

[From the New York Herald, 8th.]

EUROPE.

Earl Russell's Defence of England's Policy Towards the Union.

His Grand Plan of Neutrality and Friendship and Condemnation of the "So-Called" Confederates.

Lord Palmerston's Speech on the Defences of Canada and Chances of a War with the United States.

THE ATLANTIC TELEGRAPH, &c., &c., &c.

The Cunard steamer China, Captain Anderson, which left Liverpool at eight o'clock on the morning of the 25th, and Queenstown on the evening of the 26th March, arrived at this port early yesterday morning.

Her news is three days later. Sir Frederick Bruce, the new British Minister to Washington, is a passenger by the China. The King of the Belgians was on a visit to Queen Victoria at Windsor.

In the House of Commons, Mr. Ayrton asked if the Government intended to ask the sanction of Parliament to guarantee the money required to complete the railway from Halifax to Quebec. Mr. Cardwell said when the colony was prepared to carry into effect the conditions upon which the guarantee was to be given, Government would be prepared to fill the engagements, but, as at present advised, he had no intention of asking Parliament for the guarantee at this session.

The weekly returns of the Bank of France show an increase in the cash on hand of over two and a quarter millions of francs.

Advices from Bombay, India, of March 17, report the markets at a stand-still and prices nominal.—Cotton shipments for the fortnight 50,000 bales.—Exchange 2s. a 32d. The rate of interest has advanced 1 per cent.

THE AMERICAN QUESTION.

EARL RUSSELL'S PHRASES OF DEFENCE AND ASSURANCE OF ENGLAND'S FRIENDSHIP FOR THE UNION.

In the House of Lords on the 23d of March Earl Russell, in laying on the table the despatches from the Minister of the United States, said—I wish to make a statement in regard to the relations between this country and the United States. My lords, one of these papers is a letter from Mr. Adams, in which he states that he is commanded by the President to deliver to the British government a notice, dated March 13, in regard to the termination of the Reciprocity treaty between this country and the United States, and stating that this treaty will terminate twelve months from the date of the acknowledgment of that notice. Mr. Adams also encloses the vote of the Congress, which has been approved by the President, declaring that it was no longer for the interest of the United States that that treaty should continue. Coupled with this notice is a notice given with respect to the armament of the lakes. I think it must be admitted that recent occurrences on the lakes—namely, the seizure of vessels by the agents of the confederacy and other acts of hostility, completely justify the United States in giving notice of the termination of the convention. My lords, it was not to be expected that the United States should submit passively to such acts of violence without availing themselves of all the means of repression within their power. With regard to the Reciprocity treaty, although I will not say there are sufficient grounds, yet there are grounds with respect to the admission of articles duty free into the United States which may induce the United States Government to wish for a renewal of the treaty with modifications that may be more advantageous, and which the United States Government may consider more just, to the United States.—

When Mr. Adams informed me of the result of the negotiations which had taken place between the President of the United States and the agents of the so-called Confederate States, I expressed to him a hope that when he should present to me the notice of the termination of the Reciprocity treaty I should find that the Congress and Government of the United States would be ready to consider propositions by which a small and limited armament might be kept up on the lakes, for the purposes of police, at both sides; and also that a renewal of the Reciprocity treaty, upon terms to be agreed upon by both parties, might be negotiated during the twelve months to elapse before the existing treaty ceased its operation. Of course Mr. Adams was not authorized to give me any assurance upon the subject, but the words used induced me to trust that such an assurance would be given. I am sure your Lordships will all be anxious that the relations between this country and the United States should continue as they are now—of a pacific and friendly character. (Cheers.) And for my part I should be very sorry that anything should occur, or be done in this country that would tend to prevent such a satisfactory result.—

But, my lords, I cannot but think that the expressions which have been used and the speeches which have been made may tend to excite in the United States a disposition unfavorable towards the end which we thus desire to accomplish. I allude to speeches declaring that this country has behaved wrongly to the United States, has given the United States just cause of complaint, and that an unfriendly spirit has been shown throughout these transactions. My lords, the obvious effect of speeches such as these must be that individuals in the United States who are in favor of hostilities with this country must know that there is in this country a party ready to take up the view that the United States are in the right, and, therefore, that they will be wanting in proper spirit and in proper regard for the national interests and the national honor if they do not complain loudly of the conduct of this country. I ask your Lordships to attend for a short time to the statement which I have to make; because I cannot but think that the government of this country and this country itself have been wrongfully accused upon these various points. One of the chief complaints put forward is that this country is a great bully and without proper consideration, granted belligerent rights to what are called the Confederate States.—Now, every one who knows anything of the law of nations knows perfectly well that although a country may put down insurgents

who rise against its authority, yet that a country has no right or power to interfere with neutral commerce unless it assumes the position of a belligerent. (Hear, hear.) But that is what the United States did. The President of the United States by his proclamation declared that the coasts of particular States were in a state of blockade, and that armed vessels belonging to those States were to be treated as pirates. There came representations on this subject from her Majesty's Minister in the United States, but in the first instance they merely covered despatches from Admiral Sir A. Milne, commanding her Majesty's squadron in those waters, asking how he was to treat the armed vessels of the two parties. At that time Lord Campbell held the high office of Lord Chancellor, and of course we consulted him and the law officers of the crown as to what should be done. Lord Campbell declared, as we all supposed he would do, that there was no course but one to pursue—namely, to regard the blockade on the part of the United States as the exercise of a belligerent right. And as belligerent rights cannot be confined to one party, but are usually exercised against somebody else, our advisers told us that we were entitled to recognize the exercise of belligerent rights on the part of both the combatants, and to declare her Majesty's neutrality between the two parties. (Cheers.)—And this, accordingly, was the course which we recommended. The proclamation in that sense was approved, if not actually drawn up, I believe, by my learned friend the present Lord Chancellor; and the course of neutrality thus adopted was certainly received with favor, and, I believe, commended itself to the sentiments of the country as the right course for us to take. It is said now that we ought to have awaited the arrival of Mr. Adams. I know not what Mr. Adams could say on the subject. If I had told my colleagues that we must wait for him and consult him I believe it would only have caused embarrassment in the relations between the two countries. He could scarcely have approved anything which we did short of taking the part of the North against the South. But, then, it is said, if the proclamation of neutrality was not altogether wrong, at any rate it ought to have been delayed, and that unfriendliness was shown in the manner of its promulgation. I conceive that there was nothing unfriendly, nothing uncourteous in the declaration; but, on the contrary, that it was the proper course for this country to declare at the earliest moment that it meant to take part neither with the North nor with the South, but to remain entirely neutral in the contest. (Hear, hear.)

Be it observed also that from the issue of that proclamation on the 13th of May her Majesty's subjects were bound to take no part in the contest, and were warned that they would disobey her Majesty's injunctions if they gave aid to one side or the other.—Your Lordships all remember the affair of the Trent. It is said with regard to that affair, as with regard to the proclamation of neutrality, that the proceedings of the government were unfriendly and uncourteous, and I am accused—not for the first time certainly, nor probably for the tenth time, but with as little justice now as on any of the former occasions—of having had a despatch put into my hands which ought to have been published, because it contained an assurance on the part of the United States government that they did not intend to resist the delivery of the vessel and the commissioners. My lords, that was very far from being the case; and although Mr. Adams did bring me a despatch on that occasion, it was a despatch relating chiefly to other questions between the two countries, and merely ending with a declaration that if any demand were made upon the subject of the Trent, that question would be fairly considered by the United States government. The despatch was not put into my hands, and therefore I could not publish it. Even had it been left with me, and had I published it, it would have given no satisfaction, because I certainly believed, and my noble friend at the head of the government also believed, up to the last moment, that it was entirely a matter of uncertainty whether the United States government would give up these commissioners, or whether they would refuse to do so, and withhold arbitration. And now as to the manner in which these demands were made. In the first place, I wrote to Lord Lyons, and begged him not to make any demand in the first instance, but to acquaint the Minister with the nature of the despatches, and requested that he would name a day when the despatches could be put into his hand, after consulting the President. That appeared to me the course it was most courteous to take. And I am bound to say, in mentioning these facts, that there is one circumstance connected with them which does the highest credit to the memory, good taste and discretion of the late Prince Consort. At the last moment, after her Majesty had approved the despatch, we received a letter from the Prince Consort, in which he said that some of the expressions used in the despatch might be considered too abrupt, and suggested other phrases, which he thought might make it more easy for the Government of the United States to accept the request which it conveyed. These phrases were adopted by the Government and embodied in the despatch, and, doubtless, tended in some degree to render the document more acceptable to the United States Government, who were called upon by its terms to perform a duty in conformity with the law of nations and regarded by the people of this country as an act of justice. (Cheers.) But it is said that, while we displayed great haste in acknowledging the South as belligerents, we were guilty of great supineness in the case of the Alabama, and upon this point I have only to state that the evidence on this subject was furnished to us by Mr. Adams, and that the information which we received was immediately laid before the law officers of the crown, and that on the very morning of the day on which they reported the Alabama left Birkenhead. On this question, however, I will say no more, because it may form a matter for discussion between the Government of the United States and our own. I do not wish in any way to forestall that discussion; but I think I may say that we have done everything which either international law or the laws of this country demanded of us in order to prevent the attacks made on the trade of the United States by that vessel.—

There was, however, another case which was the subject of much discussion, and in respect to which considerable irritation was created. After the Alabama had sailed from Birkenhead other vessels were built, the construction of which amounted in itself to an armament, and furnished evidence of a hostile purpose. The owners of those vessels were in correspondence with Captain Bullock, the agent of the Confederate States, and we had every reason to believe that those iron rams were intended to break the blockade of the Southern ports, which had been established. Now, it seemed to me that if those vessels were allowed to

proceed from the port of Liverpool the utmost danger to the friendly relations existing between this country and the United States would have been the result. I could not conceive it possible that the United States would have allowed these armed vessels to break the blockade, which had been acknowledged by the authorities of this country, and not make demands with which we might not have found ourselves able to comply. I therefore took what was a very strong measure on this subject. I ordered those rams to be detained, and afterwards directed that they should be seized for the purpose of preventing them from committing acts of hostility. We subsequently had placed in our hands the contract by which the agents of the Confederate States had agreed to sell those rams to M. Bravay, who said they were not intended for purposes of hostility against the United States. The question, however, remained to be tried, and we came to the conclusion that, though the moral evidence was complete, and though we believed the legal evidence to be complete, that there might still be circumstances which would prevent a conviction from being obtained. I am, however, convinced that it would have been an ignominious and ignominious thing if we had been obliged to go to war, not for the honor of England, because that was not engaged; not for the interests of England, because they were not involved—but for the sake of private considerations, where no injustice had been done. I therefore regret very much that the noble earl opposite took the course which he has taken, and that he should have done everything in his power to prevent our stopping those vessels, which might otherwise have gone and broken the blockade. I will now say that there is every reason to hope that, as the ports of the Southern States have been captured by the arms of the United States, many questions which have hitherto arisen as to the breaking of the blockade, the imprisonment of the crews of vessels, and several other questions touching the maritime rights of the two countries, will disappear, and that there will be the less reason to apprehend the occurrence of hostilities between us and the United States.—I must at the same time observe that the impartial course which her Majesty's government has pursued has, from time to time, been impeded and endangered on the one side by those partisans of the North who were constantly stating that we were acting in a manner hostile to the North, and, on the other, by those who were as constantly violating the neutrality which her Majesty had proclaimed, in the pursuit of their own private ends. But, be that as it may, I am satisfied that there is not the slightest pretence for saying that the course which the government has pursued has not been strictly neutral. To-morrow a new minister will set out from this country to represent her Majesty at Washington. We greatly lament that Lord Lyons is, owing to the state of his health, unable to return to his post. (Hear, hear.) There is no person to whom the country is more indebted for the wise, calm and conciliatory line of conduct which he has pursued than the noble lord, who has never failed, at the same time, to maintain the dignity and honor of the country. Sir F. Bruce, who is about to take his place, has distinguished himself greatly by the firmness of his policy. He has acted in such a manner towards the Chinese government as completely to win their confidence, while his conduct towards the representatives of the other European powers has been such as to obtain their concurrence in every step which he has taken. Towards the British interests in China he has so acted that, while willing to listen to their complaints and obtain redress for their just grievances, he has never shown himself prepared to support their unreasonable demands. That being so, he appears to me to be exactly the man whom it is desirable her Majesty should choose to represent her in the United States, and I hope that under his auspices the friendly relations between the two countries will be maintained. (Cheers.)

ENGLAND WILLING TO LEARN.

In the House of Commons on the 23d of March Mr. W. Ewart asked whether it was the intention of the Government to send to the scene of war in the United States any military or medical officers to study and report on the progress of military and medical science as it was exemplified in the war in that country.

The Marquis of Hartington said that military officers had been sent to America from time to time during the progress of the war. There was at Washington a naval attaché, and it was also proposed to send there a military attaché. The Government at Washington made no objection to that measure, but a final decision could not be come to until the meeting of Congress. It was not the intention to send out a medical officer.

FRENCH SUPPORTERS OF THE AMERICAN UNION.

[Paris (March 24) correspondence of London Times.] The amendments on the address already prepared by the opposition, not, however, including the names of MM. Thiers and Berruyer, will probably give rise to a long and animated discussion. * * The opposition members proposed to add after the nineteenth paragraph, "We proclaimed from the commencement our sympathies for North America. Thanks to heroic efforts, slavery is abolished. We shall be happy to see the powerful republic of the United States, the natural ally of France, re-established; and we hail with joy a triumph which will have cost the cause of liberty nothing."

THE DEFENCES OF CANADA.

CHANCES OF AN AMERICAN INVASION OF THE COLONY—IMPORTANCE OF ITS DEFENCE AND DUTY OF THE COLONISTS.

In the House of Commons on the 23d of March the Marquis of Hartington, in rising to move the vote of £211,400 for superintending establishment and expenditure for works, buildings and repairs at home and abroad, said—I will not detain the House in reply to a question raised by an honorable member, because it bears more upon the general subject of our relations with the United States than upon the details proposed by the government for the defences of Canada. I think it may be convenient to the House, if I state, as shortly as I can, what are the views of the government. I may be permitted, in the first place, to express a hope that the House will to-night discuss this question upon its merits solely, and not again enter into the consideration of the possibility of hostilities with the United States. (Hear, hear.) I do not feel called upon to express any opinion as to the wisdom and prudence of entering on discussions of that sort. It might, perhaps, be better that we should, on both sides of the Atlantic, frankly state what our fears and apprehensions of each other are, and it is possible the very discussion of the differences between us and our suspicions of each other might tend rather to improve our relations; but, on the other hand, I should be inclined to fear that words inadvertently uttered in the heat of debate might tend to excite animosities which might be productive of danger.—Whatever may be the opinion of the House upon this point, there is one thing which I feel sure is not necessary

ly mixed up with this question—that is our relations with the United States. The real facts of the case are these—Four years ago our North American provinces had upon their borders a very great nation—not then a great military nation, because then the United States had the smallest standing army, perhaps, of any nation in the world. The people were the least turned to military matters and their greatest men devoted themselves to the pursuits of peace and ecclesiastical life. The United States, however, have become a great military nation, and have command armies as large as any which can be wielded by the great Powers of Europe, and at the head of these armies are generals as able as any we know of. (Hear, hear.) Although our North American colonies cannot compete with the United States in size or commercial prosperity, yet they are, it must be admitted, a great nation, and are on the high road to be a still greater nation. These colonies profess a wish to remain independent and distinct from their great neighbors—the United States; and they also profess, in the most unmistakable language, their desire to maintain their connection with this country. If such are their wishes it seems to me that it is not strange they should desire to place themselves in such a position as not to be depending upon the forbearance of their great neighbors, however long they might imagine that forbearance might be extended. It seems to be only worthy of the position of our North American colonies, and only worthy our position, so long as they belong to us, that we should do what we can to place their borders in a state of defence. Without the slightest expectation of the government of the United States meditating an attack upon our Canadian provinces, I do not see why we should not do what all continental nations do—namely, erect such works as are necessary to protect their frontier. Now, a good deal has been said about the length of the Canadian frontier; but upon that point I need hardly say more than that it was never intended to maintain that frontier intact. (Hear, hear.) Not only would an attempt of that kind prove impracticable in the case of Canada, but it must always be impracticable in that of any continental nation engaged in war with a powerful neighbor. What great nation is there in Europe, for instance, which cannot be invaded at any moment by a powerful neighbor, not at one but at many places? All, then, that can be done is to fortify the most vital points, and to trust for the expulsion of the enemy to such further operations as may from time to time be judged expedient. (Hear, hear.) If Canada be invaded by the United States or any other enemy, the invasion must either be made with the object of permanently annexing the country or of inflicting upon our arms a humiliating defeat. If the object be the permanent annexation of the country, that can only be accomplished by the conquest of the whole country, and more especially by the reduction of the most important points. It can certainly never be attained by overrunning the country, though operations of that character may be very largely extended. Above all, to insure the annexation of Canada, it is necessary that the enemy should possess himself of the line of the river St. Lawrence, the great artery of the country. He must also possess himself of the points which command the navigation of that river—namely, Montreal and Quebec. If we, therefore, can place the line of the St. Lawrence and these two points which command its navigation in such a state of defence as to enable the Canadians to resist the attack of an enemy, it is reasonable to suppose that if the object of the enemy be annexation, he will first of all endeavor to ascertain his chances of success at those points. Unless he can see a prospect of success in those directions, he will hardly think it worth while to incur the expense and the loss of so large a number of men as must necessarily follow a hopeless attempt. It was calculated that the number of troops required to garrison those two places was thirty thousand men, but it was desirable to have thirty-five thousand, and likewise a movable force of twenty thousand or twenty-five thousand men, making a total of sixty thousand men. He then noticed the military force of the colony, consisting of volunteers and militia, and observed that it was quite possible that the western provinces of Canada might not think sufficient provision was made for their defence, but that the government plan, he believed, was perfectly practicable as a defence of those provinces. In conclusion, he said if the House adopted the view of those who thought we should leave Canada to herself, he hoped it would say so at once, and not deceive the Canadians.—Others suggested another mode of defence, by withdrawing our troops from the colony and, if necessary, acting on the enemy's border. But they were bound to show the points where the United States, with all their great harbors fortified, and with enormous armies, could be vulnerable, and how we could attack her weak points at less cost than would be approved by the House, which he hoped would be approved by the House.

Mr. Disraeli, after confessing his dislike to the manner in which the government had brought forward their proposition, said he should support the vote, though he considered war with America most improbable. Canada, if her blood was up, might raise two hundred thousand fighting men, and this number, supported by a series of strong places, would be quite three hundred thousand; so that the result of an invasion would be uncertain.—He dissented from Mr. Lowe in his views of the future of Canada.

Mr. Bright said he objected to the vote because the main portion of the expenditure for the defence of Canada was to be borne by the colony. He protested against the doctrine that the Cabinet of London may get into a war with that of Washington, and Canada be made the battle field, this country being entitled to call upon Canada to bear the chief part of the expenditure. If so, what advantage was the connection to Canada? There was no prospect of a war between America and Canada alone. Why should the Canadians be taxed for a policy not Canadian? That was his main objection to the vote.

Lord Palmerston said—Sir, this is not a Canadian question, it is not a local question, it is an imperial question. It is a question which affects the position and character, the honor, the interests and the duties of the great country, and I hold it to be of the utmost importance to the character of the nation in a case like this, and when the great majority of the House seem to be of the same opinion, that it should not go forth to the world that there has been a difference of opinion on the motion; but that it should be seen to have been accepted by a unanimous House of Commons. (Hear, hear.) Sir, there are one or two points with regard to which I think it right to express my dissent from some doctrines which have been laid down. Many gentlemen have argued this question as if there was a general impression and belief that war with the United States was imminent, and that this proposal of ours was for the purpose of meeting a sudden danger which we apprehended to be hanging over us. Now, I think there is no danger of war with America. Nothing that has recently passed indicates any hostile disposition on the part of the United States towards us; and, therefore, I do not base this motion on the ground that we expect war to take place between this country and America. But it is necessary that when you propose to put a country in a state of defence you should show that war with some powerful neighbor is imminent and likely soon to take place. Why the whole practice of mankind is founded on an entirely different assumption. (Hear, hear.) Every country which is able to do so fortifies its frontier if its neighbor is a powerful State, which might if it thought fit attack it. But it is said that you cannot defend Canada.—Now, I utterly deny that proposition. (Cheers.) I think that assuming a conclusion which no man is entitled to assume.—Does the example even of the war now going on tend to justify that conclusion? The territory of the Confederates is vast and extensive. Have they attempted to defend very important points and these important points, although the rest of the country may have been overrun, have resisted attack—some of them even to this day, and others for three or four years of the contest.—(Hear, hear.) Look at Richmond, is Richmond taken? (Hear, hear.) Has not Richmond been attacked for a great length of time? And what are its defences? Why chiefly earthworks, with a force behind them; and though that force is inferior in numbers to the force which threatens it, it has hitherto remained in Confederate hands.—