manner in which volunteers pour in, the Turks contrive to keep up an army of fire hundred thousand men. It is, indeed, stated by persons whose authority would be most powerful could I venture to mention their names, that when brought into the field, fairly into stand up fight, the Ottoman army must give way; that in its present state of transition from wild discipline to European tactics the old stuff has evaporated; not that they are not still a brave race, but that combined movements in the hour of danger will puzzle and confound them; that it is contrary to every principle and habit of their life; and that they themselves at bottom, except in entrenchments, have little confidence in them. Their artillery practice all allow to be superb.

The manufactory of arms at Liege and St Etienne is stated to be enormously increasing.

The emigration of Germans to the United States must be very great, if we may judge from the fact of 650 of them, who a few days ago were seen walking down the Boulevards on the road to Havre. These same Boulevards are now offering a spectacle which could be found in no other city in the whole world but Paris. From the end of the Faubourg St Antoine up to the termination of the Boulevard de la Madeleine, a broad carriage way stinting its long length at an angle of some forty five degrees and lined on each side by palisades, supported by magazines, containing everything that skilful art and ingenious combination can produce to witch the traveller's eye, are being built, on the splendid *pave* of asphalte, small wooden *baraques*, with a slanting roof, to shoot the rain, a small incumed front, to display the wondrous mechanism of all things that can excite to very madness of delight the generation that is growing up. I will not, however, anticipate, but reserve for its proper day, namely, the *jour de l'an*, the history of its more than Eastern treasures.

The Theatre Francaise cannot accept any further proposals from M. Dumas in the way of dramatic representations, and so that celebrated author has written a letter to a friend in New York, in which he says:—"Find for me on the borders of the St. Lawrence, the Hudson, the Delaware, or the Ohio, a corner where, surrounded by chosen friends, I may spend my last days, and die under the sun of liberty."

The title of Donizetti's posthumous opera, about to be given at the Theatre Lyrique, is "Elizabeth, ou la Fille du Proscrit." The libretto is from the pen of M. M. de Leuven and Brunswicke.

News from Buenos Ayres.

We have received our files of Buenos Ayres journals, dated to the 9th of November. The news is not of much importance.

The *Argentine Packet* of the 28th of October, says, in its monthly trade and political retrospect—"We are now reaping the fruits of the derangement occasioned by the late blockade. The few arrivals that have been during the past months, are a mere drop in the bucket, and it is needless to expect anything approaching an average despatch till the supplies are made up by fresh arrivals. The demand for this capital and province is decidedly good, and the first cargoes that arrive may reckon on a quick and advantageous market. Important reforms in the import and export tariff are pending in the Chamber of Representatives; but in the actual state of the import market we believe they have only a very secondary part in the apparent dullness alluded to. The drafts of law presented by the late Provisional Government, now under discussion, and likely to be sanctioned, involve important modifications in favor of general commerce; and are expected to come into operation on the 1st of January, 1854. To appreciate the general bearing of the measure, suffice it to say, that the duties of thirty five, forty, and fifty per cent are reduced to twenty five as the maximum, whilst the absolute prohibition of from eighty to ninety articles, on the flimsy pretext of protection to articles of home production, is entirely done away with. Under the new law, wheat, flour and Indian corn will be admissible at all times, the first paying a fixed duty of one silver dollar per "fanega," equivalent to about four Winchester bushels; the second one silver dollar per cwt; and the third six silver rials per fanega. The new ministry has not yet announced any definite programme of policy; but from its composition, the known character of its members, and the deference due to public opinion, we are entitled to infer that it will be one of peace and conciliation, economy and reform, impartial justice and liberty of action; and the community at large, we are convinced, is prepared to accept and appreciate such a system.

On extending our view to the national organization, there is a dark and mysterious veil, that forbids us to speculate with the same certainty or complacency. After three months and a half of cool reflection, the advances of Buenos Ayres have been met with little else, so far as we can yet see, than studied neglect and cold disdain, and the election of the first constitutional President, fixed for the 20th of the ensuing November, is probably destined to rear an insuperable barrier to the patriotic wishes of the wise and good of all parties and sections of the republic.

The Olinda, the second of the new line of steamers, sailed from Buenos Ayres for Lisbon, Brazil, and the River Platte, on November 5.

The Argentine *Packet*, under the head of "Hopeful Symptoms," says:—"A contract has been concluded for lighting the capital with gas. A proposition for supplying it with water is now before the Chamber of Representatives. The site of a new custom house has been decided upon. The necessity of a mole and a railroad to the Boca is unanimously admitted. As a specimen of the local improvements, in the first three and a half months of peace, this is not amiss."

The British *Packet*, of October 29, says:—"The only news of interest is the sudden death of General Juan Antonio Lavallejs, acting President of Montevideo, and the leader of the thirty three devoted patriots who hoisted the standard of revolt in 1825, which eventually resulted in the independence of the Oriental State of the Uruguay."

Eclipses of the Year.

In the year 1854 there will be two eclipses of the sun and two of the moon.

The moon will be partially eclipsed on the 12th of May, beginning at 10h. 52m. A. M., consequently invisible to us.

There will be an annular eclipse of the sun on the 26th of May, visible as follows:—Beginning at 4h. 10m.; greatest obscuration 4h 26m. End, 6h. 34m. P. M. Eclipse begins 147 degrees 52 minutes, from vertex to the right. Digits eclipsed 10½ on the northern limb. The line of central and annular eclipse passes through a portion of the northern part of the United States, and southern part of British America. This will be the largest eclipse visible in the United States until the year 1900, when the sun will be totally eclipsed, the centre passing near Washington.

A partial eclipse of the moon will occur on the 4th of November, at 4h. 11m. P. M.; invisible. The moon will rise with a slight shade on its northern limb.

The sun will be totally eclipsed on the 20th of November, the middle occurring at 5h. 14m. A. M., invisible. This eclipse will be central and total in the southern part of Africa, South America, and the Southern ocean.

Our Houston Correspondence.

HOUSTON, (Texas,) Dec. 21, 1853.

Passage of the Pacific Railroad Bill by the Legislature—The Southern Route Adopted—Comparison with the Benton Line—The Ports of Galveston and San Diego—Terms of the Texas Contract, &c.

The great Pacific Railroad bill passed the House of Representatives of this State, on Saturday last, by a vote of seventy one to thirteen. It had previously passed the Senate by a vote of twenty two to four, and is consequently completed.

I send you a copy of the bill, that you may see how resolutely and effectively the Texans are working to secure for their State the Pacific Railroad. It is well understood that this bill meets the entire approbation of Gen. Rusk, our able and indefatigable Senator, who has made himself personally familiar with almost every rod of ground between the Sabine river and San Diego on the Pacific, and knows whereof he may affirm in this respect in the Senate of the United States. Gen. Rusk has recently completed a tour of reconnoissance as far west as the Pecos, where he was met by Judge Ankrim and his party from El Paso, who were on a similar tour; so that what Gen. Rusk may state in the Senate, in regard to the "Southern route" for the Pacific Railroad, (in reference to its intrinsic advantages, without regard to comparative advantages) ought to be received, as it doubtless will be as ascertained fact. When comparative advantages, as, for instance, between this route and Col. Benton's snows buried, double-Switzerland route, come to be made, the Texas route for the grand chain of railroad between the Atlantic and Pacific will be able to exhibit claims whose superiority, in the matters of distance, grade, favorableness of climate, wealth of country traversed, and productiveness, which will leave the Benton project fluttering on the summit of the Rocky Mountains. Colonel Fremont may again lose two-thirds of his men in exploring the desert wilds north of 36 deg. of latitude, but no railroad men in this practical world can probably be found who will be willing to lose their senses by attempting to follow his explorations with a railroad. It is, practically, just as absurd to attempt to build Colonel Benton's railroad, as it would be to attempt to build a railroad from north to south, right through the Swiss Cantons; and a recent letter of Col. Benton, touching the unfortunate Gunnison's surveying party, makes this plain. You have published the letter, (in which Col. Benton says that a portion of his route is equal to two Switzerlands,) and your readers will remember it. The stalworth Colonel never said a truer thing. To construct a railroad through the upper Sierra Nevada, on the line he wishes, would be just about like constructing a road through the everlasting glaciers of Mont Blanc, and then back again by another route. If Col. Benton can persuade the American Congress to patronize his plan and his route for the great Pacific Railroad, against the plain, easy, unobstructed, cheap route through Texas, on the parallel of 32 deg., then Col. Benton may be set down as the prime magician of the age, and the American Congress may be set down as the easiest gulled association of intelligent gentlemen in the world.

Your readers may think I write thus because I am a Texan. Well, I do. I write thus because, as a Texan, I believe I know how superior our route for the Pacific railroad is over all others, and because I know, also, all about the scheme of Col. Benton, and how preposterous it is to attempt to force a great national railroad through a country where snow and ice must obstruct the running of trains for two or three months in the year, when it can be easier, better, cheaper, and quicker (far quicker) constructed through a country where neither snow nor ice can interrupt the running of trains for a single day in the year, and where the agricultural and mineral wealth of the land is absolutely wonderful. Do we not know of the absolute sterility of thousands of miles of Col. Benton's proposed route? Do we not know how absolutely it is covered up, for thousands of miles, by snow? Do we in Texas not know all about the country north of the thirty-sixth degree of north latitude, from St. Louis to the Pacific, quite as well as Col. Benton knows it; and do not the people of this Union and their representatives in Congress know it too? I rather think so. Colonel Benton is fooling nobody by his grandiloquent representations of the impenetrable and impracticable route of his railroad to California and Oregon. Not a bit of it. The people of the country know as well as Colonel Benton does about his route, and laugh at it as a scheme to be accomplished not less than a hundred years hence, when ice and snow shall have become more manageable. To build a railroad to California and Oregon, on Colonel Benton's plan and route, now, would be truly like building a railroad through a couple of Switzerlands.

But I need not trouble you with these comparisons, nor with any comparisons. I think you will agree with me that the action of the Legislature of Texas, the result of which I send you, is likely to be conclusive as regards the Pacific Railroad. This action, I believe you will admit, secures the Pacific Railroad to Texas. The advantages of grade, of climate, of almost infinite productiveness of soil, mineral and agricultural, over which the road will pass, and of cheapness of construction, must secure the first connection of the Atlantic with the Pacific ocean through Texas. The first railroad that connects the waters of these oceans will be that which reaches from San Diego on the Pacific, to Galveston, on the Atlantic, or Gulf of Mexico. The distance between Galveston and San Diego is less than thirteen hundred miles