the general tone of diplomatic society, no idea of an unpleasant termination to the renewed conference. Russia has no thought of stirring up the ashes of the fire which was so fortunately for her damped out in March of the present year. She will be satisfied by having gained the point of a conference at all, after such defiant terms had been used in reference to it by England. After a show of resistance she will find occasion to add her crochets to the mediation of France, and a great object will have been gained in exhibiting before the nations of the continent and the world in general, the increased and increasing amity between herself and the great military nation with whom she has been so recently at war. That the day is not far distant when this amity will take a practical character and assume a hostile front against England is certainly a very popular error, if error it be; and many do not scruple to assert the renewed conference will form an admirable screen for some secret treaty highly prejudicial to the liberties of the world. It is the opinion of many sound thinking men that the present *denouement* of the political events, which began in 1853 and ended with the treaty of Paris, is precisely such as the Emperor Napoleon had been throughout laboring to effect. As things were Russia could never have been anything to the dynasty of Bonaparte but a cold friend; but a little good humored wrestling and an awkward black eye or two, has now rendered the parties friends for life. These long-sighted men content themselves with expressing their firm belief that whenever another war shall break out, whatever may be its nature and its cause, France and Russia will be found on the same side.

But there is certainly another view of the question. There are those who persist in believing that Russia is still menacing and redoubtable, for she will gain from the allies money for those railroads which ten years hence she will not fail to turn against them. With these, it is said, when Louis Napoleon and Lord Palmerston have long passed away from the scene, she will transport some five or six hundred thousand men to those frontiers where no fleet of France or England will be able to withstand them. Then she will only need to cross the Danube in order to enter that land—always to her flowing with milk and honey—of Turkey, the possession of which she believes will endow her with the domination of the world. Austria might, indeed, oppose her by means of Hungarian and Wallachian railroads, but much cannot be expected from that Power. In the meantime the part which the West is performing is instructive. Journalists, diplomatists, and influential parties of all kinds, are busy squabbling about Naples, and other matters, which, in comparison with a great danger, are in the highest degree trival and absurd.

The Emperor, accompanied by an officer of his household, both in plain clothes, drove on Monday in a phaeton through different parts of Paris. His Majesty followed the Rue de Rivoli as far as the Faubourg St Antoine, and returned by the Rues de Rambuteau, Traince, Coquillière, &c., to the gateway of the Pont Tournant, where the Emperor alighted, and walked through the gardens to the Tuileries.

The Prefect of the Seine has just delivered his annual report on the financial situation of the city of Paris, which, from recent reports, has been looked for with unusual interest.

The land tax, personal and furniture tax, and that on doors and windows, for 1856, amounts to 16,671,515 fr., being an increase since 1836 of 7,774,086 fr., and which will be still greater by 357,389 fr. in 1857. In other words, the taxes of Paris in twenty years are half as much again. In order to remove an impression that generally prevails that it is the richer quarters of Paris which have most been benefitted by the number of new buildings, the report states that the eighth arrondissement, which comprises the Faubourg St. Antoine, and where the working classes principally reside, has only had 130 houses taken down, while one fourth of the total number of new buildings is in that quarter. It also declares it to be a mistake that the new buildings are not as much subdivided as the old ones, and consequently less efficient in accommodation. "I am," however, says the Prefect, "far from disputing that a greater number of disposable accommodations would not have been useful, in order to keep down rents; but what I deny is the cause which is generally assigned for the increase of rent, and which appears to have also taken place in all great towns where the extension of railway communication has caused a sudden increase of population." The report goes on to throw all the blame of financial difficulty on the year 1855, which, from a disastrous law of the 10th of May, rendered the city of Paris incapable of meeting the charges imposed upon it. "Thanks," it adds, "to the measures of finance of 1856, we have now entered on a new era, and we henceforth hope to be able to maintain an equilibrium between the receipts and expenses. This will not at first be effected without difficulty, but the government of the Emperor, who has resolutely undertaken the difficult work from which former governments have shrunk—that of re establishing order in the departmental budgets—will devise means for preventing a recurrence of the embarrassments of the past."

PARIS, Dec. 4, 1856.

Snow in Paris—The City Finances—The Imperial Prince—The Imperial Displays, in Public, &c., &c.

The ground is covered with snow, and the frost is so sharp that all building operations are suspended; and there is that dull livery of gray pervading the atmosphere which promises a continuance of severe weather. The appearance of the city, as the eye wanders over it from the heights of Passy, is singularly picturesque; the domes of the Hotel des Invalides and of the Church of the Assomption, and in the far distance that of the Pantheon, have a majestic effect, as, looming through the frosted atmosphere, their snow-white robes, like gigantic parachutes, swell over the panorama, and spire, and tower, and fluted portico, glistening in their pure winter panoply, are only relieved from a monotonoly of white by the thousands of trees which, leafless and gaunt, shoot up their hard, black, staring boughs, in living testimony of the fleeting nature of beauty and luxuriance. The accounts from the departments all concur in speaking of a very marked change in the weather since Sunday. Snow had fallen heavily on Monday at Lyons, Valence, Bordeaux, Havre, Cherbourg, and in the whole northern part of France; in fact, winter would seem to have set in with considerable severity. In Paris yesterday morning, snow came down heavily, and continued to fall during the day. The thermometer is now at 26 Fahrenheit.

It is impossible not to feel some misgiving as to tranquillity being preserved should the present weather prove a presage of lengthened severity. The government, it is well known, has made ample provision, as far as regards Paris, to meet casual necessities. The *manutention* is stored with every description of corn, and government purveyors are prepared to enter the market as purchasers for the relief of those whom the inclemeucy of the season shall have cast upon their hands. The power of an absolute government is so complete that it has nothing but to will an interference with the laws of commerce, in order to meet an exceptional demand, and its will becomes law. Still, the distress in a city gorged with tens of thousands of laborers, attracted to it by such gigantic works as have been going on for the last five years, cannot but be enormous; if from any circumstance the employment is suspended, it will require no commom vigilance and providence to keep it from assuming a restless form.

The Prefect of the Seine has just presented to the Departmental Commission the budget of the city of Paris for the year 1857, in which the receipts are estimated at 59,972,212fr.; expenses, 59,964,920fr.; surplus, 7,292fr. In the list of ordinary expenses he Prefecture of the Seine stands for 2,883,140fr.; Prefecture of Police, 183,112fr.; optional expenses, but of departmental utility for both prefectures nited, 1,099,399fr.; extraordinary expenses for repairs of Palais de Justice and other edifices, improvement of departmental roads, &c., 54,954,653fr.; special expenses for vicinal roads, 594,473fr., &c. The assistance given to orphan children requires an augmentation of credit of 215,200fr., and that for lunatics 50,779fr., the total increase in expenses being 402,140fr.

The Prince Imperial was yesterday, in spite of the coldness of the weather, taken out for air and exercise in the garden and court of the Tuileries. In the afternoon his imperial highness was carried in a carriage, with a military escort, to the Park of Monceaux, where he remained an hour and a half. What he may grow up to it is impossible to say, but though a strong, healthy looking child, he is assuredly, at present, far from prepossessing in appearance; the mouth is gross and altogether uncomely; the cheek bones are long and prominent; the complexion is swarthy. But he is lusty as a young eagle. Scarcely nine months old, he rolls himself over and over after any object which attracts him, with surprising agility, and shows all the germs of future despotism in his determined manner of exercising his free will on all matters within his domain. The fondness of the imperial parents is absolutely intense, and the genuine amiability of both is never more apparent than when the child is in their presence. As to the Empress, it seems to be the only thing that was wanting to draw out the great depths of her character; and in the duties of maternity she displays a grave solidity and womanly earnestness of which she was not always supposed capable. The health of the Emperor, if it were ever affected to the degree so generally reported, is surprisingly recovered. He now rises at 7 o'clock; is frequently at work in his Cabinet by candle light, and at 10 receives his Ministers, Marshals and high functionaries, as heretofore. The only difference observed in him by those who are most intimately associated with him—and I am speaking on the best information—is that he is often seized with long fits of abstraction, and will sit for hours sometimes doing nothing; and yet, it is evident that this is not a state of inaction, for there are unmistakable indications of his mind being in constant operation. He has an affection of the instep—a sort of tic douleureux, he calls it—which often prevents him drawing on his boot, and indisposes him to move about. His general health appears excellent, and thus secures him from the imputation of gout. Sledges are preparing for the court, of the most magnificent description, and it is expected that to-day the Emperor and Empress will drive to the Bois de Boulogne, where, if the weather continue, there will be superb skating on the fine sheets of ice the frozen reservoirs will afford.

The French law treats the appropriation by the finder of articles in the streets as robbery; and within the last three weeks several cases of condemnation have been recorded; yesterday a seller of roasted chestnuts was sentenced to four months imprisonment by the tribunal of Correctional Police for having offered for sale to a jeweller, for 72f., a scent box, in gold, which he happened to pick up in the streets. The jeweller not being satisfied as to the man's right to sell the article, called him aside and delivered him over to durance vile.

From Spain we hear that the Queen has been anxious that O'Donnell should accept the St. Petersburg mission, but that he has respectfully declined the golden ostracism. The greatest possible anxiety is felt about the reported rising in Sicily, but as yet we are all in the dark. The most curious incident in the political world is the sudden transformation of the *Assemblée Nationale* into a thick and thin advocate of the English and French alliance against Russia, whose organ it was during the war, and whose faithful advocate it has remained till within the last two or three days. Indeed, it has endured martyrdom formerly in the cause of Russia, and in consequence of its too energetic language had its mouth stopped by the censorship, for two months. It now maintains that the meeting of the new conference is a check for no one, unless to the Power which is obliged to sacrifice its pretensions to a decision of the majority, and on these points it is of the same opinion as the Morning *Post*, that Lord Palmerston has nothing to fear. It adds:—"It appears certain that France has rallied to the opinion of England in the questions of the Island of Serpents and of the new Bessarabian frontier. This point gained, the English Cabinet could feel no objection in approving of the conference, since it was certain to obtain the triumph of its views." "*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*," some people will exclaim at this strange chopping round of the political vane of the *Assemblée Nationale*, which, to be complete, only requires a few stirring articles on the justice of the Neapolitan interference. By the by, there is a telegraphic despatch from Naples to-day, which states that part of the Swiss guard had been sent against the Sicilian insurgents, and that a movement has occurred at Girgenti, (the ancient Agrigentum,) on the southern coast of Sicily. An appeal to the Neapolitan army on the part of the people has been circulated with great diligence and much secresy.

The splendid bon-bon shops of Paris are preparing their Christmas attractions, or rather for that *dies nefasta*, the *jour de l'an*, when everybody is expected to give to everybody. But even Parisian ingenuity is mortal, and has its limits, and therefore it must not be expected that having dived so deep as it has already in the well of discovery, there are many lower depths still for it to sound. As far as one can judge at present, many of the *novellies* exhibited have an unmistakeable look of old acquaintances renovated like the sleeping beauty after a year's retirement from the busy world. Doubtless the "great guns" are kept back till the last. In the meantime, I confess, as an *habitue* whose annual day of suffering is drawing near, I look with a somewhat jaundiced eye on the preparations making for giving a tangible form to the aspirations of my many claimants. I cannot go to a house without finding my young friends engaged in framing lists of wants for the *jour de l'an*, which simply as an ingenious curiosity, are shown to the visiter, of course with no idea that he will avail himself of so agreeable an opportunity of supplying their desires; and as for servants, of all descriptions, from the *concierge* down to the scullery maid, their interest in my health, in that of my wife, in my children, in my very cat and dog, is so painfully feeling that I am in danger of becoming an invalid when I contemplate the impossibility of agreeably remunerating so much ingenious solicitude.

While in the act of folding up my letter, my attention is drawn to the window of my study by a crowd of persons following one of the Imperial carriages. It makes one smile in mockery at the absurd shifts monarchical government is compelled to have recourse to in order to maintain its proper position. The carriage contains that poor atom of humanity, the baby Prince Imperial. There he goes, down the avenue *de l'Imperatrice* at a slow pace, on account of the glassy state of the road. On the box is a fat imperial coachman, in gorgeous green and gold. Behind stand three footmen six feet high. The carriage itself is burnished all over with paint and varnish and gold. A troop of guides *en guerde tenue* clustre at the wheels, the windows, and in its rear; and by the side, as commander-in-chief of this expedition, which is presumed to convey the hopes of all France, rides in scarlet and gold, one of the mareschals of the Palais. The poor little baby, that so many horses, so much tailoring, so many gay and fat and valiant men should be all afoot, doing that which a decent nursemaid with a strong arm and kindly soul, would do ten times better by herself, and that all this should be thought necessary to give him importance in the eyes of those millions it is fondly hoped he will live and rule! Surely the gew-gaws and gingerbreadism of the sovereignty of one must be near its end, when in the last half of the nineteenth century the great grandson of a Corsican avocat can, by such means, be converted into as rightful a king as though the imperial purple had for centuries adorned his ancestors! I know nothing so weak in the Bonapartist pretensions as their slavish imitation of Bourbon pageantry and etiquette! Should Henri Cinq ever find his way back again, as many say he will some day, he will certainly find little to alter. His palace will have been swept and garnished, all wholesome checks of a popular character removed, and Richard may be himself again, with very little concession.

Our Berlin Correspondence.

BERLIN, Dec. 2, 1856.

Opening of the Prussian Chambers—Neufchatel—Composition of the Chambers—Prussian Finances—Increased Taxation—The Resources of the Kingdom—Coal, Lignite and Zinc—The Iron Works, &c.

The opening of the Chambers, which, from the little sympathy felt by the people for their nominal representatives, passes off in general almost unnoticed, was looked forward to this year with unusual interest, it having leaked out that there would be a passage in the royal speech referring to Neufchatel, of quite an energetic and even bellicose character. Notwithstanding this impression, however, it was hardly anticipated that his Majesty would make use of such very decided terms as he actually has done. Our Diet, as it is called, met on Saturday morning, and after alluding to internal affairs, the satisfactory result of the harvest, the efforts of the Prussian government to insure the execution of the treaty of Paris by "all parties concerned"—a palpable hit at England and Austria—the King proceeded as follows:—

I have been painfully affected by the recent events in my Principality of Neufchatel, where the antagonism existing since 1848 between my undoubted title and the actual condition of public affairs, has thrown faithful men into the power of their adversaries. The moderation with which, for the sake of the peace of Europe, I have acted in respect to the state of this Principality, has been duly acknowledged by the European Powers. I am desirous, even after the late unfortunate conflict, and after my indisputable right has been again ratified by a unanimous resolution of the German Confederation, to solve this difficulty by negotiation in a manner conformable to the dignity of my crown. But I cannot and will not permit my magnanimity to be converted into an arm against my right itself. My people may rest assured that any further steps I shall take will be guided by the serious and well weighed consideration of my duties and of the political relations of Europe; but I am equally convinced that, if circumstances should require it, my people will display their accustomed zeal, fidelity and devotion in vindicating the honor of my crown.

The King pronounced the last sentence in a loud tone of voice, and with visible emotion. There can be no doubt that he wrote this part of the speech himself, as it is impressed with the usual characteristics of the royal style, and forms a striking contrast to the unimpassioned and business-like tenor of the rest of his harangue. In fact, his Majesty has greater command of language than any of his ministers, and prides himself not a little on his eloquence. The assembly, who are mostly composed of government officers, civil and military, received the King's appeal to the "zeal, fidelity and devotion" of his people with boisterous enthusiasm, vieing each other in the deafening fervor of their cheers, to which the royal orator responded by doffing his helmet—for, although personally one of the most peaceable of men, he always appears on such occasions in full uniform, with a thing on his head much like the basin of Mambrino—and bowing graciously to the assembled "peers and pillars of the State." Whether the country at large will be equally delighted, is another question. Up to the present moment no one seriously believed in a rupture with Switzerland, or had any idea that this Neufchatel farce would assume the dimensions of a tragedy; but there is a party near the throne who are evidently determined to push matters to extremity, and who, in spite of their legitimist predilections, do not hesitate even to pay their court to Louis Napoleon, in the hope of obtaining his co-operation or acquiescence. It cannot be denied that they are wise in their generation, for in this case, even more than in the Oriental and Neapolitan difficulties, everything depends upon the French autocrat, who is next neighbor to Switzerland, and without whose consent no one could think of attacking her. If he turns a deaf ear to the flattering overtures of the Prussian statesmen, the latter will have to confine themselves to negotiation, and all their blustering will go for nothing; but if he countenances them in requiring the Swiss government to release the Neufchatel prisoners without a trial, and thus tacitly acknowledge the sovereignty of Prussia in that Canton, or if he only promises to remain neutral, there will be no alternative but for Switzerland to submit, or to run the risk of an armed intervention of Prussia and the Germanic body. Without derogation to the traditional valor of the brave mountaineers, it may be doubted whether they would be able to resist such overwhelming odds as could be brought to bear against them in that event; and to Switzerland therefore, as well as to Prussia herself, who has nothing to gain by a war except the gratification of dynastic pride, a pacific solution of this difficulty must be highly desirable, if it can be obtained without sacrificing the independence of the only republic now left in Europe. Perhaps this would be a good opportunity for the United States to interfere in behalf of their European brethren, by forming a "Holy Alliance" with England for the defence of liberty. At present Joon Bull is too isolated and too apprehensive of giving umbrage to his slippery friend on the other side of the channel to act with his usual spirit in this business, but he would pluck up courage if he were backed by the Young Giant across the Atlantic.

There having been no new election this year, the Chambers are composed of nearly the same elements as last session. A few members have died and a few members have vacated their seats, but their places have been filled by kindred spirits, and the formidable majority at the disposal of ministers remains unimpaired. In the Upper House, Prince Hohenloe, the leader of the ultra aristocratic faction, has been chosen President by an almost unanimous vote. Yesterday the Lower House re-elected Count Eulenburg, the government candidate, who succeeded last session in ousting Count Schwerin, the head of the constitutional party. It is evident, therefore, that the opposition will stand no chance in either Chamber, unless the adherents of government should turn restive at finding themselves attacked in their tenderest part—the pocket.

I mentioned in my last that the Prussian finances were in rather a dilapidated condition, and that ministers would probably come down to the Chambers with some proposals for supplying them with the sinews of war. This expectation has been fully justified by the royal speech, which contains the pleasing intelligence that "the resources of the kingdom are increasing in productiveness," but adds that "several pressing and important requisites that have long been adjourned, must no longer be neglected," in consequence of which "an accession to the revenue has become imperatively necessary." His Majesty concludes by recommending the financial projects which his government will submit to the Chambers for this purpose, to their careful consideration. We are as yet in the dark as to the nature of these projects, and there are various versions afloat respecting them. Raising the income tax appears out of the question—moneyed classes, whose interests are predominant in the present Legislature, being, of course most violently opposed to any such measure. Many of the necessaries of life—meat, flour, coffee, sugar, &c., are heavily taxed already. There is a land tax (from which, however, a great part of the nobility are exempt,) and a house tax, license duties and stamp duties, and imposts varying from ten to a hundred per cent on all foreign manufactures. It is not unlikely that an additional duty will be proposed on tobacco, which is consumed here in enormous quantities, and which pays at present from eight to twenty thalers a cwt. Sumptuary taxes are also talked of, which would not be quite unacceptable to the wealthier classes, as they would prevent persons of moderate fortunes from vieing with them in external appendages—fine houses, elegant equipages, and so forth. It is doubtful, however, whether such partial imposts would suffice to meet the necessities of government, and I think it likely that some more comprehensive scheme of taxation will be resorted to. Unfortunately, the whole financial system of Prussia is extremely defective, and all the tinkering it has been subjected to of late only serves to render its inherent viciousness the more conspicuous.

In spite of the difficulties the population have to struggle with, and the heavy burthens that cramp their industry, his Majesty's assertion that the resources of the country are increasing in productiveness is not quite devoid of foundation. In a former communication I gave you some data relative to the production of bituminous and anthracite coal, which had risen last year to upwards of forty millions of tons, representing a value of more than nineteen millions of thalers. Another combustible material of great utility is the "Braunkohle," or lignite, the produce of which amounted in 1854 to 12,515,670 tons—1,660,594 thalers in value—and had advanced last year to 13,774,380 tons—value, 1,876,881 thalers—being an increase of no less than 11-8 per cent. The beds of lignite are found chiefly in the province of Saxony, which furnishes three-fourths of the whole produce; and as other kinds of fuel—such as wood, coal and peat—are extremely scarce in that province, the bountiful supply of lignite is an inestimable benefit to the population. In other parts of the kingdom—Pomerania, East Prussia and Posen—several beds of lignite have been recently discovered and are beginning to be worked. The immense forests with which the provinces were formerly covered have been mostly cut down for building and firewood, and they are obliged in consequence to turn their attention to mineral fuel. There is every reason to believe that the extensive valley of the Vistula abounds in lignite, traces of it having been detected in various districts.

The production of zinc is of still higher importance than that of lignite, and has made greater progress lately than any other branch of mining, exceeding even the activity displayed in the coal fields. In 1855 the quantity of zinc produced amounted to 4,287,293 cwt., against 3,578,577 cwt. in 1854, showing an increase of 19 per cent, the value of the former being 2,137,110 thalers, and that of the latter 1,937,269 thalers. In fact, there is no other country in the world that yields so large a quantity of zinc ore as Prussia, although the United States are said to be treading close upon her heels, and will probably outstrip her ere long. The iron works would seem to be in a less prosperous condition, presenting an increase only of 3.9 per cent (2,228,317 tons, against 2,144,509). The production of lead had risen 13-5 per cent; that of copper only 2-7 per cent. Gold and silver are obtained in infinitessimal quantities, the whole amount of the former not exceeding 2,930 thalers, and that of the latter 251,619 thalers.

On reviewing the whole mining operations of Prussia in 1855, it appears that the total value of their productions amounted to 27,463,061 thalers, and the number of male laborers employed to 100,804; whereas in 1854 the value of the productions was only 21,383,024 thalers, and the number of operatives 99,871. The increase of the latter is limited by the more extensive application of steam power and machinery, which is gradually superseding human labor in many of the departments of mining industry.

Our Vienna Correspondence.

VIENNA, Dec. 1, 1856.

Interview between Louis Napoleon and the Russian Ambassador—The Neufchatel Affair—Peace Conferences—Francis Joseph's Visit to Italy—Danish Encroachments, &c.

If you be desirous of having a sample of a German correspondent's audacity, I am able to give you a most striking one. There lives in Paris an Austrian refugee, one Mr. Hirsch, (which in English signifies "stag,") who is the dear "own correspondent" of the Cologne *Gazette* and the Hamburg *News*. This gentleman tips both newspapers, by helping them to political or other news of his own invention, which he prepares with different *sauces à la tatare*. Thus, for instance, in the Hamburg *News*, of Nov. 21, he relates a curious story concerning a secret interview the Russian Ambassador, General Kisseleff, had with the Emperor of the French, during which Louis Napoleon, in a most cordial and good natured manner, exposed his diplomatic views and ideas, and gave to the Russian General several hints relative to the state of affairs. Napoleon, so Mr. Stag tells his credulous readers, in this secret conversation said to the other as follows:—"Now, look ye, my good man, I would rather you would stick to the bargain which we struck at the Paris Conferences, as this would save me a good deal of trouble *vis-à-vis* the French people and the other Powers, and you would remove every atom of suspicion concerning your good wishes to poor little Turkey. This would serve in the meantime, to countermine the influence Austria has gained with the Sublime Porte, for having got your troops out of the Danubian Principalities. And then, I beg you, for Heaven's sake, consider that by executing the aforesaid convention you might throw a stone into the garden of the Anglo-Austrian alliance, which I don't relish at all, and which, I dare say, cannot be over agreeable to you, my dear, dear Russians. Prussia, you know, always sides with you, as Sardinia with me and you, especially when hoping for some possible encroachment and accretions, which we can promise her, at all events, as I did when she was fighting against you. Therefore, come, do as I bid you; there's a good fellow." After which speech General Kisseleff smiled, bowed, and shed a half-frozen Russian tear. Thus ended a conversation which took place in an embrasure of a window in the Tuileries, where nobody was able to see or to hear what the Emperor and the General were about. Now you will probably wonder at the long or sharp ears of Mr. Stag, or at the marvellous confidence either Louis Napoleon or General Kisseleff put in the discretion of the sagacious gentlemen. I, for my part, cannot help admiring and envying Mr. Stag for being on the most intimate terms with Louis Napoleon (else a very reserved and taciturn prince) or a Russian ambassador, who likewise is not known for a very talkative and communicative person, and for his being initiated into the secrets of a conversation which nobody was allowed to approach. The Cologne *Gazette* and the Hamburg *News*, I dare say—and nobody will contradict me—are indeed happy to have a correspondent of their "own" whom no other correspondent on this side of the Atlantic might equal; thus I humbly strike my correspondential flag, and freely acknowledge the superiority of Mr. Stag. The only thing I, poor "know nothing" as I am, could learn concerning the above mentioned conversation is that Louis Napoleon did not say a word relative to Austria. But what did he say? "Ay, there's the rub," and Europe must feel very much obliged to Mr. Stag for his sharp ears.

With regard to the Neufchatel affair, his Majesty the King of Prussia, in his last public speech, not only mentioned his moderation, but speaking about the heroism and devotedness of his people, condescended to shed some heartfelt tears, which inflamed the Prussian deputies to so high a degree of enthusiasm that there is a hope for peaceably settling the whole affair. A peaceful arrangement would indeed be profitable to both parties.

The Neapolitan and Bolgrad questions are still unanswered, but new conferences, *en miniature*, are, it is believed, to be held in the course of next month. England, too, seems not altogether disinclined to have the different European questions resolved at these conferences, which she formerly abhorred, but now looks upon with a more pleasant eye, as the influence of a very high and illustrious person is said to prevail in the royal private cabinets. Whether these conferences are to meet in Paris, Brussels or elsewhere is as yet undecided.

The Emperor Francis Joseph has been received by the people of Trieste with every demonstration of joy, and the utmost cordiality, which, we dare say, was still surpassed by the general enthusiasm he was greeted with at Venice. Thus the hypocritical fears which several newspapers uttered, lest his majesty might prejudice his own rank and dignity by paying a visit to the Italian provinces, proved utterly unfounded and vain. Numerous acts of clemency, donations, grants of pardon, have taken place, and prepossessed the lively Italians in favor of the young, generous and chivalrous monarch.

With regard to the Danish encroachments on the privileges of the Duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg, on the rights of the German Confederation in general, and on the late convention with Austria and Prussia, Austria has declared not to yield the least iota of the rights of Germany, and invited Prussia to join this declaration.

Our Madrid Correspondence.

MADRID, Nov. 29, 1856.

Insignificant Facts—Captain General Concha—The Queen and the Pope—Ministerial Permanencies—Buchanan, Alarm and Preparation—Buckingham Smith, Esq.—Orders to the Fleet Not to Sail for Vera Cruz—Charcoal Sketches of Men on the Political Stage of Spain—The Sword and the Mitre—The Countess Montijo—Potato Bread and Lord Howden—Journey of Diplomats—Pensioning of Authoresses—Carolina Coronado, &c.

I am not going to tell you to-day, friend HERALD, those very reserved secrets which I announced to you in my last letter, because they are so important they merit being kept another week in my inkstand. This letter might be lost in France, and the intermeddling police of his Imperial Majesty get the benefit of my particular gossip, which is my treasure. Prudence and circumspection! The opportunity will soon come for sending you the secrets.

What I am going to tell you now are the insignificant things. For example: It is definitively resolved by the Spanish government to dismiss Concha from the post of Captain General of Cuba. They are waiting the arrival of the next mail from the Havana, which it is expected will bring his resignation. If it does not, he will be dismissed without further ceremony.

Second item—Queen Isabella has written another autograph letter to the Pope, promising to do all that he wishes in the matter of the sale of the church property in Spain.

Third item—There is no change in the Cabinet, and Pidal has determined not to resign the place of Minister of State.

But let us talk seriously: Your election of a President has been an election very little to the taste of us Spaniards. The man among us who says least says that Buchanan is a filibuster, and you know what that means in a Spanish mouth. The press tears its hair in commentaries upon this election, and the government is already thinking what it will do if Buchanan sends out here a filibustering Minister. The Cabinet is having serious councils about the means of defending the island of Cuba, and they are making haste to arrange the difficult questions which we have pending with Mexico and San Domingo. I can also assure you that the squadron which we have prepared in the port of Havana to send to Vera Cruz is ordered not to sail, and will not sail unless it should have got under weigh before the orders reach it.

Do you want me to tell you frankly who is the man who could do something here for the democratic party, and for Cuba? Well, it is the excellent Secretary of Legation, Mr. Buckingham Smith. His talents, his knowledge of the language, and the sympathies he has excited at the Court, would make him an excellent Minister to Spain. The truth is to be told, Mr. HERALD, and Mr. Smith is a man of much merit.

Now, then, just a few strokes of the charcoal to give you an idea of the men actually on the stage of politics at Madrid.

Narvaez, you see, wears a wig, and consequently he has his brains always hot.

Pidal exposes his bald spot to the air, and thus you see his head is cool.

Nocedal is trim and pretty as a steel engraving, and so his slender soul is of steel also, a kind of thin Toledo blade, which pricks, cuts, doubles up, whips about, and does not break. He is one of the most dangerous enemies to liberty.

Moyano is pug-nosed and ugly—but his talent is sharp and his intellect well proportioned. He combats always without scruple, and wins by his tenacity.

But enough of the ministers. Bravo Murillo, without being minister, figures largely in the royal councils. The Queen consults him in everything. Bravo Murillo would enter the Cabinet if it were not for his antipathy to the military element. Our government now is dressed in uniform, and Bravo Murillo would dress it in a cassock, or at least in a black coat and respectable silk hat.

When Narvaez wished to come to an understanding with Bravo Murillo about the formation of a new Cabinet, the dialogue was in this wise:—

Narvaez—Bravo, pick up the sword, man!
Bravo Murillo—Duke, put on the mitre!
Narvaez—And the army?
Bravo Murillo—And the clergy?
Narvaez—Rub-a-dub-r-r-rub-r-r-rub-r-r-r-rub!
Bravo Murillo—*Dominus tecum!*

Meantime other things come to pass not less important for the country; and this one is an item of fact and highly interesting intelligence. The Countess Montijo has given a dinner at which the guests ate potato bread; she, the mother of the Empress and grandmother of the Son of France, eating potato bread—and eating it with partridges—*tête de veau, suprême de volaille*—even with ham, has been an example so edifying that Lord Howden has immediately given another dinner, at which they have eaten potato bread with roast beef, plum pudding, and all sorts of things.

This is for a shame to the poor, who in Spain die of hunger if they can't get wheaten bread. Did you ever see such insolence? Wheaten bread, when the Countess, mother of Emperors, and the noble Lord, eat potato bread!

Have you ever seen such pretensions on the part of the people?—such gluttony as this of the democracy? But they will be forced at last to comprehend that the virtue of moderation is in those who give the preference to the humble potato over the stuck-up wheat stalk.

The Countess Montijo at length puts the potato in the place which its merit must grace, whilst she frowns down that obtrusive and impertinent grain which has been so foolishly considered the support of the poor. This is a great advance in those countries which are pinched with hunger.

Sr. Tassara will delay his departure for Washington some eight or ten days. Gonsalez Bravo will soon start for London.

The press has busied itself lately in asking the government to pension the authoresses of most merit. Carolina Coronado, Gertrudis Avellaneda, and another who has published all her works under the pseudonyme of Fernon Caballero. The Cortes will probably vote the law, if so be the Cortes are allowed to assemble; which I doubt. Carolina Coronado it will be remembered is the wife of the late Charge d'Affaires of the United States, Mr. Horatio G. Perry, and one of the most popular and best loved names in Spain.

The *Discusion*, organ of the democratic party, says:—

We have seen the *Criterio* recall the name of Fernon Caballero, and the *Estado* recall the name of the Senora Avellanedo, and propose them to the national gratitude. We, without diminishing their merit, would recall to-day one of the truest glories of our literature, the popular name of the Senora Donna Carolina Coronado, the poetess by excellence, in whose sweet verses breathe always the pure aroma of a woman's heart, and moves a soul impressionable as a sensitive plant, luminous as a star.

The Senora Coronado is the poetess of nature; in her compositions the creation is beautified, taking the tints of of a sublime inspiration.

She is besides the poetess of the domestic circle. The ties of the family—the sentiments most intimate and sacred of life—have been sung by the Senora Coronado with a simplicity and a charm which is beyond our encomiums.

The Senora Donna Carolina Coronado is doubtless one of the most sympathetic names of our literature, and best worthy the consideration of all those who esteem the lustre of our arts.

All which being duly set forth, we are prepared to dive again and come up next week.

The Isthmus of Darien Canal.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE LONDON TIMES.

The expedition sent out by the governments of England, France and the United States of America, in December, 1853, to survey the proposed canal route across the Isthmus of Darien from Caledonia bay on the Atlantic coast to the Gulf of San Miguel on that of the Pacific, is generally supposed to have proved a complete failure, and, indeed, the circumstance that none of the engineers engaged in it have made any report would seem to justify that supposition. It can, however, be easily shown that notwithstanding the deplorable mismanagement of the expedition, and the very hasty and incomplete examination made of the country, with a tunnel of three miles in length a canal between these two points is practicable. The only published accounts of the expedition are Commander Prevost's "official report," in the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society for 1855, and a pamphlet by Dr. Cullen, entitled the Mismanaged Darien Expedition of 1854, published by Effinham Wilson. Commander Prevost's report has no bearing on the question of the practicability of the canal, as the course he took from the Pacific side was three points of the compass westward of the proper route. Appended to it, however, there is a section of the isthmus, and a very accurate map, compiled, I believe, by Captain Fitzroy and Mr. Arrowsmith, in which the longitude of each coast is corrected in accordance with the surveys of Commander Parsons and Captain Kellett. The rivers Sucubti and Chuquanaqua are in it laid down from an accurate Spanish survey found in the archives of Bogota. The levels are those taken by Mr. Gisborne and his assistants, Messrs. Bennett, Armstrong, Devenish, and Bond. From this map and section the following facts appear to be established:—

1. The harbors on both coasts are admirably adapted for termini of a grand ship canal.
2. The Savana river is quite free from obstructions, and is navigable to the mouth of the Lara.
3. From the junction of the Lara with the Savana to the Chuquanaqua, opposite the mouth of the Sucubti, a distance of twelve miles, the country is of such a character as to present no engineering difficulties, nor for that distance would any deep cutting be required in the construction of a canal.
4. The next stage, from the Chuquanaqua to the confluence of the rivers Asnati and Sucubti, a distance of nine miles, the country is of the same character.
5. From the confluence of the Asnati and Sucubti for the next six miles, to the little Indian hamlet of Sucubti, there is no difficulty to be surmounted.
6. For the next three miles the land gradually rises from 180 feet to an elevation of 420 feet.
7. In the next three miles, in the direction of the Atlantic, the ground rises into a peak 930 feet high, so that here a tunnel would be required.
8. From the foot of this peak to the Atlantic seaboard, a distance of only two miles, the ground is very low, and presents no difficulty whatsoever.
9. The whole length of the canal to be cut would be 35 miles.

Such are the facts, and it should be borne in mind that in the map and section which I have mentioned above the existence of a valley across the Cordillera is not taken into account, and I regret to say no search was made for it. I myself have repeatedly and distinctly seen it from Caledonia bay, and taken the bearing of its entrance, which was nearly due west of Isla del Oro or Golden Island. The mountain which, according to Mr. Gisborne, would require tunnelling, is southeast of it. This mountain, Dr. Cullen says, is called Agla by the Indians.

The country being overgrown by a dense forest of tall trees and high brushwood, and Mr. Gisborne having made only a very hurried examination of it, the valley remained unseen by him, and its existence was therefore ignored. It is, however, very plainly marked on Commander Parsons' survey of Caledonia bay and Port Escoses, 1854, lately published by the Hydrographic office.

Again, Dr. Ross, who accompanied Commander Prevost, in a conversation which I had with him a few weeks ago, distinctly informed me that he descended into another valley transverse to the Cordillera, several miles to the northwest of that opposite Golden Island. This would show that the mountain running parallel to the shore of Caledonia bay, instead of being, as is generally supposed, part of an unbroken range, is really isolated.

Mr. Gisborne himself, in a letter to Commander Hancock, dated Her Majesty's ship Espiegle, Caledonia Bay, April 4, 1854, says:—"I am quite aware that in now concluding my surveying operations there is a great deal of interesting information still wanting, and that the examination of the Isthmus is not near so perfect as I had hoped to make it."

Commander Prevost, in a despatch to Rear Admiral Fairfax Moresby, C. B., at Callao, dated Her Majesty's ship Virago, Savana river, Jan. 7, 1854, says:—"Fording the river, (the Chuquanaqua,) we began to ascend, entering, as we supposed, the Cordillera, and during our progress passed over several hills, the highest of which we estimated at seven and eight hundred feet in height. From this and other summits we were able to see, though indistinctly, over the surrounding country, which showed the ranges of hills to broken, assuming a sugar loaf form, apparently having narrow passes or valleys at their bases, along which several rivers and mountain streams may find their way into the Atlantic."

In fine, I think there are sufficient grounds to justify her Majesty's government in sending a few vessels of war to Caledonia Bay and the Gulf of San Miguel, whence parties of sailors, marines and engineers might be landed to survey the four or five miles of ground which separate the head waters of the Aglaseniqua and the Sucubti, and which are, I believe, traversed by a valley. I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient humble servant,

WILLIAM M'DERMOTT, M. D., Surgeon R. N., Late of her Majesty's ship Espiegle, on the Darien expedition.

23 NORTHUMBERLAND STREET, Strand, Dec. 8.

Return of Rev. Dr. Livingstone to Civilization.

[From the London Times, Dec. 11.]

The Rev. Dr. Livingstone arrived at Marseilles from Tunis on the 6th inst., and was then in good health. His left arm is, however, broken and partly useless, it having been torn by a lion. When he was taken on board her Majesty's ship Frolic, on the Mozambique coast, he had great difficulty in speaking a sentence of English, having disused it so long while travelling in Africa. He had with him a native from the interior of Africa. This man, when he got to the Mauritius, was so excited with the steamers and various wonders of civilization that he went mad, and jumped into the sea and was drowned. Dr. Livingstone has been absent from England seventeen years. He crossed the great African continent almost in the centre, from west to east, has been where no civilized being has ever been before, and has made many notable discoveries of great value. He travelled in the twofold character