AFFAIRS IN EUROPE.

The Situation Tending to a General War.

Important Naval Movements in France and Great Activity in the Ports.

The Prusso-German Secret Treaties and Powerful Consolidation of Fatherland.

Napoleon in the Face of Forty Millions of United Germans.

French Hints to Russia on the Eastern Question.

The Fenian War and British Reform Revolutionary Crisis.

&c. &c. &c.

The Cunard mail steamship Java, Captain Moodie, which left Liverpool at eleven A. M. on the 23d, and Queenstown on the 24th of March, arrived at this port yesterday afternoon, bringing details of our cable despatches.

The English government and people had already benefited by the great American steamship enterprise opening up Japan and China from San Francisco to Hong Kong and Yokohama. News from Japan to February 27, received per the Colorado at San Francisco, and thence by telegraph, was received and published in London on the 21st of March.

In England exciting rumors were rife at the departure of the Java as to the prospects of the new reform bill and the Derby Cabinet. According to one authority Ministers themselves expected to be out within a week.

Great interest was felt in the fate of Dr. Livingstone, the African traveller. By some it was contended that the report of his massacre admitted of little, if any, doubt; while others continued to hope that the statement was untrue. An Admiralty note announces that her Majesty's ship Wasp proceeded on the 2d of January to Quilos, with the British Consul at Zanzibar on board, to endeavor to ascertain the truth.

The Paris Bourse on the 21st of March experienced a decided fall, and speculation was forthwith active upon the probable cause. It was said to have been occasioned chiefly by the publication of the secret treaties between Prussia and the South German States. On the following day, however, there was a marked improvement.

In the English House of Commons, on the 21st of March, Mr. Adderley replied at great length to a question put by Mr. Buxton in reference to the outrages in Jamaica. The tenor of Mr. Adderley's reply was that the government had taken every step possible to punish those who, it was alleged, had been guilty of excessive cruelty in putting down the so-called rebellion in Jamaica. One fact came out which had not hitherto been stated. It was that Ensign Cullen and Dr. Morris had been acquitted by the courts martial by which they were recently tried.

In South Germany the publication of the treaties between Prussia, Bavaria and Baden seems to have given great satisfaction. The papers were congratulating their readers that there is in reality a united Fatherland.

The Greek blockade runners to Candia had a new danger. The Turkish ships of war came into the Piræus to watch one of them. Upon this the Greek government addressed a protest to the Turkish Minister at Athens. The reply was smart. Turkey, said the Turk, is at peace with Greece, and she has therefore the right to send her war vessels to Greek ports.

The recent hurricane at Valencia, Spain, appears to have been severely felt along the whole eastern coast. Great damage to the shipping occurred at Gandia and Oliva. Some vessels were wrecked at Peniscola, and the circuit which suffered most severely from the tempest appears to have been the district between the mouth of the Ebro and Cape San Antonio. At Vinaroz, also, there were some losses. Here the works in the harbor suffered. The safety of the Dutch steamor Irene was for some time doubtful, but she is reported to have arrived at Malaga. In the plains, also, much mischief was caused by the hurricane. Great damage was done to the orange trees, numbers of the fruit having been blown off the trees.

Mr. Ralph Earle, the Secretary to the English Poor Law Board, has resigned.

Dr. Pearson, a physician in good practice at Ely, England, has been convicted at the Cambridgeshire assizes of poisoning with strychnine two valuable horses. There was no motive alleged for the crime. The prisoner was sentenced to five years' penal servitude.

Five men were killed by the bursting of a boiler used for agricultural purposes at Wallington, Norfolk, England. Seven others were more or less injured, and the lives of two were despaired of.

An interesting ceremony took place at Windsor Castle—the christening of the infant son of the Maharajah Dhuleep Singh and his wife, the Maharanee. Queen Victoria stood in person as one of the sponsors, and the "Shahazadah," as he is called in the *Court Circular*, received the names of Victor Albert.

A numerously attended meeting of the London branches of the Engine Drivers' and Firemen's United Society was held at Exeter Hall for the purpose of considering negotiations pending with the various railway boards of directors. The tone of the speeches was of a conciliatory, but at the same time determined character. Resolutions were unanimously passed urging upon the deputations to the various boards of directors the importance of adhering to the memorials for ten hours a day, the mileage, and the scale of wages agreed upon at a conference held in November last, leaving the settlement of other points to the discretion of the various deputations, and disclaiming any intention of embarrassing the directors or inconveniencing the public.

In the House of Commons on the 21st of March Sir R. Collier asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he had received copies of the depositions of the crew of the steamship Tornado, sworn before the British Consul at Cadiz on the 23d of February last, and if so whether he would lay them upon the table of the House. Lord Stanley said he had not received the papers named. He had, however, telegraphed for them, and when he got them he would lay them on the table.

Mr. C. Fortescue asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he could lay upon the table the papers relating to the Union of British Columbia and Vancouver Island, and the subsequent condition of the united colonies. Mr. Adderley said the papers relating to the first part of the question were in preparation and would be produced shortly.

The *Avenir National*, speaking of the late scene in the Corps Législatif, says:—

The speech of M. Rouher has aroused in us the past in all its intensity. He has pushed us sixteen years back. He has excited passions painfully suppressed but ever burning—an inflammable substance which a prudent minister would be careful not to put a spark to. M. Rouher has played with fire and produced an explosion, the echoes of which are still heard from one end of France to the other. In answer to the *Pays*, which by way of reproach to the liberal deputies said, "honest people keep the oaths they have taken," the *Avenir* says:—Such is the opinion of the *Pays*; it is also ours; but the *Pays* will not be thanked in all quarters for bringing to mind this truth on the occasion of the 2d of December.

The *Official Gazette* of Madrid of March 20 published addresses from various State bodies concurring in the recent circulars of the Ministers of the Interior and Foreign Affairs of Spain, relative to the attacks made by the foreign press upon the Spanish government. A royal decree has been issued appointing the Marquis of Miraflores President of the Senate.

The official English correspondence on the subject of postage to the United States has been laid before Parliament. The result is that the post office of each country is to make its own arrangements for the despatch of its mails to the other and receive the postage, the other country making no charge for delivery; and after this year the Cunard contract then expiring by notice given to that effect, the entire postage on a single international letter is to be 6d. if despatched from the United Kingdom; 12c. from the United States. It is proposed that the charge for through territorial transit in closed mails be one-tenth of a penny per oz. of letters and per 10oz. of newspapers, books or patterns, for every nineteen miles travelled; of single letters, 1d. or 2c. for transit through either country. It was agreed to fix an earlier date than next New Year's day for a reduction of the rates charged on printed matter and patterns, and the territorial transit charged on closed mails.

During a debate in the House of Commons on the supply of hands for the British navy and the class of vessels in the service, Sir John Pakington said:—Looking at what was going on in other countries we found that the United States were building twelve first class war steamers. Mr. Shaw-Lefevre—I think they are building six of the larger class and six of the smaller. Sir J. Pakington—I believe very much in the vigor of the United States, and when I had the pleasure of seeing the Secretary of the United States Navy in this country some time ago, he made no secret of it that his department looked upon these ships as the most effective of men-of-war. The United States have adopted the policy of having ships of great speed, capable of going to sea as cruisers, and also capable of carrying, as far as their guns go, very heavy armor.

FRANCE.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE OF THE HERALD.

Important Movements—Extraordinary Naval Preparations—Six Vessels in Process of Construction—The Ironclad Guienne—The Tigre and the Plongeur—Activity in other Navy Yards—Sinking Ships by Photography—The New Port of Rochefort, &c.

ROCHEFORT, March 20, 1867.

I came down from La Rochelle yesterday for the purpose of learning something of the extraordinary naval preparations which Napoleon is undoubtedly making with some object, and have to-day been over the entire navy yard, and have seen the vessels which are now rapidly approaching completion.

Six vessels of different sizes and descriptions are on the stocks here. Foremost among them is an iron-clad frigate called the Guienne, which it is expected will be launched in August next, and which will be one of the most formidable vessels in the French navy. She is of five thousand tons burthen, with an engine of a thousand horse power, and is pierced for fifty-six guns, among which will be fourteen three hundred pound guns, carrying cylindrical and conical shot and shell. She is built with a sharp stern, thus greatly diminishing the chances of a successful "fire in the rear," or of the successful "punching" of the spur from a ram. She is covered with iron plate of fifteen centimetres in thickness below, and twelve centimetres above the water line. (The centimetre is a little more than one-third of an inch, and is expressed by the decimal 0 394.)

The experiment is to be tried of sheathing these plates with copper, in order to prevent their oxydization. Besides her broadside guns she is pierced for an immense bow guns, directly under the bowsprit, and the commandant's cabin, which is away aft, is so arranged that the side and stern windows may be easily taken out and five more guns put in. On deck and amidships is what the engineers, adopting the English word, call a "blockhouse," which is an iron-clad tower, not intended for guns, but simply as a look-out for the commander of the ship during action. It is iron-clad and shot proof to within about six inches of the top, which is of glass, through which the commanding officer can watch the action, and inside a telegraphic apparatus communicating with all the posts in the ship is to be placed, through which he will give his orders.

The Guienne is expected to be able to make her ten knots an hour, and it is said that when she is launched the Emperor will come down here to see her off.

Near the Guienne, upon the stocks and in an advanced state, is a transport intended expressly for the conveyance of two thousand horses. This will be completed about the 1st of November.

Beyond her is in course of construction the Tigre, a vessel built very much upon the model of the Stonewall, with a formidable spur, and twin screws working independently of each other, and enabling her to turn with great rapidity and ease, and making her as valuable for defence as for attack. Then there are two iron-clad corvettes, with towers and barbette guns, and a wooden frigate and corvette building. Great activity prevails in the yard, and it is understood that all these vessels are to be completed and launched before next March; and it is known that three other vessels of the character of the Tigre are being built at other navy yards in France—the Bélier at Cherbourg, the Cerbère at Brest, and the Boule Dogue at Lorient. While at Cherbourg, besides the Bélier, six other vessels, all of which are to finished in the course of the present year, are in progress of construction. These are the Volta, a despatch boat, to be completed in August, and the Jeanne d'Arc, an iron-clad frigate, which will be launched in September, and the Estrees, another, which will be ready for sea in June. Two iron-clad ships, the Suffren and Atalante, are being hurried, and a fast sailing corvette, the Clocheterie, was commenced about a month since.

There has recently been completed in this navy yard another vessel, which, although she has been launched and is ready for work when occasion requires, is now kept carefully housed and removed from the vulgar gaze. She is an experimental nondescript craft, called the Plongeur, built, I am informed, something after the model of the Winans "cigar boat," and is intended for submarine work. It is said that a model of the boat will be placed in the Grand Exposition, in which case I shall send you a description of it.

Rochefort was wisely selected as the naval station at which all these vessels were to be built. It is an out of the way quiet place, where few foreigners and fewer natives ever come, and were it not for an occasional newspaper correspondent looking around for something extraordinary making his way here, the government might go on building ships to the end of time without anything being known about it. Admission to the navy yard is very difficult to be obtained, and it was only by great exertion and the exhibition of a fair share of the *aplomb*, so necessary to a newspaper man, that I was permitted to enter it.

I am informed that when the Emperor comes down here during the coming summer some very interesting experiments are to be made in a new system for the protection of harbors, and in which the ordinary camera obscura employed by photographers is to play an important part. As I understand it, the plan to be employed here is this. Opposite the mouth of the Charente, the river upon which the port of Rochefort is made, is a little island called the Isle d'Aix. Upon this the camera is to be placed, and brought to bear upon the spot upon the water where a torpedo is placed. A vessel in sailing over this spot would be instantaneously exhibited in the camera, and at this moment by means of a galvanic wire, the torpedo is to be exploded. Of course in practice there would be several torpedoes, with a camera brought to bear upon each one of them.

Besides the work in the Navy Yard here the government is engaged in the construction of an entire new port, which is being hollowed out away inland, beyond the town, adjoining the railway station, and where ships can be entirely concealed from view on the water side. This tremendous work is being rapidly pushed forward.

THE REFORM REVOLUTION.

Canvass of the Proposed Derby Bill Qualifications.

In the House of Commons, on the 21st of March, Mr. Gladstone put the following questions to the Chancellor of the Exchequer:—Whether the conditions of voting in boroughs, so far as they are affected by the bill of the government, are to be the same for occupiers of the value of £10 and upwards as for occupiers under £10; or, if not, in what respects they differ. Whether it is intended by the bill that the occupying franchise in boroughs, which now depends upon the occupation of "any house, warehouse, counting house, shop or other building," is henceforward to depend upon the occupation of dwelling houses exclusively; whether the total number of male occupiers stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his speech on Monday consisted exclusively of the occupiers of dwelling houses; whether her Majesty's government will lay upon the table their estimates of the numbers of voters to be enfranchised under the several clauses of the bill, together with the data, so far as they think fit, upon which such estimates are framed; and, whether an occupier claiming to be registered under clause 34, when a composition or rather reduced rate on the premises has been duly paid by his landlord, must, in order to be registered, pay the difference between such reduced rate and the rate which would have been chargeable upon him if directly rated.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said—It will be for the convenience of the House if I group the various inquiries made by the honorable gentleman. The first two are fresh in the recollection of the House. The right honorable gentleman asks whether the conditions of voting in boroughs, so far as they are affected by the bill of the government, are to be the same for occupiers of the value of £10 and upwards as for occupiers under £10; or, if not, in what respects they differ; and whether it is intended by the bill that the occupying franchise in boroughs, which now depends upon the occupation of "any house, warehouse, counting house, shop or other building," is henceforward to depend upon the occupation of dwelling houses exclusively. It appears to me that these two questions, which really refer to the same point almost, are framed rather under some misapprehension of the character of the measure we have introduced. That measure is entirely a supplementary measure; and it does not at all interfere with any privileges or conditions under the act of 1832. Therefore the conditions for voters in boroughs are not the same for voters of the value of £10 and upwards as for occupiers under £10. We follow precedent in that respect. The qualification of residence under the existing law is in round numbers a residence of one year, and the qualification for the new householders proposed to be enfranchised is to be a residence of two years. There is that difference at once. We follow in that precisely the precedent set in the bill of 1854, brought in by Lord John Russell under Lord Aberdeen's administration, of which the right honorable gentleman was a distinguished member. That bill proposed a considerable reduction in the amount of the borough qualification. It was a £6 rental. In consequence of that reduction the government of Lord Aberdeen proposed a residence of two years as requisite to the qualification. That is the same amount of residence as we propose, without connecting it with a £6 rental. There was a proviso introduced into that measure that the rights and privileges under the act of 1832 should not be impugned or affected by that arrangement, and there was a saving clause, which I hope in more effective language is contained in the present measure—I think it is clause 40—which entirely preserves all the privileges under the act of 1832. So far as the present measure of the government is concerned that act of 1832 is preserved in its operation without the slightest interference. I think that is an answer to the first question. Then the right honorable gentleman has asked whether it is intended that the occupying franchise in boroughs which now depends upon the occupation of "any house, warehouse, counting house, shop, or other building" is henceforward to depend upon the occupation of dwelling houses exclusively. My previous answer to a certain degree applies to this question, because, of course, the qualification of a householder under the new franchise is limited to the possession of a house. Any person who occupies a warehouse, counting house, shop or other building, and being qualified under the present law, would enjoy his franchise in that respect. The reason why we have limited franchise in the bill to the occupation of dwelling houses is, because there are no warehouses, counting houses, and scarcely shops at a rating which the bill particularly deals with. As for other buildings, the including them as elements of qualification would probably lead to considerable fraud. Therefore we have resolved that it should be a *bonâ fide* household qualification. The third inquiry of the right honorable gentleman is, whether the total number of male occupiers stated by me in my speech last Monday consists exclusively of the occupiers of dwelling houses. No; that number consists of the inhabitants and not the occupiers of dwelling houses; but of course it includes all the enfranchised qualified by the possession of warehouses, counting houses and other buildings under the existing law. The right honorable gentleman inquires whether the government will lay on the table their estimates of the number of voters to be enfranchised under the several clauses of the bill. On Saturday morning I have no doubt that every gentleman will have in his hands the most complete information of the amount of the inhabited houses in every borough, and every possible detail connected with that most important branch of the subject. I believe that to-morrow, if not already distributed, there will be returns as to the amounts in respect to the less important franchises, the savings banks and education franchises. I am not clear whether there are any official returns as to the amount of franchises arising from property in the funds. It would hardly be convenient to lay on the table an official return in reference thereto, and it is no great matter if such a return is not laid on the table. The House, I will assume, will accept the figures on the authority of my statement; but, with regard to the number of voters which may be produced by direct taxation, it is quite impossible for us to give any formal statement to the House. It would take a considerable time to make it out, and even if we had the time the expense would be so great that we should hesitate before authorizing the preparation of the return. There is before the House a variety of documents of considerable importance, which, though they do not form materials from which an estimate could be framed, are of great value and amplitude, and upon which honorable gentlemen will find it not difficult to arrive at satisfactory conclusions. With respect to the question whether an occupier claiming to be registered under clause 34, when a composition or other reduced rate on the premises has been duly paid by his landlord, must, in order to be registered, pay the difference between such reduced rate and the rate which would have been chargeable upon him if directly rated, I have to state that he certainly would be called on, if he claimed the right to be registered, to pay the same rates as his neighbor, and it would be very great injustice if we proposed to make any difference in that respect. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. GLADSTONE—There is one point on which, perhaps, the right honorable gentleman might make his answer more complete if he will reply to the question I am about to put. I think, under the present law which relates to £10 householders exclusively, there has been a certain ruling that part of a house will be construed as a whole house. Will that law apply to householders under £10, or in that case must the entire house be occupied?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER—Nothing in the bill applies to houses under £10 which is not definitely and distinctly stated; but of course everything relating to £10 and upwards remains as before.

Reform for Scotland.

In the House of Commons, the same night, Sir R. ANSTRUTHER asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it was the intention of her Majesty's government to introduce a bill for the reform of the representation in Scotland in the present session; if so, when the bill would be laid upon the table; and whether the bill would include any additions to the representatives of that part of the kingdom.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER—Yes, it is our intention after the holidays to introduce a bill for the reform of the representation of the people in Scotland, and we do contemplate an increase of its representatives. (Cheers.)

THE RADICAL OPPOSITION

Important Assemblage of the Liberal and Whig Radical Members at Mr. Gladstone's.

[From the London Star, April 22.]

Yesterday afternoon a meeting of the liberal party was held at the house of Mr. Gladstone, in Carlton house terrace. About three hundred members were present. Amongst them were Mr. Villiers, Mr. Montague Chambers, Mr. J. S. Mill, Mr. M'Cullagh Torrens, Lord Amberley, Mr. P. A. Taylor, Mr. Cardwell, Mr. Layard, Mr. B. Osborne, Mr. Ayrton, Mr. Roebuck, Mr. T. B. Potter, Mr. Bright, Mr. Graham, Mr. Leveson Gower, Professor Fawcett, Mr. Crawford, Dr. Brady, Mr. John Fildes, Mr. Milner Gibson, Mr. E. Baines, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Hadfield, Mr. Davey, Mr. Moffatt, Mr. T. Hankey, Mr. Denman, Mr. Headlam, Mr. Padmore, Mr. Gilpin, Mr. Otway, Mr. Biddulph, Mr. S. Laing, Sir J. Ogilvy, Mr. Robertson, Mr. White, Mr. W. Ewart, Sir George Grey, Mr. Cogan, Mr. W. Martin, Mr. P. Vanderbyl, Mr. Horsman, Mr. Stone, Sir W. Hutt, the Marquis of Hartington, Sir J. Johnstone, Mr. Brand, Mr. Kinnaird, &c.

Mr. GLADSTONE, in opening the proceedings, referred to the time as a crisis in the question of reform, and one of some difficulty with regard to the various parties in the House of Commons. At the last meeting which they held in his residence he referred to two topics: one with regard to the necessity of acting on the general opinion of the party for the purpose of preserving their unity and their party unimpaired. He said at that time that the only statement with regard to the borough franchise before them was that contained in the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which proposed a six pound rating franchise. He thought that was a point which probably was of so clear a nature that it might be left to be discussed and determined in committee. Mr. Gladstone then referred to his own speech of Monday night, and to what he had said about the possibility of some arrangement being made respecting the vote being fixed at that amount at which the personal capacity to pay rates terminated, so that all persons above that point might be introduced without any question of rate or rental. But he said he thought it was not wise for them as an opposition to undertake at that stage of the question the responsibility of naming the exact plan upon which the suffrage should be based. *The time might come when it would be necessary for them to state the basis of a plan*, and when it should be the conviction of himself and his friends, and of the party, *that such a period had come, he would not shrink from stating what course he should be prepared to propose.* Turning, however, for the present to the new bill as it was before them, he said that he spoke with the strongest feeling and conviction that he was right when he declared it to be a bad bill, and in fact the worst Reform bill that had been ever submitted to Parliament by any government in this country. But, notwithstanding that, there might be, probably, some difference of opinion even amongst those who condemned the bill as to whether the proper course was to oppose it on the second reading or to extend their forbearance further and allow the second reading to go by unchallenged. He then proceeded to a dissection of the measure, describing it as containing ten fundamental points. The first was the county franchise, which he thought they would all probably be unanimous in considering had been fixed at too high a rate, and it must therefore, of necessity, in any case, be lowered. There was next the question of that branch of the bill which referred to the redistribution of seats, which he thought wholly inadequate, and which must necessarily be entirely recast. Then there was the question of the voting papers, which introduced a change of a nature to which was, so far as he could comprehend it, he believed they would be all equally and unanimously adverse. Then there came the fancy franchises, some of which he thought entirely bad, and probably none of them indeed would be found worth retaining; and he thought they would all for the most part be of opinion that that portion of the bill should entirely disappear. Then came the fact that the lodger franchise was entirely omitted, and that portion of a Reform bill he held to be absolutely essential for any satisfactory settlement of the borough franchise. There was the suffrage based upon income and assessed taxes, which, as he explained to the House the other night, he thought was sure to lead to a most extensive system of fraud; and he feared that, with regard to household suffrage, at the very lowest point of the franchise there would be found a class of voters who were so poor and so dependent that they must necessarily afford an opportunity for a very extensive traffic in votes. He then referred to what he considered an old and most valuable principle of our parliamentary representation, and that was when Parliament had given votes to any class of the people, all men entrusted with the suffrage should be equal at the poll. He declared that he would to the very last set himself against any and every plan which would make one man at the polling booth inferior to another man. When once the franchise had been conferred upon any one, it ought to give that man an equality of power with his neighbor. This he regarded as an essential point. Looking at the bill altogether he thought he might say that it divided the constituency into five different classes. There was first the dual voter with his two votes. Next there came the old £10 householder, who, if resident, might be rated for any kind of building he occupied in the borough. There was then the voter at £9 and under, who was not equal to the £10 voter, because he was only allowed to register for his dwelling house, and he had to be a resident for double the length of time which was required of the £10 householder. Then there were the compounders above £10 value—that was the present compounders, who were to be left hereafter just as they were—the bill would not in any way interfere with them. And after them came the compounder under £10, who had to claim and obtain his vote under many and great difficulties. These householders and compounders under the £10 line might be really considered as representing the whole amount of enfranchisement proposed by the new bill, and at least two-thirds of them were not to have a vote conferred upon them by the bill at all. He referred also to the manner in which the clauses of the bill had been arranged. He directed their particular attention to the fact that the first clause dealt with household suffrage, and that the thirty-fourth clause referred to compound householders. Thus, between the householder suffrage clause and the compound householders' clause, which were very intimately connected with each other, there were placed in the bill all the different clauses about the county franchise, about the voting papers, about the redistribution of seats, and many other matters which surely should not have been interposed between two parts of the bill so entirely and so obviously dependent upon each other. He referred to the rumor which was in circulation that the government wished to put off the committees on the bill until after Easter, a course to which he thought there were most serious and even insuperable objections. Still, looking at the whole subject, he would not entirely abandon the hope of going into committee; but the liberal party should try before that to obtain from the government concessions, not so much with regard to new figures as with regard to better principles. The dual voting, the trouble and in fact the fine imposed upon the compound householders in their attempt to get the suffrage, were parts of the bill of especial importance; and the debate on the second reading ought to be employed to obtain information and concessions from the government on these and other points. It appeared to him that every gentleman who felt that he had a right to belong to the liberal party ought to be determined to insist upon an equal access of the franchise to all those whom Parliament gave or professed to give a vote. With regard to the future, he thought they ought to reserve their judgment as to the committee. If they permitted the second reading to pass they should not be precluded from taking any step upon the motion to go into committee which they might think both just and proper. The course they would take would necessarily be influenced by the statement which might be made by the government during the coming discussion. Perhaps it might be his duty to give them the trouble of attending another meeting on the day after the second reading of the bill.

Mr. ROEBUCK said a few words. He remarked that he understood, as the law now stood, even where the rate was paid by the landlord, the occupier could be still a voter; and he wished to know whether it was meant that that should apply to all those who were to be enfranchised under the new bill, because if it did it meant a simple household suffrage.

Mr. AYRTON was one of those who preferred that the second reading of the bill should not be contested; but while he was in favor of that course he was not wanting in the fullest confidence in Mr. Gladstone, and he felt that they were under great obligations to him, and he could not but approve of the remarks which he made and the course which he had suggested to the present meeting.

Mr. COGAN was prepared to act upon the proposition which had been laid before the meeting, although he was himself in favor of a more active and decided course of proceeding, and he would have been glad to take part in any movement against the second reading of the bill. (Mr. Cogan was understood to express the general opinion of the Irish members of the liberal party of the House of Commons.)

Mr. BRIGHT felt *he had really little to say* after the clear statement which had been made to the meeting by Mr. Gladstone. He thought, under the circumstances in which they were placed, that statement was one in which they might all concur, and the course which was recommended was one which they should all support. At the same time he did not wish it to be concealed that he would himself have recommended a different course. But in a mere question of procedure, in which there was no great principle involved, he should not like to set his own opinion up as being better than the opinions of others. He would always go willingly and loyally with the political party with whom he was connected, but he begged to clear himself from responsibility, if all should not turn out as well as seemed to be expected, by saying that after more than twenty years' experience in Parliament he never knew a bad bill brought in by a government made a good bill in the course of its passing through the House or through committee. He feared it was hardly to be hoped that they could by any possibility make such an entire change as was necessary to be made with this bill in order to render it satisfactory to the country during its passing through the House. He considered the constitutional plan parliamentary action was this—that the majority in the House ought to provide the members of the administration, and that a great question like that of reform should be in the hands of its friends and not in the hands of its enemies. If the spirit of the Chancellor of the Exechequer could be there and could inspire them, what he wished them to do, they would do just what they had determined upon doing to-day, and when he had succeeded in that he might say, "The Lord hath delivered them into my hands." Notwithstanding, however, these rather gloomy anticipations, Mr. BRIGHT expressed a strong hope that he might in the result be proved to have been entirely mistaken. Whatever he could do he would do most cordially while the measure was passing through the House to make it such a one as would settle the question; that is to say, not settle it merely in the House of Commons sense, but in a sense satisfactory to the great body of the people.

Mr. GRAHAM, the member for Glasgow, made a few remarks, but as the feeling of many gentlemen was that the object of the meeting had been already obtained, his observations were scarcely audible in consequence of honorable gentlemen leaving.

The proceedings then terminated.

What the People Think.

From the London Times, March 22.]

The liberal members of the House of Commons met yesterday, and it has been decided that the second reading of the Ministerial Reform bill shall not be opposed. Two hundred and seventy-eight supporters of the party met at Mr. Gladstone's house in Carlton Gardens, and after a very short discussion—if that can be called discussion which consisted principally of but one speech—resolved that the great battle of the session, if fought at all, should not be fought at the second stage. We are informed that the meeting was unanimous in supporting this conclusion, although it is sufficiently evident that its unanimity of feeling was not unbroken. The more fiery spirits of the party declared their preference for immediate war. Mr. Gladstone himself, as we understand, expressed his own belief that it would be vain to discuss the Government bill. Mr. Bright pronounced the same opinion with even greater energy. Wiser counsels, however, we are glad to say, prevailed. While Mr. Gladstone avowed his personal impatience of further forbearance, he confessed that a large section of the party thought a good bill might yet be made out of the materials laid before them by the ministry. The ultimate decision was in favor of waiting till the Chancellor of the Exchequer had declared, on the second reading of the bill, what portions of it the ministry were willing to relinquish, and what parts they held to be vital.

* * * The announcement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the government proposes to increase the number of Scotch representatives, coming as it does after a scheme which leaves the number of English members untouched, *opens up a process which ought to be jealously guarded.* There is no invincible reason why the number of members of the House of Commons should not be increased; but it is extremely undesirable, and should not be assented to unless it be clearly necessary. Sir George Bower's motion to omit altogether the disfranchisement clauses must be peremptorily rejected. Even if there were no populous towns and increasing counties requiring representation, the fact that so many small and decaying boroughs return members to the House is an anomaly which should be corrected. The proposal of Mr. Serjeant Gaseler to disfranchise absolutely those boroughs having a population under 5,000, and to deprive of one member those boroughs under 10,000 and returning two, is a crude suggestion of a better course. The consideration of such questions may, however, be deferred to the time when the House enters into committee on the bill, a time which now bught not to be far distant. The opposition show their willingness to help the government, *if the government be disposed to meet them in turn.* Past offences have been amnestied, past errors may be amended. The Ministry have still an opportunity, but if they are wise they will *not permit the forbearance* which has so far been shown to betray them into confidence. Their bill may pass a second reading and perish on the motion to go into committee. Every mistake the Ministers have made has weakened themselves and strengthened their adversaries, and, while it is still possible to keep back the attack, a repetition of past errors would remove the last bond of restraint, *and a united opposition would sweep them from place and power.*

[From the London Star (reform organ), March 22.]

The liberal party, as represented yesterday at Mr. Gladstone's house, came to an agreement which we are far indeed from regarding as entirely satisfactory. There were, in point of fact, only two courses open to any one pretending to be a liberal, and we do not think the meeting chose the better of the two. Every one admits that the government reform bill is in its present condition entirely unacceptable. Mr. Gladstone is understood to have yesterday pronounced it the worst reform bill ever introduced by any ministry in this country. If it has any essential and vital principles at all, then it has none which are not absolutely objectionable. To make anything good of it, it must *be literally transfigured*; it must change its form, its substance, its nature. * * * Nobody can pretend to say whether he is for or against the one until he knows what is to be done with the other. This is but one illustration of the many difficulties which begin to thicken and darken around us when once we leave the firm, clear highroad *of resolute opposition*, and plunge into the brakes and tangles and jungles of compromise and detail.

We do not desire to present a gloomy view of the situation. Perhaps the worst evil before us may be a little delay and waste of time. We have still some hope that as the tory tactics are forced into development, their object may become so clear as to render any further concession or toleration impossible, and to unite the liberal party in a prompt and resolute resistance to the whole measure. It is, of course, always open to the liberal party, if they but hold together, to reject this idle and worthless bill. They can do this if they will, on the question of second reading; on the threshold of committee, or even in committee. But our firm conviction that this will have to be done at last, makes us little inclined to applaud a course which seems to accept delay for no purpose, and to invite danger where certain safety lies in prompt and decisive action.

[From the London News, March 22.]

The deliberations of the members of the liberal party who assembled yesterday at Mr. Gladstone's issued in a very sensible and prudent conclusion. They resolved not to oppose the second reading of the Reform bill unless the suicidal obstinacy of the government forced this course upon them. Mr. Gladstone frankly confessed that his own personal opinion was not that of the majority of his party, but he wisely waived his own judgment in obedience to the restraining common sense, or the "unerring instinct," as Mr. Disraeli would call it, of his followers. There are strong reasons for the step to which he was inclined, as well as for that which he unwillingly adopts—reasons so strong as to seem absolutely unanswerable when one side of the question only is looked at. *The whole bill of the government is worse than any of its parts*; and this being so, it might seem desirable to reject it as a whole rather than run the risk of seeming to throw it out on account of any one fault in detail. It does not contain, in its more essential portions, in its provisions of enfranchisement and for redistribution of seats, a single unexceptionable clause. It can only be amended by substituting for it an entirely different measure. So far as the intrinsic difficulty of the task is concerned, it would be far easier to frame a bill *de novo* than to patch the scheme now before the House of Commons into anything satisfactory.

THE GERMAN QUESTION.

Effect of the Prussian Secret Treaties—Feeling in France and Austria—Napoleon in the Face of Forty Millions of United Germans.

[From the Paris Temps, March 22.]

There is no longer a south and north in Germany. We are no longer in face of a Prussia of 29,000,000 of people, *but of 40,000,000 until, in the course of events, they become* 50,000,000. And that there may be no mistake as to the *exclusive military character of this powerful agglomeration*, that there may remain no doubt that it is entirely in the hands of M. de Bismarck and his royal master, we learn that an amendment having for its object the security of the fundamental liberties of the German people, especially the freedom of the press and the right of public meeting, was yesterday rejected by the Parliament of the North. It only remains now for the King of Prussia to get the imperial crown decreed to him, and to invite the Austrian Germans to take their seats in the German Parliament. This will be *the crowning of the edifice.*

[From the Journal Debats, of Paris, March 22.]

* * * Why has it been decided to publish them [the treaties] now? Was it to satisfy those members of the North German Parliament who desire the unity of Germany, and who persist in the belief that the treaty of Prague was an absolute obstacle to the triumph of that unity? *Was it to give an answer to the speeches made during the last five days in the Corps Legislatif?*

[From La France, of Paris, March 22.]

The policy of moderation adopted by the government of the Emperor is neither a policy of obliteration nor of weakness. *France may be silent, but she never abdicates her rights.* Prussia, doubtless, is cognizant of the real state of French opinion, and that the public sentiment has not been modified by the events of the last few months, nor by those events which recent publicity has brought to the knowledge of the French people.

The *Bavarian Gazette* accompanies the publication of the treaties with some officious comments, in which a hope is expressed that it will not trouble the good relations between Germany and foreign nations, and especially France. "We even believe," it says, "that this publication, regarded as a necessary consequence of the principle of nationalities so generally accepted in that country, will be received as a guarantee of peace." "We," adds the *Debats*, "see that there is no want of wit in Munich, and that the inhabitants of the 'modern Athens,' whatever Heinrich Heine may say, know how to deal in irony."

A semi-official article in the Carlsruhe *Gazette* of March 21 considers the Prusso-South German treaties as inspiring confidence in the future development of Germany, as Germans have now, in case of danger, a united fatherland. The same article further says:—Let us hope that the day is far distant when the stipulations of the alliance would have to be carried out. The happiest result to which the new alliance could lead would be the complete legislative and commercial unity of Germany.

The Feeling in Prussia.

A despatch from Berlin of March 22 says:—In addition to the agreement on the military question a *complete understanding* is stated to exist between Prussia and the South German States (Wurtemburg excepted) in reference to the future position of those States towards the Northern Confederation. This understanding will be carried out immediately after the adoption of the federal constitution. The *Borsenzeitung* publishes an article advocating an intervention against Wurtemburg.

It is expected that a plebiscitum will take place in Luxemburg on the question of the entry of that province into the Northern Confederation. Prussia is not opposed to this course.

The *Nord Deutsche Zeitung* of to-day, approving of certain statements in the *New Free Press* of Vienna relative to the position of Austria to Prussia, says:—Austria will not be able to find a more faithful ally than Prussia, if she would enter without reservation into a close union with us and promote the national development of Germany. Let us hope that our friendship will grow closer and stronger the more it is understood, and how important for the preservation of peace in Europe are friendly relations between Austria and Prussia.

A Parliamentary banquet was given to-day in celebration of the King's birthday. The members of all the political parties in the North German Parliament were present.

It is stated that at the birthday reception at the Royal Palace to-day the King's address, both to the French and English Ambassadors, but especially to the former, in reply to their congratulations, expressed the most friendly assurance of peace.

The Treaties News in Austria.

Vienna despatches of March 22 report:—It is officially stated that the Prussian government announced to the Imperial Cabinet, on the 15th inst., through the Prussian Ambassador, the conclusion of the secret treaties between Prussia, Bavaria and Baden. The Prussian Ambassador, in making the communication, added that the treaties were partly of a *decisive character.*

THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT.

Opening of the Session—Speech of King Victor Emanuel.

The Italian Parliament, elected by universal suffrage, and embracing the representatives of the united kingdom of New Italy, assembled in session in Florence on the 22d of March.

King Victor Emanuel was present. Having ascended the throne his Majesty delivered the following speech:—

SIGNORI SENATORI SIGNORI DEPUTI—

For the happiness of Italy, who has confided to me her destinies, I have deemed it expedient that the representation of the country should be renovated at the fountain head of the national suffrage. I am confident that it will there have imbibed a consciousness of the serious wants of the country as well as the strength necessary to provide for them. There has been a time for daring resolutions and bold enterprises. I pursued the course which was then necessary, full of confidence in the holiness of the cause which God has called upon me to defend. The nation replied with readiness to my appeal, and by our union and perseverance we acquired our independence and preserved our liberty.

Now that our existence is assured Italy demands that the force of her intelligence and her will shall not be exhausted in intemperance and rivalry, but shall, on the contrary, be concentrated, with the object of giving her a stable and wise organization in order that she may be able to develop in repose and tranquillity the elements of vitality and prosperity which she has received from Providence.

The nation demands that the chamber and the government shall apply themselves with wisdom and resolution to this *work of reparation.* Nations love and appreciate institutions by reason of the benefits they derive from them. It is necessary to show that our institutions give satisfaction to the noblest aspirations after national dignity and activity, and that they are at the same time a guarantee for the good organization of the State and the welfare of the people, in order that the latter may not lose confidence in liberty, which is the honor and strength of our political reconstruction.

In order to obtain this result my government will submit to your deliberation a bill for a complete administrative *reorganization*, which will strengthen at the same time both liberty and authority, and facilitate as well as simplify the relations between the governing and the governed, while the provinces and the communes, in accordance with the proposed law, are to enjoy greater liberty in the sphere of their jurisdiction.

More extensive pow