AFFAIRS IN EUROPE.

The Chess Contest in England.

OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENCE.

LONDON, August 20, 1858.

Paul Morphy, the American Chess Player, in England—Something About Chess in General and Morphy in Particular—The Interest he is Creating in England—His Wonderful Superiority Over the Chief Magnates of the Old World—The Latest News Respecting His Match with Herr Löwenthall—The Score Between the Young American and the Leading English Player—List of the Killed and Wounded—The Match with Staunton, &c., &c.

The appearance of your gifted countryman, Paul Murphy, in Europe, has been the signal for excitement in the chess world, unparalleled since the memorable conflict of Labourdonnais and Mc[illegible]onnel. For centuries past England has been regarded as the adopted home of the goddess Caissa. Almost every educated person here is more or less acquainted with her mysteries, and amateurs from all quarters of the globe have gained their proudest laurels within her midst. In London, Philidor rendered his name as enduring as the game itself; Labourdonnais showed himself invincible, Anderson's fame became European, and Löwenthall, Harrwitz, Horwitz, Lowe and scores of others became "household words" in chess. Now, more than ever, strangers frequent our shores for the purpose of displaying their knowledge of the game, Albion being looked upon as the trysting place for chess knights errant, and the approaching meeting at Birmingham of the British Chess Association promises to be a very Ashby de la Zouche of Zatrikion gladiatorial tournays.

We used to ask in Europe, "Who ever reads an American book?" No one puts that question now, unless with the certainty of "writing himself down an ass." Washington Irving, Fenimore Cooper, Longfellow, and others far too numerous to mention, are seldom equalled, never surpassed, in the various branches of literature, and their works are even more popular in England than in the United States. Our daily and weekly newspapers are indebted for column upon column to the American press, and your opinions are cited as authority upon questions affecting the European continent alone. We have, in fact, become beaten out of our Old World egotism, and are forced to admit that the intelligence of our transatlantic brethren is not merely expended in the mechanical pursuits of a nascent civilization, but that every study which elevates the man and adorns the nation is vigorously pursued in America. Your ploughs turn up our fields, your reaping machines gather in our harvests, English journals send to the United States for printing presses which cannot be equalled here, your shipbuilders have broken up our vessels and remodelled the navies of Europe. But American intelligence is displayed in more aesthetical pursuits than even these; and comparing "great things with small," we may sum up your discoveries in science and your achievements in art and literature, and liken them to the doings of the horse tamer, Rarey, who has "stood before kings" and exploded the fallacies of a thousand years.

The game of chess has been the intellectual pastime of the great and learned from remote ages. It is mixed up with the history of nations—at home and in every clime, from Iceland to Japan. It is not mere tradition, but positive historical fact, that the greatest warriors and philosophers in different countries, devoted many hours to its study daily. Brahmins in India, Bonzes in China, bishops and cardinals throughout Europe, all worshipped at the shrine of Caissa. The troubadours sang its praises and counselled the knights to make "the King of Games" their chief pastime; whilst in the far East, Tamerlane, the Great, named one of his sons Schaurshk, in honor of chess. Its influence on the intellectual faculties and habits is so beneficial that heathen nations have ascribed to it a divine origin, and learned men have even recommended it in place of mathematics, as a better "schoolmaster for the mind."

The first congress of American chess players, held last year in New York, gave an impetus to the game throughout your immense territory. In fact, you seem desirous of "doing all creation" as well in chess as in other things, and clubs are springing up throughout the different transatlantic cities whose numbers will shortly surpass those of united Europe. This astonishing progress is principally due to the genius of Paul Murphy, who started at once into universal notice, like Minerva, from the head of Jove; and, after him, to the feats of Louis Paulsen in blindfold play. But Paul Murphy's splendid successes in America were not regarded in Europe as evidences of first class skill. It was broadly asserted that "possibly Mr. Murphy might be all that his admiring fellow countryman represented, but he had never played a game which would bear the test of analysis." Envy, with lying tongue, was silenced to some extent when his arrival in England became known, some two months since. Amateur after amateur measured swords with him, and depreciation gave way to silence, for he has not yet met his equal, although the greatest players in England have opposed him.

Soon after the New York Chess Congress had terminated its sittings, the New Orleans club offered to back Mr. Morphy against Mr. Howard Staunton for $5,000. It had been proposed that the associated players of America should challenge Europe to produce his equal. This would have been the proper course; but the pusillanimity of certain influential members of the Congress, and their jealousy of Morphy, who had beaten them "out of their boots," prevented the challenge being given. The pluckless wights must now regret their opposition.

Since the lamented death of De Labourdonnais, no player has perhaps ranked so high as the English Staunton, and a victory over him is regarded as the crowning glory of a chess knight's ambition. His "handbooks" on the game, translated into all languages of the civilized world, are everywhere "the law and the testimony," and his powers of analysis are considered unrivalled. For many years past the editor of the chess department of the *Illustrated London News*, his reputation has grown with the growth of that journal. His opportunities for building up a colossal reputation have been such as no player ever possessed, and but a few years back, the name of Staunton was revered in chess as that of Newton in science. But a short-sighted ambition made him "Solomon himself." At one time courted and flattered by all, and justly so, too—for chess is deeply indebted to him—he has now lost much of his popularity through his vanity when successful and his utter want of magnanimity in defeat. When victorious, he characterizes his opponents as "brilliant in attack," "sound and analytical," &c., leaving his reader to draw the necessary inference of his own wonderful superiority, whilst his notes on lost games call forth such remarks as "the play on both sides never rises above the dull level of parlor mediocrity." Posterity may pardon such evidences of wounded vanity, but his contemporaries will not; more especially when his defeat is certain to entail upon his adversary an unending amount of obloquy and depreciation. But you may consider me trespassing upon "family matters," in thus making you a party to our English quarrels.

In answer to the formal challenge of the New Orleans Chess Club, Mr. Staunton replied that the leading European players had other and more serious occupations than chess, and that for himself, he was prevented by literary duties from undertaking so long a voyage as that to the Crescent City. (He is now editing a new edition of Shakspere, of which critics speak favorably.) Paul Morphy, in the chivalric spirit of knight errantry, thereupon crossed the Atlantic and threw down his gauntlet in *propria personæ*. Mr. Staunton could not, of course, decline the challenge; more particularly as he had stated in the columns of his paper, that if Mr. Morphy desired to play him, he must come to England. In accepting the *défi*, he requested that the match might be postponed a month or two, in order to study the openings and endings of games, he being somewhat out of practice. To this proposition Morphy of course acceded, and a contest will shortly commence which will excite more attention than any game during the past twenty years. The American people will naturally look to the New York Herald for news of the battles fought in so intellectual a campaign, and your correspondent will make it both his duty and his pleasure to keep you au courant of every episode therein.

Since his arrival in London, Mr. Morphy has essayed his skill with nearly all our most prominent players—with the following result:—

Morphy	19	Barnes	7	Drawn	0
"	4	Owen	1	"	0
"	5	Boden	1	"	3
"	6	Lowe	0	"	0
"	2	Hampton	0	"	0
"	10	Bird	1	"	1

Mr. Barnes is a prominent member of the St. Georges' Chess Club, and a very reliable player. Morphy played with him almost daily, immediately after his arrival, but the fatigues of a first voyage across the Atlantic had somewhat affected your countryman's powers. However, a week sufficed to reinstate him in his wonted health, and he scored the final eight games without a break. Mr. Owen, a gentleman well known to chess players under the nom de guerre of "Alter," is regarded as of equal strength with Mr Barnes. Mr Boden ranks among the first six European amateurs, vide Staunton, Andersen, Heydebrandt, Van Der Lasa, Löwenthall, Harrwitz and Boden—and the observation was made at the St George's, by a gentleman well qualified to judge, that he did not think anybody could win from him (Boden) in such large proportion. Mr. Lowe is an amateur of long standing, having broken many a lance with all the most eminent masters of the past thirty years, and staunchly maintains that Paul Morphy is the superior of every living player. Mr. Hampton is the Secretary of the St George's Club, and, both in his official and private capacity, has shown himself an earnest well wisher to your countryman. Mr. Bird has the reputation of being one of the most brilliant and dashing of European players; but all alike seem to lower their crests to the knight of the Crescent City.

The above games were merely played for "love" or honor, each gentleman being desirous, as you may easily understand, of taking the conceit out of the daring adventurer. Their defeats were galling from several causes. If a Russian, a Hindoo, or a Chinaman had come to set us to rights, we Englishmen should not have felt so much piqued, but to be thrashed by a "confounded Yankee" is more than disagreeable. Then, again, Paul Morphy's name was never heard of in the chess world until some ten months back, and it is not in flesh and blood to have one's laurels trampled upon by an upstart, a parvenu, without winding. Added to which, Morphy's youthful years and looks do not seem consonant with his wondrous knowledge of the board and powers of combination; but all the above considerations are set at rest by the grace and suavity of his manner, and it would be difficult to say whether he is the more liked or admired.

To the above list I may add two consultation games against Mr Staunton in conjunction with Mr. Owen, Mr. Barnes being Morphy's ally, both parties were scored by the latter gentleman. I have said nothing as to numerous contests in which Morphy gave greater or less odds—all of which he won, without a single exception. Probably no living player can give the odds of knight or rook with such facility as your countryman. This is well known in New York.

Soon after Morphy's arrival, he was challenged by the celebrated Hungarian, Löwenthall, to play a match for £100 a side, the winner of the first nine games to be the winner. Löwenthal has long been recognised as one of the foremost professors of the game, both as combatant and analyst. As a chess writer, and editor of the chess department in the *Era* newspaper, he is well known in the United States and throughout Europe. Allied with his countrymen, Szen and Guinn, he vanquished the strongest players of France in the celebrated match of Paris against Pesth. On a visit to America, some years since, he met Mr. Morphy, then a boy of twelve, and in three games the latter won two and drew a third. Perhaps the desire to wipe out this defeat had something to do with the present match; but it is evident that the young Louisianian is still his superior. The score between them now stands:—

Morphy	8	Löwenthall	3	Drawn	1

Mr. Morphy achieved a very splendid victory last week over Mr. Owen, giving him the odds of pawn and move. The prize was a valuable set of ivory chess men, and the terms, the winner of the first five games. Every body was astounded when the following result became known—a result which has, perhaps, done more than aught else to establish Morphy's reputation:—

Morphy	5	Owen	0	Drawn	2

Mr. Owen has won an equal number of games at the above odds, from Mr. Staunton, and when it is considered that the latter gentleman is more used to the "pawn and move" and "pawn and two" game than, perhaps any other player, Morphy's triumph is the more astonishing, especially as he is entirely unaccustomed to giving these peculiar odds. The only way in which I can account for it is that your countryman possesses a genius for the game—an intuitive knowledge of cause and effect, combined with a prodigious memory, far excelling anything resulting from mere study and experience.

Nothing definite has yet been decided on in reference to the match between Staunton and Morphy. The latter has beaten all his opponents in Europe, the least proportion being three to one; and the former, shown by his "backwardness in coming forward," that he is not very desirous of the encounter. Bets of three to two are freely offered in chess circles, that he will find some excuse for declining but I think we shall not permit any such cowardice, especially when he has already accepted Morphy's challenge. The gallant young Paul—or as they call him here from his courtesy to antagonists, and his courage over the board, "the chivalric"—has frequently told him, "I am not desirous of playing for any stake, being no professional chess-player, but am willing to contend for anything, large or small, you may name. Reputation is my sole object, and I leave the entire choice of terms to yourself." Can any man with common courage back out from the contest? If Staunton does, we'll taboo him.

Our Paris Correspondence.

PARIS, August 17, 1858.

Moral Results of the Cherbourg Festivities—The Atlantic Telegraph—Scepticism of the French Savans—The Paris Conferences and the Danubian Principalities Question—French Opinions on the Right of Search Question—The Paris Journals on Free Trade—The Austrian Concordat—A Homily for the Sabbatarians, &c.

The festivities of Cherbourg are over, and the Emperor of the French has succeeded most perfectly in his main object—to inspire England with a proper respect for his genius and power, and to prevent even as much as a thought of forming another alliance but that of France. No one could be more delighted than he is with the apprehensions and fears inspired by the cannon at Cherbourg, and no one understands better than he the economy of building fortresses to prevent wars. The only fortress England possesses consists in democratic ideas, of which she is endeavoring, in Europe, at least, to make herself the representative, and which gives her the power to create enemies to every existing European government in the midst of them, and in places most fatal to their existence. Against ideas, even fortifications, cannon and mortars, are unavailing; but England is only a retailer of democratic ideas, most of which she herself only obtained second hand from America and France. Besides, official England is more frightened at the progress of democracy than France herself, and will always use that weapon (with which Canning already threatened the Congress of Verona), with the extremest caution. So throughly are the influential classes of England averse to popular government, so great is their contempt for the shopkeeper, the mechanic, the journeyman, and that last, but most necessary element of industry, called the operative, or the mere "hand," that they would sooner ally themselves with the most absolute despotism than proceed hand in hand with those over whom they have lorded it for centuries. It is easier even for Russia to coquette with progress in a democratic direction than for England to adopt it otherwise than as a make-weight to the machinery of State, and as a means of raising revenue. The necessity of raising revenue has introduced every particle of reform and political progress that England may boast of, and she introduced neither more nor less than was absolutely necessary to answer that purpose. Even her late professions of friendship and regard for the United States are nothing but an anxious concern for the prosperity of her best customer, occasionally intermixed with a governmental extempore side play, exhibiting the old chronic disease. The people of England, that is to say, the great mass which neither reads nor thinks, though some of them have money "in the funds," have a notion that the Americans are a distant connection of theirs; but whether cousins or cousins germain, they cannot tell, and the term "brethren" is only used by orators as a figure of speech. Still, there are about a hundred members of Parliament, and a majority, as I honestly believe, of the great bankers and merchants, who can read the future, who are anxious to maintain friendly relations with us. The news of the successful enterprise of the magnetic telegraph, connecting the United States with Great Britain, produced an immense effect on the higher industrial classes; an effect such as no American present at the time, in any of the large cities of England, could have witnessed without being proud of his descent and of his country. England understands the full value of that success, and has hailed it with an air of triumph, which, as some of the oldest inhabitants of London have assured me, can only be compared to the pride and exultation with which the island overflowed at the news of the battle of Waterloo. The success of the telegraph is the Waterloo of peace, and a capital offset to the humiliation of Cherbourg; for such that great *fête* actually was, when you consider its origin and bearing. Every reflecting Englishman felt it so, and it must have been a relief from the cold formalities of a formal French welcome, when the Queen's yacht went round from ship to ship in the English line and silently informed each British commander that the Atlantic telegraph had become a "fixed fact."

Here in Paris the news has produced but very little effect, and strange to say, some very scientific men still doubt its final success. They hold that the machinery will get out of order; that the least thing will damage it, and that it will require constant renewing, which will be connected with an immense outlay and great practical difficulties. French savans are undoubtedly the best informed men of the world, but they have not always been happy in predicting the practical results of newly discovered truths. The scientific commission which reported against the great discovery of Fulton, still doubted the possibility of applying it successfully to the propelling of vessels; and the old English proverb, which saith that the proof of the pudding is in the eating thereof, is perhaps as good as any application (*à priori*) of a principle already proved by a successful experiment. Metaphysicians in Germany have at least, as Schiller told them, proved the possibility of things that were done; but the French philosophic speculators maintain the impossibility of things even after they are accomplished. But never mind all that; the fact is patent that the world has made a great step forward in the great work of civilization, and the magnetic telegraph, like the invention of printing and the discovery of the American continent, will mark an era in universal history.

The most perfect political calm has succeeded the political excitement at Cherbourg. Paris is going on with its system of improvement and embellishment inaugurated by the Emperor, as heretofore, and the Conferences for the regulation of the government of the Principalities will soon be brought to a close. It is not likely that these Conferences will now lead to any serious complication; but that the work now done will soon have to be done over again, admits scarcely of a doubt. The five Powers of Europe who were jointly the protectors of the Danubian Principalities, do not pull in one direction, and three of them at least, if not four, have ulterior objects in view. What is now aimed at is the pacification of the Turks and Christians in those countries, which, however, will not easily be effected. To uphold the *status* of Turkey is not in the power of England and France, were that task entirely confided to their care; but with Russia and Austria pulling in a different direction, the thing is altogether impossible. Peace is not the policy of Russia—at least not any longer than she shall need to repair damages and arm for another encounter, while Austria, though, from the wretched state of her finances, compelled to have recourse to diplomacy rather than to arms, looks upon Moldavia and Wallachia as alluvions of Hungary and Transylvania, to which she has a stronger claim than any other nation in Europe. As far as the Conferences have gone, Austria has got the better of Russia, for, contrary to all expectations, the divided government of these Principalities remains in substance, but whether that will eventually inure to the benefit of Austria or Russia, time alone can reveal. It is very probable that the Emperor of the French has views and plans of his own on this subject, as on every thing else, and that in the end he will give to the course of events a new and unexpected direction. England has no independent policy in Turkey. If Lord Palmerston had one, it was too expensive to be adopted by his successor, or to receive the support of the Manchester party. Meanwhile the Russian flag, which by the late treaty of peace was almost driven from the Black Sea, has made its appearance in the Mediterranean, where Russian steamers will soon compete with French, English and Italian, and where Russian men-of-war may find it as pleasant to pass the winter months as at Cronstadt. The progress of Russia for the last two years has been in a proper direction. Emperor Alexander I. looks to the development of the internal resources of his empire, after the mode of the United States, as the best means of strengthening his foreign policy and giving effect to his army and navy. If Russia be again called into the field, she will present herself not only armed as she has never been before, but in a condition which will enable her to concentrate her forces with ease and in a short time wherever it is necessary for her to strike a blow or to avert one. Her policy now clearly embraces the two continents—Europe and Asia—and extends from the Neva to the mouth of the Amoor, on which latter river she has now taken a military position strong enough to protect her colonists and merchants against any foreign power. Increase on China may now be made by her with the same ease that she succeeded in detaching one Turkish province after the other, and acquiring some of the most valuable territory from Persia. Russia is the only European Power which, by virtue of her Asiatic possession, her semi Asiatic character, and her vast homogeneous population, can assimilate the Asiatics whom she may conquer, and thus actually substitute European institutions for Asiatic ones. Other nations cannot hope to do so, even by the utmost exertion of their power. The people of Hindostan will never assimilate with the English, and no treaty with the Barbarians will make Chinamen desirous of coming in closer contact with Englishmen or Frenchmen.

While at the Paris Conferences harmony apparently prevails, the *Nord*, the Russian organ established at Brussels, and the Augsburg *Journal*, which is the quasi organ of Austria for Germany, are indulging in a species of warfare quite unusual for the calm dignity of that literary and political journal of Europe, which Metternich, in his palmy days, was pleased to call the sixth power of Europe. The *Nord* has almost become a democratic, certainly to some extent, a revolutionary propagandist, evincing a particular interest in the affairs of Austrian Poland and Italy, and expressing even some faint views for the suppressed and mutilated nationality of Italy. These, taken in conjunction with the late visit of Count Cavour to Plombieres, and the purchase by the Russian Steam Navigation Company of the Sardinian docks of Villa Franca, are quite sufficient to engage the attention of Austrian journalists, and to keep up the feeling of jealousy and disappointment engendered by the late war. It is the divisions between Russia, Austria and England which enables the Emperor Napoleon to become, in the midst of peace, the arbiter of Europe, and to do it at a comparatively small cost. Even the demonstration at Cherbourg, and the vast improvements introduced into the navy, all which affect only the foreign policy of the Emperor, are small when compared to the cost at which Paris and the larger cities of the interior are embellished and improved, to satisfy the French people with the internal policy of their government. Those who saw Paris three years ago, and found it thoroughly metamorphosed as compared to 1848, find that vast changes have again been introduced, which make the French capital the most magnificent city in the world. One thing only seems to be lost sight of—in proportion as new houses, streets and boulevards are built, rents must go up, and everything else with them; so that Paris, while becoming attractive, is also becoming expensive in a degree which must eventually affect its commerce and all other business relations. Office houses and shops which but a few years ago rented for 12,000 francs, now bring 30,000; tailor's shops on the *Boulevard des Italiens*, pay as high a rent as 48,000 francs a year (about $9,600), and the question is only to what extent must these men be patronized, and by whom, to continue to pay such rents? There is a *terminus à quo* to everything, and especially as regards questions of political economy. With all my sincere regard for the present government of France, and my heartfelt admiration of the Emperor whose genius has introduced improvements in every department of administration, and whose force of character and constant vigilance have given to France the most influential position among the nations of Europe, I think that the finance department is that which has been allowed to go on as if there were no limit to the capacity of men to create wealth, or as if wealth had no reference to time or space. The property destroyed by improvements is not wholly represented by the increased value of the improvement, and the rise of every species of property reduces the value of wages in a much shorter time than wages themselves rise in consequence of the improvement.

We have had quite a discussion on free trade between the *Débats* and the *Constitutionnel*. The *Débats* was disposed to become the champion of the free trade movement, while the *Constitutionnel*—true to its old instincts, which, it appears, have but very little differed since the time Alphonse Thiers was convicted—defended the protective policy. Depend on it the French free traders are not in earnest, and the protective system has too long existed in France to abolish it *à la* Robert Peel. Besides, French commerce is not in a condition to compete with that of either England or America. In the freighting business France is literally doing nothing, and the French manufacturers are not in the habit of establishing commission houses in foreign countries, but wait till strangers come to buy or give orders in France. They are thus unable to take advantage of foreign markets, and the commissions on the exchange of products are earned almost exclusively by foreigners. The French are so much accustomed to a central administration of their affairs that they are quite willing to leave the regulations of trade to the care of their government, and actually believe that the government can do it effectually. Notwithstanding all this, the moneyed men of France seem to have less confidence in the government than either the working classes, the peasantry, or the army, and the French funds have not improved since the late Paris treaty of peace. These are the anomalies to which France is still exposed, and they are eagerly watched by England. It is the commercial classes of France which are most favorably disposed towards England; but these classes are not always ready to back their opinions with money. The army, the peasantry, and the clergy of France, have no sympathy with the institutions, the habits or manners of the British people; and if the Duke of Malakoff manifested a particular pleasure at the words of peace and mutual good understanding which flowed from the lips of the Emperor at Cherbourg, then you may depend on it, he only acted a part in that magnificent melodramatic performance, or expressed only his individual assent, not that of the army, whose laurel clad representative he is. The officers of the French army want promotion, and promotion is but slowly attained in time of peace.

The declaration of General Cass that in reply to Lord Napier he had no proposition to make, but was ready to listen to and consider those which Great Britain might make to prevent the abuse of our national flag for purposes of illicit trade, is not considered here as no opening the question of the right of search or visitation. England, I rather think, will not press the proposition which she has to make on that subject, just at this moment, but rather wait till the feeling produced by her recent conduct toward our ships and flag shall have subsided. America and England may negotiate on that subject, but the right of search will never be renewed.

An ecclesiastical council is convoked at Vienna to give effect to the late concordat concluded by Austria with the Pope. This is done at the request of his Holiness, who, it seems, is not satisfied with the manner in which the provisions of the concordat are carried into effect. The utmost the Emperor of Austria, Francis Joseph, is said to be willing to concede is "freedom of the church within the views and purposes of the State." The council will be held soon.

The Emperor's *fête* on the 15th was a very splendid affair, and passed off with all the decorum and order which mark these celebrations in France. The most curious circumstance on grand occasions of this nature in this country is, really, the little that it seems necessary to do for the people's enjoyment beyond the general arrangement that all shall abstain from labor. The natural gaiety of the national character is of itself almost entirely sufficient. There are to be soon free theatres, all spectacles being gratuitously thrown open, and it is amusing to see the patience which the working classes exhibit to secure an entry, taking their stand at the door long before the opening. There are shows and climbing poles on the Place des Invalides, and the same again at the Barriere du Trone. There are jugglers too, and mountebanks everywhere; but the acting of the populace which swells itself of these accessories is very insignificant as compared with the immense masses which derive their enjoyment from simply finding themselves abroad in holiday garb, walking, chatting, riding or sitting with those they love. This is the true spectacle at even the most magnificent *fête* to the foreigner's eye, but it is one that the mind loves to dwell on, for it is both pleasing and instructive. It reads a lesson to America and England which both countries would do well to "mark, learn and inwardly digest." It shows that with all our boasted reformation there must be something rotten in the State, when in Protestant countries enjoyment is inseparable from debauch. Here is a mighty capital into which from all parts of the empire are daily emptied the foulest spirits; behind it on a Sabbath day! Theatres are open galleries and exhibitions on all hands invite you to enter, restaurants wear their most attractive livery. You will be shocked, confounded, and inquire: Is not this the Lord's Day? Yes, you will be told, and a day of rest and relaxation, as well as prayer; and thus it is a holy day! Now go through this hell-doomed city, where, to your mind, the Devil reigns supreme, search its purlieus, go beyond its barriers, and what do you see the people doing? Are they drunkards? Are they reviling in unseemly amatory strife with their sweethearts? Do they exhibit any one of the external insignia of debauchery? Is there a loud cry, a rude push, a violation of any of the *convenances de société*? I answer: For any one of these things you will show me I will show you twenty thousand in London, and as many, in proportion to its population, in the most God like, Sabbath observing of American cities.

Our Madrid Correspondence.

MADRID, August 14, 1858.

Movements for an Improved Organization of the Liberal Party—Interesting Incidents of the Queen's Visit to Leon—Effect of the French Passport System on the Spanish Frontier—Site of the Ancient Munda—Curious Historical Investigation—Progress of Material Improvements and Government Reform in Spain—Singular Narrative—The Story of Monte Christo Realized—Multiplication of Railroad Projects and other Speculations—Spanish Church Intolerance in the Islands in the Gulf of Guinea.

It is said that the Duke of Victoria, that ancient patriot who was surprised two years ago by O'Donnell in his political career at the head of the government, and driven out from it, that he has lately had an interview with some of the leading liberals of Spain with regard to future party improvement. The agitation at some of the towns consequent upon the preparations for election to the Cortes have begun to be felt at large. The interest, however, of the country is unmistakeably engrossed by material affairs, such as running steamships and, above all, railways. A journey to the coast by the railroad is now the fashion, as well as the prescription of the faculty for the cure of every infirmity. The prescription given in all cases, with the certainty of the one that came from Sangrado is, "fourteen sea baths;" and the entire cost of going and coming, and taking in that amount of health, is set down in the pharmacopia at fifty dollars just. The enjoyance of the dose just now, is in the paradise of the world, Valencia, among Moorish turrets, and groves of olive and orange. To see this gay world, and to look upon the sea, for the first time for many, is no little thing. The old picture, the ancient heirloom, which the cold of winter and severe want could not drive its owner to take from its ancient nail, yields to the temptation of the modern summer, and is sold—a venerable Van Eyck, a suspected Murillo, the Mater Dolorosa. Even the curate, never believed to have done a wrong, is thought to have exchanged for a consideration to go to salt bathing, a real Zubaran in the sacristy for an imitation and copy by the execrable and never-to-be cursed sufficiently, Giordano. This is the madness here now that rules the hour.

The progress of the Queen in her pilgrimage to the northern parts of Spain affords a strong contrast to the pomp of movement and appliance attending just now the sovereigns of England and France. She goes in four wheeled vehicles to visit the shrines of the saints and heroes of the olden time; there are the glories of modern improvement, with only some affectation of the past. No guards surround or protect Isabel II.; she is in the midst of her people—they speak to her and she to them. In passing through the province of Leon she visited the great altar, and prayed for a time before the silver urn that for fourteen centuries has held the ashes of Isidro, the patron saint of Madrid, inseparable from her boy, the Prince of Asturias; and thence she turned her steps to the ancient Pantheon, the resting place of the Kings of Leon—Alonzo IV., the monk, of Ramiro II., of Ordono III., of Sancho I., and many who have not a name except in the hearts of Spaniards, nor a memorial beyond the wormy vellums of the monastries. The names of ladies, better known through romance, are those of Elvira, Urraca, Ximerra, Zaida—Queens of castiles and kingdoms, that are sometimes provinces and often lie a them counties now. The primitiveness with which the royal *cortège* has been met has given a great charm to incidents otherwise uninteresting, and the hearty manifestations of love have in many instances affected her Majesty to tears. In the same kingdom of Leon the party was greeted by a dozen little girls, in the dress of their country, representing as many towns, who presented gifts to the young Prince. The one from Murias brought butter from her cottage, singing her couplets; the one from Valencia, honey in a jar; from Orsigo, hose; from Sahagun, a lamb; from the flocks of Riano, a white kid; from the wild cliffs of Villafranca a fawn; and so on from Leon, Astorga, Lavecilla and Baneza. She of Ponferrado sang in the spirit, but with none of the roguenesse of this:—

At morn I left the distant sill
To bring this little basket here—
An offering from our pretty sill,
And none more rich can any bear.

Our pebbles there have yielded these—
These sprigs of gold which here I bring;
Receive this homage—let it please—
For thou wilt need it, little King.

Their Majesties, transported with delight, directed all these little testimonials of loyalty and respect to be taken care of, so charmingly presented by the young shepherdesses.

The requirements imposed by the French government with regard to passports, since the famous attempt to take the life of the Emperor, have had the effect, so far, to decrease to a most serious extent foreign travel into France and the sale of its manufactures. In looking to that means for salvation, the view was undoubtedly taken which absorbed the attention of the devotee, who, in looking to the cross, observed with satisfaction that it was of silver. The great preventive has been found fruitful in income, but is found also to have the unfortunate quality detected in the blanket by the Irishman, namely, that in removing one part to supply what he thought was a mortal to the head, he took away that which was directly necessary for the covering of the feet. The revenue proposed, it appears, cannot be raised without a corresponding and even greater amount of loss to the country from the injuries sustained by industrial and commercial interests. It can hardly be calculated with what hazard of kingdom and Imperial blood this liberal closing of the eye of the French frontiers is attended; suffice it to say, that purely for the public accommodation, a Consul was placed at Irun, the last Spanish town on the interior travel to the north, thus catching accidentally the latest dripping from this country. From this tax the expensive and hospitable diplomatic establishment at Madrid is kept up, and the consulates throughout the country are paid. Under the pressure of this real or pretended fear for the life of Napoleon III., the city of Metz is found so far to suffer from its effects as to have ventured to put in circulation a petition for signature, asking the relaxation of the rules existing in respect to passports, they being found practically to produce such a diminution in the number of strangers resorting to that city as must prove fatal to the industrial undertakings which grew up in times of less restrained international communication.

The Royal Academy of History has offered a premium of $600 for an essay that shall set forth the site of ancient Munda, the ground whereon was fought the battle between Cæsar and the sons of Pompey that decided the fate of the world. It has for a long time been supposed to be Monda, near Malaga, but a recent examination of the fields—a closer investigation than formerly of the accounts given by Hirtio and Dion Cassius, together with admeasurements made and directions and distances considered—go to show so many contradictions and impossibilities in the many authorities, that what has been something like an ancient tradition until now, has come to be doubted and almost disregarded. Some find the spot in Ronda, and others look for it in the province of Cordova, rather than in that of Malaga. The matter is of curious interest in the history of that turning point in the affairs of mankind, and it is said that some of the most learned men of Spain have entered into competition for the reward. There are explorers already, it is said, going over the country, giving the subject the most exact scientific attention. So broad a field of investigation may necessarily fix some other sites and cities of ancient renown, the positions of which are often made to fit this or that ruin, or at best some vague tradition or unconsidered authority.

The reforms and changes made by the new government give surprise and very general satisfaction. The new Mayor of Madrid, the Marquis of Vega de Armijo, very unexpectedly made an early call the other morning at the City Hospital. In a very unusual manner, for so great a dignitary, he went personally about to examine the condition of affairs. He first tested the different food prepared for the invalids, caused the quality of the salt to be tested, and sent a sample away for analysis, examined the store room and looked at the provisions. Thence he went to the dining room, and directed that an open way between it and the dormitories should be forthwith permanently closed. He was very much scandalized at the luxurious state of the wash rooms, lined with tiles of China, the tables of jasper, and superb looking glasses, while he found the bed clothes in a not less remarkable condition. He asked how often the latter were changed, and he was told every three months or thereabouts, on account of the high price and great scarcity there was of linen. Finding in the infirmary that the old and young were lodged together, he commanded that they be separated, and for the purpose he directed this hall at once to be divided into two. Observing that some of the little children had sore eyes, he ordered that they should be kept apart from the others and washed at separate places. Observing that many were barefooted, he looked into the state of the department where the *alpargatas* were made, and discovered one cause of the insufficiency of the supply was a want of the materials to make them. Looking a little further into the shops, he found them badly conducted, and directed, for the better supply of necessities, that they should be made elsewhere. Finally, he gave orders that a large bathing room be constructed, to be supplied freely from the water just brought to the city by the completion of the canal of Isabella II., and that a plan be directly drawn of it and submitted to his inspection.

In any other country than Spain the story I am about to tell would appear to be a romance, but here, where nothing is strange, and where even the occurrences of the hour are colored continually with Oriental light, nothing is rare and few things startle. In the year 1824 there went to Nobeja a Commissioner of Apremios, who had some affair of gallantry with a maid of that place. It was the occasion of a difficulty between him and three young fellows of about seventeen years of age, in which, beyond the walls, the stranger was left lifeless. The aggressors managed for a time to conceal themselves; two of them finally giving themselves up to justice, accused their companion as being the cause of the death, and were tried and acquitted. The circumstance had passed away entirely from the public mind, until the other day a gentleman of Madrid, well known as a journalist and for the kindliness of his disposition, was at Nobeja, when he was told the story, and, in confidence, that the third youth had betaken himself to a vault, where, completely without light and nearly without air, he had continued ever since, maintaining himself and those dependent on him by his labor, and that his name was Joaquin Soria. It appeared in the end that he had hidden himself in that place directly upon the commission of the murder, and not wishing afterwards to move away and leave his parents, who were getting on, and two sisters younger than himself, he had continued there and supported them by the making of confections for a period of nearly thirty years. At the close of about twenty years there remained only one sister and himself, but he was resigned, and preferred to close his life where so long a period of it had already been spent. His mind, so far from having become ascetic, had assumed a soft tranquillity, and his leisure hours he had employed in acquiring French, the study of history and other branches of learning. This account, with some other particulars of the case, having been published in the journals the other day, the gentleman referred to, Juan Rioy Amat, has come outfunder his own signature, and after rectifying some mistatements, gives the substance of the above, and ends as follows:—"That model of piety and resignation has not been pardoned as it is stated, but discharged from his ancient complaint by the Audiencia at Valencia, confirming in that the decision of a lower tribunal. It may be said that his pardon was obtained, but as he had never been condemned, the words are not justly applied. My friend, Don Jose Sivera, being acquainted at Nobeja in the year 1858, he heard by an accident of the concealed life led by Soria, and naturally moved by so sad a tale, he tried to obtain his pardon at the Court, but failed in consequence of the violent civil broil that took place in 1856. Being myself in the Province of Alicante last winter, the facts were told to me, and I directly hastened to the retreat of this unfortunate to witness with my own eyes a circumstance which makes probable what was only imagined in the novel of Monte Cristo. Instead of a sullen misanthrope, I found a man tranquil, resigned and communicative, in no way desirous of returning to the society which, fortunately for him, he had never known. His soul had learned from study and labor that true philosophy which the world is apt to teach by sufferings at the price of tears. He entered that vault thirty years ago, a youth of seventeen, his locks black; he comes thence in the forty seventh year of his age with white hair. His heart was then full of hopes and gay wild illusions which have forever vanished, but he has at least the consolation that they have not been stricken down by the hand of reality. How many, many there are in the world who might wish they had passed the life of Joaquin Soria. I conclude," says the writer at the close of his note "by giving you thanks for the favorable notice in his name and for myself, and to the learned Judge, Don Antonio Alix, for the haste that he has made in this cause, and the humane considerations he has allowed to weigh in favor of the recluse, and also to the superior tribunal which, in permitting Joaquin Soria to go free, has consulted the true spirit of the law and the sentiments of humanity."

At Madrid no persons of note are to be found at present, except the officers of government and two or three Foreign Ministers. Persons of the highest fashion are for the most part at Paris, or at cool spots among the Pyrenees. The crops of the year—all kinds—will probably be abundant; the fruits of the season are in great variety, and plenty everywhere. Here, where everything is dear, damson plums and green sages are at five cents the pound; peaches from Zargaza, equal to the best, six cents; figs and grapes, the only fruits from the neighborhood, the former four cents, the latter two; Watermelons and musmelons alone are high—at two and three times the price of grapes by weight. Oranges and pears are also in plenty, but few sold. It is impossible to speak of the quantity of fruit that is daily consumed; the whole population, and particularly the lower orders, appear to live exclusively upon it, and perhaps it is the cheapest as well as their healthiest food for the season. Every market place, street corner and square is filled with the fruit every morning from the country, and put in baskets, panniers, under sheds on the ground, and in bins; and large as the amount is, it is nearly all sold before midnight. This season continues a long time—throughout all the warm weather—the fruit preserved by the dryness of the climate, which permits nothing readily to decay. Melons, pears and pomegranates shrink and dry; grapes gradually become raisins on the branch; and figs, if allowed to hang, remain in the same way preserved. None appear imperfect—none bitten or pecked by bird or bug.

The liveliest interest continues to be felt for the rapid construction of railroads; laborers and money are in plenty wherever there is work and confidence. The structures of this nature in progress are extensive, and on this account in a year or two more, will add greatly to the value of country property and the general prosperity. The unequal prices of articles of consumption, particularly between points of the interior, because of the expense of transportation, are almost incredible. The railways will soon equalize the values and supply deficiencies. Some cities and towns have already begun to swell beyond their ancient limits. The walls about Alicante have just been ordered to be thrown down. Some of the best private residences at Madrid are beyond what were its barriers two or three years ago. Lands at large are sought to be brought into cultivation by extensive systems of irrigation; the waters of the Guadalquiver, it is thought, may be most advantageously used in this way, and studies are now making by engineers under the direction of the government, to ascertain the practicability, extent and cost. There is now wealth and a young energy in Spain for all these enterprises. The impulse thus given to business and improvement is said to have its origin in the sale of a part of the church property that took place some years ago. If that be the case, more of it will go before long, and perhaps be followed by the distribution in some part of the valuable t