EUROPE.

Special Despatches by Mail to August 6.

England's Position Towards Belgium and the Belligerents.

The Neutrality of Belgium---Coal and Other War Contrabands.

How the British People and the English Aristocrats Incline.

The Alabama Case and the Present Code of Neutrality.

Irish Agitation and Popular Ferment.

GENERAL MOLTKE AS A SILENT MAN.

The European mail of the 6th of August at this port supplies the following important news details, by special correspondence, for our columns.

ENGLAND.

The Secret Treaty and Neutrality of Belgium—French Oversight and Prussian Advantage—Luxembourg—British Anxiety—The Navy and Army—Coal and Contrabands—Moltke and Bismarck—Financial and Commercial Consequences.

LONDON, August 3, 1870.

We were all startled by the publication in the *Times* of a draft of a treaty between France and Prussia, without date or signature, but very ominous for all that. In consideration of France making no objections to Prussia's gains in South Germany, Prussia was to put pressure on Holland to sell Luxembourg to France, and, further, to assist France with an army if that Power should choose to annex Belgium. An alliance, offensive as well as defensive, was to secure these objects. It is not too much to say that this document has almost monopolized attention in France, Prussia, England and Belgium. At first it was thought by many to be clear proof of a desire on the part of France to disregard the faith of treaties, though some regarded it simply as an attempt to embroil this country with France, since England stands pledged to guarantee the neutrality of Belgium. The course of the week has not favored entirely either of these simple constructions. On the document being brought up in Parliament the government gave no opinion as to the value to be attached to it, but said that the Powers implicated would doubtless hasten to explain whatever mystery there was about it.

OVERSIGHT IN DIPLOMACY.

There has been plenty of "explanation" since, but not enough to clear up the matter. The Prussian government says that the document in question was written by Comte Benedetti, and exists in their archives in his handwriting; and so much is conceded by France. The difference is this, that while Bismarck says it was one of a series of similar French proposals, the French Ambassador here says it was a suggestion of Bismarck reduced to writing by M. Benedetti from his dictation. Each party, while alleging that it was the other who made the proposal, says that it was at once and definitely rejected. Bismarck adds that he kept the fact of the offer a secret in the interests of peace. He adds that he believes but for the publication of the draft in the *Times* France would have renewed the offer as soon as the rival armaments were both complete, and have urged Prussia to make peace at the expense of Belgium. It is useless to try to reach a decision at present as to who originated this neat plan of spoliation; in any event it is unlucky for France that the plan exists in Berlin in the handwriting of M. Benedetti, whose indiscretion in leaving such an instrument in such a place seems incredible.

DOUBTS OF BOTH POWERS.

This is about all that can be made of it at present, though the French government might clear up its part in the affair, if it is capable of it, by publishing its despatches from M. Benedetti at the time in question, the date of what was called the Luxembourg affair. As the matter stands no one can help feeling that confidence in both these friendly Powers is considerably shaken. It is felt that such proposals are not usually made, at any rate in writing, without a tolerable certainty that they are not sure of immediate rejection. As matters stand Belgium feels that her utmost strength must be always in readiness to defend her neutrality. And England sees with what suddenness she might have been dragged into war for the defence of Belgian neutrality. Nor is she by any means too sure that that danger is not in store for her yet. The matter has been before the House of Lords twice, where Lord Granville has given such information as to documents as is summarized above. But on Monday next the House of Commons will undertake the subject, which will be properly introduced by Mr. Disraeli as leader of the opposition. On that evening the government will no doubt be pressed for the fullest statement of what it knows and what it thinks, and the more powerful and popular Chamber will, it is hoped, make clear the wishes and feelings of the country.

POWER OF ATTACK OR DEFENCE.

Great anxiety is naturally felt to know the state of the forces available in case of trouble breaking out. The navy is reported at 60,000 men and 400 vessels, of which forty are iron-clads. These are said to be in a greater state of efficiency than has been known in the fleet for years.

With regard to the army, it is stated by Mr. Cardwell to be as nearly as possible at the full strength called for by the estimates. Of course many more questions have been asked on this subject than it was prudent for the Ministry to answer; but, as remarked above, Monday is expected to bring out a satisfactory explanation from the Premier himself.

COAL AND CONTRABANDS.

Coal is already a subject of lively discussion. France will not consider it contraband of war, while Prussia will. Hence, if the French navy captures vessels carrying coal to German ports it will let them go as innocent; but, as the Prussians are far inferior in naval force, the supplies of coal to France run little danger. Annoyed by these reflections the Germans are already clamoring that England will violate neutrality if she allows Newcastle to supply coal to the French fleet, and asking if England really wishes another Alabama question. Truly, the ways of neutrality are hard to travel. Coal, unfortunately, is as useful in peace as in war, which is more than can be said of ball cartridges. However, without defining as contraband articles of doubtful nature, Parliament is amending the Foreign Enlistment act as it should have been amended before Mr. Laird's business practices were enabled to do such harm. It is hoped that the new provisions will prevent any one of Mr. Laird's turn of mind from repeating those operations in which he so cunningly made the whole country his special partner. But about the coal business it is impossible to say what will be done, since neutral nations are not in the habit of redressing irregularities between belligerents, or of laying down rules for the decisions of their prize courts.

FROM THE SEAT OF WAR.

Very little news from the seat of war reaches us. The position of the French army is not known with certainty, while the Prussian arrangements can only be guessed at. It is certain, however, that the valleys of the Moselle and the Saar are crowded with agriculturists whose tools would scarcely be recognized by a farmer. One or two skirmishes are reported, but in very different terms by writers of opposed nationalities. The Emperor Napoleon has reached Metz with his son, and with his restless cousin, who is supposed to be all the safer for being under the Emperor's eye, and without a command. An imperial proclamation has been issued in the army, telling it frankly that the war will be long and severe, and that the enemy consists of some of the best troops in Europe. The greater the glory of overcoming them, which is certainly to happen, since the French soldier will prove himself worthy of his fathers. The army is assured that the cause of civilization depends on its success, and that if every man does his duty the God of Battles will be with the French. It must be very comforting to know all this on the word of their Emperor, but the French would hardly have objected to a little more fire in the proclamation. An address specially composed for the navy was read by the Empress at Cherbourg just before the departure of the squadron, and of course her Majesty's inspiriting presence added greatly to the natural enthusiasm of the moment. Some fifty thousand men are believed to have left for an expedition to land on the coast of North Germany, no one knows where.

MOLTKE AND BISMARCK.

The German preparations are reported as complete. Count Moltke inspires as much enthusiasm in matters military as does Bismarck in matters diplomatic; even though the soldier is so chary of his words that he is said to be "silent in seven languages." He reminds one of General Grant. A gentleman in Berlin lately tried to pump him:—"How are things going on, General?" The answer was, "Thank you, sir; my rye crops are doing nicely, but my potatoes are backward." His affairs are, at all events, getting on well in one respect—the supply of men—for numbers of eligible recruits are declined owing to a sufficiency in the army. Every indication shows that the Germans will have plenty of reserves to fill the gaps made by battle.

FINANCE AND COMMERCE.

Failures on the Stock Exchange keep still occurring, both here and in Liverpool. About forty cases have been reported in London and more are expected. Still the markets are growing steadier and moderate investments are made. The war burst upon a "bull" speculation not unworthy of Wall street, and with similar results—the only difference being that certain foreign government loans are the vehicle of disaster here for the most part. In the commercial markets the only favorable item is that the grain market is lower than last week, both in wheat and other domestic crops and in Indian corn. The cotton spinners and clothmakers are very gloomy, and well they may be, with lower prices and a market slipping away from them. All production is in suspense, unless we except that debatable article of coal.

Popular Feeling Toward the War Combatants—The People Inclined Toward Prussia, the Aristocracy to Napoleon—Has Civilization Commenced or Is It Ended?—First Commercial Failures—Two Millions Sterling Gone in One Bank—A Banker Shot.

LONDON, August 4, 1870.

The war has, of course, been the all-absorbing topic here. The general sympathy is, no doubt, with Prussia, unless it be in the lordly circles to which the *Standard* addresses itself. That paper has been very solemn, Pecksniffian almost, in its lectures to other journals, and bidding them speak more respectfully of England's "great ally," not without a covert threat that Napoleon may punish them for their blunt language. But the sermon falls on heedless ears. The war is generally considered as Napoleon's wanton act, and newspapers cannot be expected to hide that belief. To be sure, pretty strong language has been used, but who can wonder at it? Europe always deludes itself with the thought that the war of the day is the last that will ever occur, and that in face of armaments which waste almost as much money as war does. There can never be another war, it is argued: that would be "a scandal on our boasted civilization." The next war arrives in due time, and the homilies which ushered in the last are worked up to suit the present, and "scandal" is explained away or laid at the door of one party. It does seem a little odd that men find, even in these old days (for they are old and not young, although new) no better means of settling their disputes than by slaughter; so odd that one is driven to think that the fault lies in human nature, of which, according to Sam Slick, "There's a deal in man." It would not so much matter if the customary way of speaking were true, and that France or Prussia really bore the whole burden. It is that plaguey Jacques Bonhomme or Hans who will put an individual human interest into the business by getting wounded or killed, and his great and glorious country labors under difficulties if it tried to act as his substitute in either of these events. Horace is as right now as ever. "Whatever the madness of the kings the people get the blows." No doubt each man flatters himself that he will survive the war on the sound principle that "all men think all men mortal but themselves." But each man knows, as well as we more fortunate outsiders, that thousands will be killed who will each leave a hole in some family and circle, and they go to it just as cheerily as if killing were the politest thing in the world. One cannot but think a thing or two proved by the conduct of civilized mankind with regard to war: either people utterly disbelieve the Christian religion as taught by any of its churches, or they believe that a man who dies in his country's service goes straight to heaven. As I do not think the latter opinion is prevalent I am driven to the former, and record it as my conviction that the treatment of the question of war proves that Christians disbelieve their religion. It is very clear that they face with much calmness the risk of damnation—for other people.

EFFECT ON 'CHANGE.

However, we do not want to talk theology, since even our universities are to be freed from a compulsory dose of it. Let us speak of mundane things. It was said above that the war was an all-absorbing topic "of course." If you were here you would see the strict propriety of that statement. The Stock Exchange affects almost every man, woman and child in this land of capitalists and paupers, and a lively time there has been in that mysterious institution. Thirteen failures as the result of one fortnightly settlement make a pretty heavy list. Not that any one but their friends ever care a button about the failure of stock brokers or dealers, always barring their creditors. But the fall in securities is the thing that pinches. Consols down two per cent, five-twenties ten, Turkish bonds heaven knows how much, and even English railways as high priced as Illinois Central ten or twelve. The bad feeling was aggravated by the failure of a bank in Norwich with liabilities of nearly two millions sterling. It was a private affair, the Crown Bank, with thirty-one branches, and owned by three persons. One worthy partner had been speculating for years with poor success and managed to lose some three million pounds sterling. As his own resources did not reach this trifling figure, and as his deposits were temptingly within reach, the deposits of the Norfolk tradesmen and farmers had the honor of defraying his expenses. A few days since a pistol bullet entered his chest, by whom fired the discreet papers omitted to state. The coroner's inquest leads one to think that he committed suicide. Decidedly these English papers are very delicate to the troubles of an unfortunate man if he is a baronet or better. What puzzles me is whether the ruined speculator shot his banker for not continuing his advances, or the banker shot the speculator for not keeping a better account. At any rate, the depositors have thrown the concern into bankruptcy, and will be lucky if they get seventy-five per cent. The circulation was forty-nine thousand odd pounds sterling, all unsecured; and the holders of notes take their chance with the others. This vicious practice of issuing notes without special security is the usual one here, though it has not escaped the condemnation of the philosophic John Stuart Mill.

This bank failure added intensity to the first panic, which was already so severe as to show a wide spread system of operations for a rise. What would become of foreign governments without this speculative feeling in England it is hard to say; they might be driven to keep the peace. The phlegmatic John Bull is, beween ourselves, the greatest gambler in the world, with the possible exception of one or two of your Congressmen. But he does not like the "chips," so he buys Turkish sixes, or any other neatly drawn device for raising money. A small bookseller near me sees that "Turks" are down six per cent, so he buys a bond; the week sees his Turk down nine per cent more. He is a *prédestiné*, as Balzac would say. Count on him as a warm friend of Turkey till he gets his money back. Now this bookseller, and thousands like him, would have bought five-twenties if they had been in smaller denominations. The sanguine Bowles is so far in the right. But if he thinks bonds of fifty dollars would fund the existing five-twenties and ten-forties into a four per cent loan he shows an amount of faith which I am sure does not characterize his own successful business. All the same; he is doing good service to America, both by his published testimony before Congress and by his weekly lucubrations published here.

The Naval Armament—A Fleet for Gibraltar—Its Aggregate, Power and Command—A Cruise in the Atlantic.

LONDON, August 5, 1870.

The whole of the ships forming the Channel squadron will leave this week for Gibraltar, where they will meet the Mediterranean squadron about Sunday week. The combined fleets will proceed thence under the command of the Mediterranean Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir Alexander Milne, for a cruise in the Atlantic, when the several ships will be exercised in divisions and a trial will be made as to the comparative merits of the Monarch and Captain, armor-plated turret ships.

ORGANIZATION AND COMMAND.

The fleet will comprise the Lord Warden, 32 guns, armor-plated ship, with the flag of the admiral commanding in chief.

The Bellerophon, 14 guns, armor-plated screw ship.

The Royal Oak, 24 guns, armor-plated screw ship.

The Prince Consort, 24 guns, armor-plated screw ship, and

The Caledonia, 20 guns, armor-plated screw ship, from the Mediterranean squadron.

The Minotaur, flagship of the Vice Admiral, Sir Hastings Yelverton, in temporary command-in-chief of the Channel squadron.

The Agincourt, flagship of Rear Admiral Henry Chads, second in command of the Channel squadron, and the Northumberland, Warrior, Hercules, Monarch and Captain (iron-clads) and Inconstant and Voiage make up the squadron from here.

The latter vessel is at present watching the movements of vessels in the Downs, but will be ordered to join the fleet before it leaves Gibraltar.

AT WOOLWICH.

The splendid dockyard at Woolwich, the freehold of which was ordered to be put up for sale, is, I hear, to be for the present retained by the government, and the town, which has been desolate for the past twelve months, is once again likely to show some tokens of activity, although the present Board of Admiralty have created a vast amount of havoc by the recent sale of machinery and the displacement of the iron flooring as well as the breaking up of the iron shafts, all of which was sold by public auction at an enormous sacrifice. At all the Royal dockyards ships are being got ready and the men in the reserves are being transferred to them. The dockyard hands are being increased as far as practicable, and, in fact, every means is being used for the augmentation of all the naval establishments.

MEN AND STORES WANTED.

The stores are being surveyed, but in every respect found deficient for the requirements, the dockyards and victualling establishments being entirely denuded. Men are in great demand, both for the fleet and the Royal marines, so much so that good bounties will have to be given if the government really intend to increase these forces, and then where they are to come from I am at a loss to know; they certainly are not to be found in any of the ports I have visited this week—viz., Plymouth, Portsmouth, Sheerness, Chatham and Woolwich, if the latter may be termed one. Again, where the stores are I am at a loss to know. They most certainly are not in the dockyards, and since my return from Plymouth I hear, on a reliable authority, that the ships at that port belonging to the Channel squadron are unable to leave, as there are no ordnance stores to fill them up with.

A GREAT RAM.

I have just had a telegram saying that the Hotspur, a new armor-plated ram, mounting two guns, left Messrs. Napier's yard, at Glasgow, this morning. She is 2,637 tons and 600 nominal horse power, and will be brought forward for commission on her arrival at Devonport with as little delay as possible.

Profits of a Peculiar Neutrality—Both Belligerents Welcome for Cash.

[From the London Telegraph.]

Many of our manufacturers are already beginning to reap a rich harvest from the war. At Leeds several of the mills have begun to work five days a week, and they will soon, no doubt, have to work six, in order to supply the requisite military stores. Birmingham is enjoying a still greater share of good fortune, the gunmakers having received more orders for small arms than they can execute. Of course the orders do not come directly from the belligerents; they are forwarded, in most cases, by neutral Powers desirous to guard themselves against the contingencies of the conflict; but in some cases, no doubt, they are sent by agents, who carefully conceal the name of the party for whom they act. France, at least, seems to have been active two months before the war; for, according to a well informed provincial contemporary, a Birmingham firm recently supplied her with 30,000 chassepots. During the war each of the belligerents is likely, under whatever difficulties, to make ample use of Birmingham. It is not comforting to think that we should thus be taking even an indirect part in the present war; but the belligerent character of Birmingham has at least one assuring side. It is a source of strength to England. By means of the official as well as the private factories, this country, should the government but choose—as it does not—to avail itself in time of the gunmakers' services, can produce more rifles in a given time than any other nation. Were we at war the gun factories of Birmingham could, of course, if prior orders were got out of hand, be virtually made government works; and in the present perilous state of affairs that fact affords a certain sense of security. On the other hand our supply of rifles seems so deplorably short that the sooner the War Office turns its eyes to the resources of Birmingham the better it may be, not only for the security of England but for the peace of Europe.

BRITISH NEUTRALITY.

The Cabinet Policy and Code as Between France and Prussia—Provisions of the New Law and a Glance at the Old—How the Queen and Government Stand Towards the Belligerents—The Alabama Claims Case—Hints for the United States Executive—Will Queen Victoria Pay Up?

LONDON, August 6, 1870.

In one of the late Lord Macaulay's essays—that on the "Seven Years' War," I think—after referring to the breach of faith of which the English were guilty in abandoning the cause of Frederick the Great, he goes on to say that the result of this act of treachery was that, many years afterwards, all the efforts of Pitt to get up a coalition against the First Napoleon were for a long time fruitless, the remembrance of the perfidy of which Great Britain had been guilty on a former occasion being still fresh in the minds of the German people. The moral deduced from this incident by the great essayist is that nations never can hope to escape paying sooner or later the penalty of any crimes they may commit. "Instances may be adduced," he says (I quote from memory, not having the volume at hand), "of individuals who have committed great crimes and who have yet gone down to the grave in the full enjoyment of all the advantages they had ever hoped to have obtained from those crimes. But in no case does a nation escape retribution, and for the simple reason that the life of a nation, unlike that of an individual, is not limited in duration, the whirligig of time, sooner or later, bringing its revenges." These remarks of Lord Macaulay apply with singular force to the present position of this country.

During the late American civil war, utterly regardless of public morality, and looking only to the immediate advantage of the trading classes, the English government, while professing to act according to the strict letter of the law, systematically closed its eyes to the fitting out in British ports of privateers for the service of the Confederates.

To the remonstrances of the American Minister Lord Palmerston's Cabinet turned a deaf ear, refusing to admit even for one moment that it was their duty to remedy by legislation the defects in the existing law, notoriously inadequate as it was to deal with the emergency, and rejecting any suggestion to that effect with an affectation of virtuous indignation. "The present law," said Earl Russell, "is sufficiently stringent, if properly carried out, to prevent any violation on the part of our people of the neutrality we profess; and, even if it were not so, it would not be consistent with our dignity to entertain the idea of altering it at the suggestion or request of any foreign government."

The neutrality we profess! Profess is a good word, forsooth! Well, the Alabama escaped—her doings are a matter of history—the result being that the American mercantile flag was almost driven, for the time, from the sea.

Apropos of the Alabama, the London *Standard* of last Wednesday, the 3d inst., in the course of an editorial on the war between France and Prussia, makes the following damaging admission:—

> The Alabama was allowed to steam out of the Mersey at a time when public opinion was so strong in favor of the South that Earl Russell was not sorry to avail himself of the loopholes afforded him by the somewhat scanty evidence and coincident illness of the Crown's official law adviser. Subsequent experience has only shown the fallacy of sailing so close to the wind.

To return. The immediate gain to the English people from the line of conduct adopted by the government was considerable. "But what will be the ultimate consequences of it?" objected some few statesmen—Bright for one—who saw an inch beyond their noses. "Oh!" was the reply, "the South is certain to secure its independence (the London *Times* said, 'The federals and Confederates can no more be reunited under one government than the heptarchy restored in England'), and the North will be so exhausted by the struggle and so weakened by the separation that we can afford to despise its enmity."

If, again, it had been suggested at that period that, one day, a war might break out in Europe, say, as has happened, between France and Prussia—the one strong enough at sea to blockade every one of its adversary's ports—and that as the weaker Power in this respect might seek to play over again the same game that the Confederates had done, it would be wise to provide for the contingency; the man who had made such a proposition would have been laughed to scorn. "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof; let the morrow take care of itself," was the motto of the British Ministry of that epoch.

THE CRISIS COME.

Well, the contingency, which any one deserving the name of statesman ought to have foreseen must, necessarily, one day present itself, has arisen; and what was refused to America at the hour of her utmost need has been done, in hot haste, in anticipation of the demands of the Emperor of the French. A bill to amend the Foreign Enlistment act was read a second time in the House of Commons on Monday last, and is, says the *Standard*, to be hurried through both houses at express speed, in order that shipbuilding for belligerents and their agents may be placed under a ban which will effectually prevent a European reproduction of the Alabama controversy.

NEUTRALITY TO-DAY.

The bill is entitled "The Neutrality Act of 1870." It repeals the old statute of 1819 and substitutes a new code. Its provisions generally, however, do not differ very materially from the enactment of 1819, except that the clauses are expressed with greater precision and leave less opportunity for evasion. The part of the measure which bears more particularly upon the present juncture of affairs is that entitled "Illegal Shipbuilding and Illegal Expeditions." Here the language differs widely from that of the former statute, and shows that the lesson of recent unsuccessful prosecutions has not been forgotten. Any builder who "with intent or knowledge or having reasonable cause to believe that the same shall or will be employed in the naval or military service of any foreign State at war with any friendly State," is liable to fine and imprisonment and to the confiscation of the ship. The same punishment is to be inflicted on any one who equips a ship or causes it to be despatched with the like intent, or with "reasonable cause to believe" that she will be illegally employed. Obviously the net of the law is made far more comprehensive and its meshes closer than they were under the old act. The former law forbade actual equipment or attempts to equip; but a ship might be constructed in English ports with a full conviction on the part of the English builder that she was to receive warlike apparatus and armaments elsewhere, and to be employed for belligerent purposes; yet if the ship were only built here she did not come under the operations of the statutory words "equip, furnish, fit out or arm." That was the result of the decision respecting the Confederate ship, the Alexandra. But, under the present law, a cruiser cannot escape in this way, for the mere act of building, with a reasonable cause to believe in the illegal destination of the craft, is now rendered a penal offence.

Under the new act, too, not only are much larger powers given to local authorities to detain a suspected vessel, pending a judicial inquiry into her character, but the Secretary of State is, by one clause, authorized to seize, summarily, any ship which he may have reason to believe is intended for the service of a belligerent, throwing the burden of proving the innocence of the vessel upon the builder or owner.

It will be seen that the provisions of the above statute just remedy those defects which were so conspicuous in the old law.

THE AMERICAN OPPORTUNITY.

The passage of this act cannot fail to be a strong argument on the side of the United States in any future renewal of the discussion of the "Alabama claims," for it is not only a palpable admission that the old law was not sufficiently stringent to enable the British government to fulfil its obligations towards foreign Powers in general, but it is also a tacit acknowledgment of its moral responsibility for the consequences which resulted from its refusal during the American civil war to comply with the reasonable demands of the federal government.

The Secret Treaty—Earl Granville's Report to the English House of Lords—Bismarck's Despatch.

In the House of Lords the Earl of Malmesbury asked the government if they had any further information to give in reference to the Projet de Traite, which was published in the London *Times*.

Earl Granville said that Count Bernstoff had placed in his hands yesterday a telegram from Prussia, of which he would read an English translation:—

BERLIN, July 28, 1870.

FROM COUNT BISMARCK TO COUNT BERNSTOFF:—

Your Excellency will be good enough to communicate the following to Lord Granville:—The document published by the *Times* contains one of the proposals which have been made to us since the Danish war by official and unofficial French agents, with the object of establishing an alliance between Prussia and France for their mutual aggrandizement. I will send the text of an offer made in 1866, according to which France proposed to aid Prussia with 300,000 men against Austria, and to permit Prussia's aggrandizement by six or eight millions of subjects in return for the cession to France of the district between the Rhine and the Moselle. The impossibility of agreeing to this course was clear to all except French diplomatists. On this proposition being rejected the French government began to calculate upon our defeat. France has not ceased to tempt us with offers to be carried out at the cost of Germany and Belgium. In the interests of peace I kept them secret. After the Luxemburg affair the proposals dealing with Belgium and South Germany were renewed. M. Benedetti's manuscript belongs to this period. It is not likely that M. Benedetti acted without the Emperor's sanction. Finally, the conviction that no extension of territory was attainable in conjunction with us must have matured the resolve to obtain it by fighting us. I have even grounds for believing that, had not this project been made public after our armaments on both sides were complete, France would have proposed to us jointly to carry out M. Benedetti's programme against unarmed Europe, and to conclude peace at Belgium's cost. If the French Cabinet now repudiates aims, for our participation in which it has uninterruptedly labored since 1864, either by demands or promises, this is easily to be explained by the present political situation. BISMARCK.

Yesterday afternoon M. Lavalette made a statement to him (Lord Granville), which he would read from a despatch to Lord Lyons, in which was embodied a despatch from Granville to Lord Lyons, dated Foreign Office, July 29, 1870:—

MY LORD—The French Ambassador called on me on the 28th inst., for the purpose of communicating to me the purport of a despatch which had been addressed to his Excellency by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of the pretended draft treaty published in the *Times*. In that despatch, which M. de Lavalette was good enough to read to me, the Duc de Grammont observed that the very form in which this treaty is drawn up and the terms in which it is couched showed clearly whence it came and can deceive no one. Those who have watched the course of European affairs since the accession in office of M. de Bismarck are aware from which side have come those suggestions which are now attributed to France, ever since the year 1865. M. de Bismarck has constantly endeavored to carry out his own plans by endeavoring to draw the attention of the French government to territorial aggrandizement. He told M. De Lefevre de Behaine, then Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin, that Prussia would willingly recognize the right of France to extend her borders wherever French language is spoken, thereby indicating certain Swiss cantons besides Belgium. These overtures the government of the Emperor declined to entertain. Immediately after the battle of Sadowa similar proposals were made at Brunn to M. de Behaine, and on this occasion Count Bismarck told him that the course of France was clear. The French government should go to the King of Belgium and explain that the inevitable increase to Prussian territory and influence was most disquieting to their security, and that the sole means of avoiding these dangerous issues would be to unite the destinies of Belgium and France by bonds so close that the Belgium monarchy would become in the north a real bulwark of safety to France. Further reporting a conversation with Count Bismarck in July, 1866, the French Ambassador informs his government that he reported nothing new in stating that M. Bismarck is of opinion that compensation should be sought by France in Belgium, and offered to come to an understanding on the subject with the government of the Emperor. The Duc de Grammont went on to say he declined to listen to these proposals, and when at a later period they sought a ratification of the frontiers they expressly declined to mention even the name of Belgium. The Duc de Grammont then points out that if such designs against Belgium had really been entertained by his government it would have been easy to carry them out with the proffered assistance of Prussia, who is only anxious to secure the fruits of her victories. These suggestions were again made at the time of the Luxemburg affair. They were unwillingly received, and categorically rejected by the Emperor. Finally the Marquis de Lavalette was instructed formally to assure her Majesty's government that in these proposals the initiative was entirely taken by the Prussian Cabinet. M. de Lavalette then informed me that he had received instructions, by telegraph, to acquaint me that the documents in the handwriting of M. Benedetti were written by him under the dictation of Count Bismarck, who wished to entangle the French government in a conspiracy against the liberties of Belgium, and that then, as at other times, the scheme was positively rejected. I am, &c., GRANVILLE.

M. Lavalette stated that this was not an answer to the telegram from Berlin, but that further information would be afforded.

The Bismarck Assaults on England.

[From the Cork Herald.]

A violent anti-English article appeared in the *North German Gazette* (the Berlin organ of Count Bismarck), on Wednesday. It charges England with "being a French arsenal for the manufacture of cartridges to shoot down the sons of Germany," and reminds Englishmen of the loss that would follow to their commerce if Prussia allowed France to absorb Belgium. The refusal of the British government to consider coal as contraband of war is also causing considerable dissatisfaction in Prussia, as the movements of the French fleet would be seriously retarded if the export of coal from England were prohibited. The London *Post* is very irate at the unmistakable menace contained in Count Bismarck's mouthpiece, and reminds Prussia that in the event of her violating the neutrality of Belgium, the first to resent the outrage would be the Power whose commerce and prestige she has threatened to extinguish. Another Berlin paper published yesterday a still more significant menace, by stating "that the people of Germany were asking whether England wanted another Alabama question."

FRANCE.

If Prussia is Defeated—What Then?

[From the Paris Temps, August 5.]

As to the issue of the war, the adviser of King William looks forward to it with the utmost calmness—not that he affects any arrogant confidence in the military results, but the political consequences appear to him to present little danger to his cause, even on the supposition of a striking defeat. "If Prussia is victorious," he says, "she would not only achieve German unity to her own advantage, but she would retake, if she thought fit, Lorraine and Alsace; she would have in France only a neighbor lessened in territory and lowered without the hope of recovery, subject to a political crisis, of which it will require ten or twenty years before it will be over; she remains incontestably in possession of the first rank among the Powers of Western Europe. Should Prussia, on the other hand, be beaten, what has she to lose? At the very worst the boundary of the Rhine. In point of fact her territorial integrity is not interfered with; her power of expansion as representative of the Germanic idea remains what it was before; her internal constitution rests intact; her power and her military renown will be shaken for a time, it is true, but she will remain in full possession of all the elements necessary for her recovery. For Prussia, in a word, defeat means simply loss of time; for France it would be equivalent to ruin. The first risks at the most to see her present compromised and her advance delayed, while the second plays her future and her position in the world. So reasons M. Bismarck, and it is from such arguments that he derives the serenity of mind of to-day, just as it caused him for four years to brave us unceasingly. He piques himself on the fact that he led us where and how he pleased. He has the conviction that he has, on his part, secured all the advantages on his side before beginning the game, and he thinks himself, at least, certain that he will not lose even if he does not succeed in winning. The calculation is worthy of the profound politician who prepared and made the Prussia of 1866; but M. Bismarck has already experienced a first surprise in seeing France acclaim the war, and her people range themselves around their government instead of separating from it. Perhaps this is not the only miscalculation that this result of the enterprise may entail upon him, in spite of his confidence that he has foreseen everything."

What Thiers Says.

The following is the translation of a private letter from M. Thiers, published in London:—

SIR—I thank you for the letter you have done me the honor of writing concerning the circumstances through which we have just passed. I have always believed that France would be led to resist the ambition of young and conquering Prussia, but I have always been of opinion that this ought only to be done when the necessity was obvious, and when all European nations would hold us to be in the right. Policy and humanity equally counselled such a course. If in demanding the production of the despatches I had been able to obtain twenty-four hours' respite I think that my fellow countrymen, having time for reflection, would perhaps have decided in favor of peace. I was unable to succeed, and now, always faithful to the flag of my country, it only remains to me to pray for success, while desiring that this may cost humanity as little suffering as possible and lead to a durable peace.

IRELAND.

Demonstrations for France in the War—The Franco-Hibernian Muster in Dublin—Scenes in the Streets—The French Flag Torn Down By the Police—Monster "Turn Out" Against England and Prussia.

DUBLIN, August 3, 1870.

Irish sympathy with France at the present crisis has during the past week manifested itself in a most unmistakable manner. Three monster demonstrations have already been held—two in this city and one in Cork, while several other smaller towns have expressed their sympathy not less decisively in favor of France.

The first of these demonstrations took place here in front of the French Consul's house, in which, it is said, not less than 15,000 persons took part. This was a large number, considering that no advertisement or public information was given of what was about to take place. The promoters of it, anticipating a collision with the police, kept the matter a secret. Their intention, however, was anticipated by their enemy, and, at the appointed hour, a large force of police crowded the place of rendezvous. Several bands were in attendance, which played French and Irish airs, such as "Partant pour la Syrie," the "Marseillaise," "God Save Ireland," "O'Donnel Aboo" and others. The enthusiasm of the people was very great, and as they passed the house of the French Consul cheered vociferously for the people of France, the Emperor, the Empress and the Prince Imperial, and cried, "Down with Prussia and England."

The police endeavored to suppress this manifestation, but in vain. They however succeeded, in the early part of the proceedings, in preventing the music, but afterwards they found it impossible to restrain the numerous bands from playing whatever airs they pleased. At one time a serious collision took place between the police and the people, which, had it not been for timely interference of the leaders, might have been attended with evil consequences.

COLLISION.

About half-past nine o'clock, when the streets were thronged with a living mass, cheering vociferously opposite the Consulate, a French tri-color, with a broad stripe of orange and another of green entwined with it, was raised on a pole by one of the groups standing close by. The appearance of the French colors was, as might be expected, hailed with the wildest enthusiasm, when suddenly half a dozen or so of the police endeavored to seize the flag and to remove it out of the hands of those who bore it.

A scene of great excitement ensued. The cry was raised, "They are tearing down the French flag," and then the populace rushed forward to attack the police, and, if possible, to rescue the flag. A struggle of some moments' duration ensued, which ended in the destruction of the colors; but the remains, such as they were, were in the hands of the people.

ANOTHER ASSEMBLAGE.

An immense gathering for the same purpose took place on the 24th instant; not, however, as was previously announced, at Harold's Cross, but in Sandymount Park. The bills and advertisements summoning this meeting were purposely printed so as to mislead the police. It was first announced that the meeting would take place at Harold's Cross; but it is believed that there was no serious intention on the part of the promoters of it to hold it there. Several thousand persons, however, assembled at the Cross, but when they ascertained that the meeting was to be held at Sandymount they at once repaired thither. The number assembled at this latter place is estimated at between 40,000 and 50,000. French and Irish airs were played as usual; the national colors of France and Ireland were worn; and speeches were made showing the sympathy which always existed between the two countries. Mr. Augustus Chaproniere Byrne, a Frenchman, read an address to the boys of St. Thomas' band, and, in behalf of the French residents in Dublin, presented them with some instruments in place of others which are alleged to have been broken by the police on Tuesday night.

THE ADDRESS.

The paper read as follows:—

DEAR FRIENDS—A glorious demonstration of sympathy with our nation took place in the streets of Dublin a few evenings since. You participated in it and we thank you. Returning on that evening to your homes we learned with regret that you were wantonly assaulted by some members of the police force and that your instruments were broken. We are come to replace those instruments and to ask you in the name of France to accept the ones we now present to you. In this presentation we mean to reciprocate the feeling of good will offered to us on the evening of the 18th July. We do this in the strong belief that our offering is not to any one section, but to the whole Irish people. Your assembled thousands expressed symathy to us under the united banner of Ireland mingled with the tri-color of France. France and Ireland are inseparably allied. We who reside among you feel that we are not in a strange land, nor that our lot is cast among strangers. We feel, on the contrary, that we are as one people and one race, and that the destinies of France and Ireland, of Frenchmen and Irishmen, are similar. God protect Ireland and France! Signed on behalf of the French residents in Dublin.

EUGENE BOURG.
M. BONNETT.

REPLY.

Mr. Madden, of St. Thomas' band, in replying to the above address, remarked that their instruments were broken by the agents of the enemies of Ireland, while the restoration of them was the work of Ireland's friends. He hoped that the demonstration of Tuesday evening, though apparently so trivial, but in reality so significant, might serve to strengthen and consolidate the alliance between the kindred nations and tend to prove to all Frenchmen that we are a distinct people, having nothing in common with the English. The world, he hoped, would observe that the English press, on any question did not represent the views of Ireland.

The drum, which was one of the articles of presentation, bore the following inscription:—"Presented to St. Thomas' band by the sons of France, to reciprocate the feeling of sympathy offered by Ireland to France, July 18, 1870."

After the ceremony the new drum was taken up by the boys of St. Thomas' band, who marched along the entire line formed by the other bands playing the "Marseillaise," which was afterward taken up by the associated bands.

ORDER.

To the credit of all be it said the greatest good order prevailed throughout the entire proceedings. The bands, on their return to the city, played through the principal streets, but there was not, as on Tuesday last, the slightest interference on the part of the police.

A REPLY TO ENGLAND.

The whole proceedings, from first to last, were most unmistakably a demonstration of a very significant character, and no one who witnessed them can for a moment doubt that they were intended as an answer from the Irish people to the tone of the English press respecting the conduct of the French government in the war about commencing between France and Prussia. The thousands which met to-day, not merely in Dublin but also in Cork and Galway, prove, beyond all doubt, that Ireland manfully and indignantly repudiates the sentiment expressed by the English press regarding the ruler and people of France.

In the great struggle about to ensue Ireland takes the deepest interest. She has expressed herself in the most decisive and emphatic manner that France has her sympathies, and, under the circumstances, this can hardly be wondered at. It is perfectly evident that England, in case she should be induced to give her physical as well as her moral support to Prussia, will not find a willing ally in Ireland. Nothing would induce the Irish people to side with Prussia and England in a war against France.

Public feeling upon this question runs rather high at present, and I have no doubt that before long it will manifest itself in a variety of ways on the side of France.

Mr. Johnston, M. P., the Leader of the Orangemen—Special Interview with the Political Chief of the North—His Views on Public Affairs—The National Situation as It Is and May Be.

BELFAST, August 5, 1870.

Mr. William Johnston, M. P., Belfast, is one of the most remarkable men in Ireland. For years he has been identified with the cause of Orangeism, and there is not in the whole north a more tried or trusted member of that association. Whenever his public duties admit of his doing so he invariably attends the Orange lodges; he is the chief organizer of the July and December celebrations, and, with Viscount Crichton, Mr. Verner and Colonel Stuart Knox, he is the champion of Orangeism in the House of Commons. His fidelity to the cause is above all suspicion. Under all circumstances he has continued a stern and unflinching Orangeman, and even those who do not agree with him, either in politics or religion, are ready to bear testimony to his candor and consistency. He does not say one thing and think another, for he is a man who has always acted up to his word. Moreover, he has suffered for his opinions. Not many years ago, for marching at the head of an Orange procession at which party tunes were played and party colors worn, he was tried and convicted, and sent to jail for six months. But this persecution did not cool his ardor or enthusiasm in the cause to which he is so devotedly attached. No sooner was he liberated than he availed himself of the first opportunity to violate the law again, this time, however, with impunity, as a liberal government had come into office. He became the darling of the Ulster Orangemen, and was regarded by his friends as a martyr; but he received a martyr's crown by being elected to represent the second city of Ireland in the British House of Commons. The people of Belfast are very well pleased with Mr. Johnston's Parliamentary career, and there is no doubt that should he again seek their suffrages he will be returned with an overwhelming majority.

In politics he is what is known in this country as a tory nationalist, and, notwithstanding his violent Orange proclivities, he has always endeavored as best he could to unite in one bond of fellowship persons of every shade of religious and political opinion. However anxious he may be to secure this end, he has adopted very peculiar means to bring it about. As soon as he came to Belfast I resolved to see him, and, although he complained of being somewhat unwell, when I announced myself from the HERALD he readily granted me an interview and conversation.

THE DIALOGUE.

CORRESPONDENT—What, sir, do you think of the Party Processions act?

MR. JOHNSTON—Well, I think the Party Processions act ought to be repealed. I may say that virtually it is a dead letter, for it is repeatedly violated with impunity by Protestants and Catholics. Both parties set it at defiance whenever it suits their purpose; but, at the same time, as long as it remains upon the statute book, it offers a gratuitous insult both to Orangemen and nationalists. It would, therefore, in my opinion, be doing no more than simple justice to both parties to repeal the act. Believing this opinion to be the correct one, I introduced a bill into Parliament for this purpose. The Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Judge Advocate General promised me their support; the former said that it would give him the greatest pleasure to record his vote for the repeal of so odious an act, while the latter declared that only he happened to be a member of the administration he would have seconded my proposition for repeal. But, strange to say, when my bill was being read a second time these two members of the government, instead of supporting me, as they promised to do, voted against me, and one of them, the Chief Secretary, introduced a bill which, had it become law, would have made the Lord Lieutenant a dictator and made our processions liable to be dispersed at the point of the bayonet. It was a second Coercion act. But there is no likelihood of its becoming law. Should it again be presented to Parliament it is certain to be rejected by a majority of the House. Protestants and Catholics, Orangemen and nationalists, are agreed on this question, and the government bill will receive the same opposition from the Romen Catholic members of the south as from the Orange members of the north. There never was such unanimity among the Irish members as upon this question of party processions. The Orangemen believe that they have a right to celebrate their anniversaries in whatever manner they please, and the nationalists think also that they have a right to hold their processions; and both are agreed that the time has come when they can do these things without arousing any party feeling or spirit. For my part I must say that, strong as my sympathies are with the Orangemen, I claim for the nationalists the same privilege and the same right to hold their processions and to celebrate their anniversaries as I claim for my own people.

CORRESPONDENT—Don't you believe that the celebration of your anniversaries is likely to insult the Roman Catholics?

MR. JOHNSTON—It may; but I think it ought not to do so. There is one thing I may say, and it is this—these celebrations are not intended to insult the Roman Catholics, but to preserve the memory of a struggle to which we owe our liberties. I deny that the observance of these anniversaries is inconsistent with our duty and allegiance to the throne. On the contrary, if we err at all we err in our excess of loyalty, and not by any want of respect or devotion to the laws and constitution.

CORRESPONDENT—Do you think, sir, is the feeling occasioned among Protestants by the disestablishment of the Church dying out, and is there any reason to believe that the present government are in league with the Roman Catholics?

MR. JOHNSTON—Well, I think the feeling still exists in some quarters; but, speaking generally, I think it is rapidly dying out. There are, to be sure, many persons who will never be reconciled to the disestablishment of the Irish Church, believing, as they do, that it was an act of robbery and spoliation, but these are a very small number in proportion to the population. As regards your other question, many are inclined to think that the government next year will concede denominational education to the demand of Cardinal Cullen, and this is one of the chief reasons why people suspect the Cardinal has some influence with the present ministry. The bill, too, which the Irish Chief Secretary introduced with regard to the party processions was, I must say, far more partial to Catholics than to Orangemen. The Secretary did not think, nor could he believe, that green was a party color; and green is, as you know, the color usually worn by the nationalists. Besides, his bill was chiefly intended for us—Orangemen—as it was introduced a short time before our July anniversaries, and was framed so as to prevent them. Nothing else occurs to me just now to show that the Catholics are more favored by the present government than their Protestant fellow countrymen.

TERMINATION AND CONCLUSIONS.

This brought my interview with Mr. Johnston to a close. Though naturally indiscreet and violent on public occasions, and particularly when addressing a crowd of Orangemen, Mr. Johnston is an extremely affable and courteous gentleman. He has a very prepossessing appearance, is over six feet in height, and wears an unusually long beard of a light red color. His appearance and manner appear to me to be such that, were you to meet him, you would be tempted to ask "Who is he?"

Sympathy with France in the War—Popular Demonstrations in Support of the Tri-color—The Movement in Tipperary, Castlebar and Kanturk—Democratic Agitation Extending—Marshal MacMahon—Hopes of the People.

DUBLIN, August 4, 1870.

Irish sympathy with France continues to manifest itself in several parts of the country. Tipperary, Kanturk and Castlebar have followed the example of Dublin, Cork and Galway in holding public demonstrations, while Limerick and other places have announced their intention of adopting a similar course so as to give expression to the feeling. In several parts of the county Tipperary meetings of a most enthusiastic character have been held, and others, unless prevented by the authorities, will be held in a few days. Sunday, near the "Devil's Bit," a large meeting was held under the presidency of Mr. Peter E. Gill, at which the following resolution was passed:—

> That we, the people of Tipperary, assembled on this eventful day for Europe, when France's sword is unsheathed for human liberty, deem it our duty to express our entire sympathy for her arms, which were always identified with Ireland in her struggle for liberty.

At the meeting in Castlebar, county Mayo, some six or seven thousand persons were present. The French tricolor was carried in front of a brass band, which, during the proceedings, played French and Irish national airs. The meeting, though lively and spirited, was very orderly, and the names of the Emperor Napoleon and Marshal MacMahon elicited the wildest enthusiasm.

In Kanturk another meeting was held, at which, it must be admitted, a very strong anti-English and anti-German feeling displayed itself. Several of the speakers contrasted the sympathy which France has always had for Ireland with the language and policy of Great Britain towards this country, and reminded the meeting that "the Germans were employed as mercenaries to oppress Ireland in the Williamite wars, and also during the rebellion of 1798." A resolution was passed tendering to France not only the sympathy but the arms of Ireland should they be required in the present emergency.

The chairman said that "Marshal MacMahon had only to speak and an Irish brigade, like that which fought at Cremona and Fontenoy, would rally around him."

SOUTH VERSUS NORTH.

These demonstrations, held in different parts of Leinster, Munster and Connaught, show that beyond all doubt the feeling of the southern population of Ireland is decidedly in favor of France. I may say,