

News of the Week.

From the Liverpool Mail, January 7.
EUROPE.

CHIEF EVENTS AND TOPICS OF THE WEEK.—The General War, judging from concurrent indications, has already commenced, just as the Russo-Turkish war began when few believed in it. The funds are almost daily declining; the price of corn, and the necessaries of life, almost daily advancing. We are no longer 'bored' with daily leaders in the ministerial prints to prove the pacific results, which were to flow from the Aberdeen policy and diplomatic negotiations. At last, Diplomacy is tacitly admitted to be very much in the hopeless condition of Mr. Doze-up. In place of expatiating on Vienna conferences, the chief ministerial organ, The Times, of yesterday, at length turns to those more practical considerations, counting up our unrivalled naval strength, and thus winds up its leading article:

"It appears from these returns that, setting aside the whole sailing fleet of England, we have at present afloat 11 steam line-of-battle ships, soon to be increased to 20, 5 guardships with auxiliary steam power, and 7 frigates fitted with screw propellers, which may be considered (with one or two exceptions) the finest vessels ever launched of their class. Of these screw line-of-battle ships, only two (the Sanspareil and the Agamemnon) are in the Turkish waters, and the former of these two vessels does not, we fear, answer to her name. The greater number of those already in commission belong to Admiral Corry's division, which is termed by the Admiralty the Western Squadron, though it may be considered to be on an experimental cruise; and four are still waiting for commission. So that, independent of the British squadron now in the Bosphorus, that portion of the fleet which is not in the Mediterranean consists of an equal number of newer and more powerful ships than those under the command of Admiral Dundas. This result is already creditable to the Admiralty, and it has been accomplished within the last few months on what is still a peace establishment. Among those politicians who distinguished themselves at an early period of the dispute now pending in the East by loudly recommending a prompt appeal to arms, there may be some who will perceive with satisfaction, that we are far better prepared to meet such an emergency at the present time than we were last spring. At the time the Baltic was open, our naval resources were not collected, and our coasts were comparatively undefended. We have now had time to prepare against the danger. Our armaments, indeed, are still of a very limited character, and cannot be compared to the stupendous exertions of the Emperor of Russia, who has set the whole army of his empire in motion, has 40 line-of-battle ships in commission, has raised four millions and a half of money from the Church, and commenced operations on a scale worthy of the campaign of Moscow. But no one will complain that Great Britain has been less violent and precipitate in her demonstrations of hostility, partly from her reluctance to surrender the last hopes of peace, and partly from a just confidence in that power which has never yet failed her. The Admiralty has constructed a fleet of magnificent ships, armed with all that modern science has done for navigation. We trust that young, able, and energetic officers will be selected to command them; and we venture to affirm that with good ships, good officers, and good treatment, the blue jackets will not fail to do their part in their country's battles."

The most "exciting public" event has arisen from this general stoppage of the mails. In the absence of more profitable employment, and in the best of humour, Thursday witnessed a battle-royal, in the shape of snowballing within the Exchange area, among "children of larger growth." We cannot condemn them for the weather was so bracing and exhilarating, that everybody felt ready for everything and anything—from pitch and toss to [anything short of] manslaughter. We regret that any ill-feeling should have been engendered. On the one hand: had it been distinctly understood that the Mayor had expressed a strong wish that the excitement should subside, we feel persuaded, all sides would have yielded to his worship, and that the Head of the Police and his body-guard would have escaped their share of the snowballing (and worse) which fell fast and thick. On the other hand: perhaps this last collision might have been obviated if the military Chief of the Police had exercised a "little" more discretion—shows more of the "suavior in modo" as a preliminary to the "fortiter in re," particularly as he was grappling with gentlemen all in good humour, and on their own ground, their own private property. It was a mistake throughout. We hope that kindly and generous feelings on both sides will allow this ludicrous "escapade" to be evanescent and obliterated.

RUSSIA AND TURKEY.—The news in connection with the Russo-Turkish war is less interesting than usual this week, active operations being suspended till the answer of the Czar to the last proposal of the Four Powers is

received. On Monday it was stated that the Turkish Council of Ministers notified the four envoys that it had adopted very nearly the propositions suggested at Constantinople by them. The council had not yet drawn up its statement in due form, but it was to do so and to transmit copies to the four ambassadors on the 29th December. The Caradoc arrived on Monday night at Marseilles; she left Constantinople on the 26th December, and no doubt must bring important news, since Lord Stratford thought fit to despatch her for some reason before the Porte made known his resolutions respecting the propositions of the envoy.

Little hope is felt that the Czar will imitate the example of the Porte; and from all that can be gleaned from the foreign journals, it would appear that he is determined to push matters to extremities, and brave the anger of the English and French governments.—Amongst other things it was stated that the Russian government has given notice to several commercial gentlemen and engineers interested in the Russian railways, that these works are about to be suspended, as all the men and money required for their construction will be devoted to carrying on the war. It is said, too, that agents of Russia are at the present moment engaged in this country in search of ships and warlike stores for the Russian government, while others have also proceeded to America on a similar mission. In the present attitude of affairs, parties supplying warlike appliances will, of course, place themselves in great danger.

A private letter from Teflis, of the 2d ult., announces that Prince Woronzoff had received despatches from St. Petersburg, apprising him that a reinforcement of eighty pieces of artillery had been forwarded to him, with directions to carry on the war in Asia with the greatest activity. Also that two fresh divisions of Infantry will be added to the force. In the meantime the English and French governments are preparing for emergencies, the garrisons at Gibraltar and the Ionian Islands are being considerably strengthened, and vast armaments are quietly preparing at Toulon.

From a warlike leader in the Times of Tuesday, it appears that the strength of the combined English and French fleets now in the Bosphorus amounts to 44 sail including line-of-battle ships, frigates, and steamers. Of these the French and English have each three three-deckers; we have seven two-deckers (including the Agamemnon) to five French two-deckers the French 90-gun screw-ship Napoleon having, unfortunately, been sent back to Toulon for repairs. Each flag has, or will soon have, eleven paddle-wheel steamers. The Sanspareil (English) and the Charlemagne (French) two-deckers, have auxiliary steam power. In addition to this powerful fleet, there are in the Bosphorus at least seven Turkish and Egyptian line-of-battle ships, besides frigates and steamers; so that the combined force may be taken at about 60 sail. From the large amount of steam power, the weight of guns, the size of these ships in proportion to their rating, and the perfection to which naval gunnery has now been carried both in the English and French navies, this is, beyond doubt, the finest naval armament ever sent to sea, though it might, if necessary, be powerfully augmented by the first-class steam ships and frigates which from Admiral Corry's squadron, now at Lisbon.—Those vessels are, however, probably reserved as the nucleus of the North Sea fleet in the spring. The best understanding prevails between the English and French officers, and the signal books of the two squadrons have been exchanged, with an arrangement that, in sailing order, the French squadron will form the weather and the English the port line.

The Morning Herald of the same day stated that most energetic efforts will be put forth immediately to create and fit out a powerful North Sea squadron, to be ready for service as soon as the ice breaks up. The push will be for steamers, of which we are now getting rather short, so many having been commissioned in 1853. Leaving Admiral Corry's force where it is, or sending it to Malta or Constantinople, whilst Admiral Dundas is scouring the Black Sea, we have a goodly force of ships at the home ports. Enumerating them on the spur of the moment we find ten screws mustering 632 guns; four paddles, 34 guns; and eight sailing ships, 590 guns; together with some smaller steamers and sailing vessels. This would make a large force (the ships are all sea-going vessels), but there are not half a dozen of them fully manned, a few of the others have more than their complement of marines on board. Well fitted and fully manned, this force alone would give a good account of the Cronstadt fleet, if met in good sea-room.

A letter from Malta, of the 28th ult., states that the merchants who had contracted to supply the British fleet with coals to the Black Sea, had received orders to prepare depots at Sinope, Varna, and Trebisonde.

The following is the reply, signed the 12th of December, of the English and French ambassadors to the applications for the entrance of the combined fleets into the Black Sea:—"We have to acknowledge the receipt of your excellency's note of December 4. We learned thereby that a division of the Russian fleet, which had been cruising for some days in the neighbourhood of Sinope, entered that

port on the 30th ultimo, and attacked some Turkish ships-of-war anchored there. Since then we have also been apprised of the result of the combat, which we deeply deplore, while at the same time, all our praise is due to the noble devotion and patriotism of those who fell in an unequal struggle. We are, however, in duty bound, as far as concerns us, to disclaim all responsibility in reference to that disaster; and your excellency will do us the justice to acknowledge that, whenever we are consulted by the Porte as to the expediency of the Ottoman fleets entering the Black Sea, we invariably express our doubts and apprehensions without reserve. A defective materiel, crews under the contingent required in time of war, the adverse chances of the Black Sea at this season, the possibility of encounter with an enemy of superior force—all these reasons were exposed to the government of the Sultan, in support of an opinion in opposition to its own. The presence of the Anglo-French fleet in the Bosphorus is an incontestable proof of the interest and sentiments which animate the Emperor of the French and her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain. Their presence has a political signification. It is a moral support, as long as there remains a hope of effecting a reconciliation between the adverse powers—Should, however, Russia attempt to land a force on the Bosphorus, or at any other point of the Turkish coasts, the combined fleet will then be required to act, and enter immediately the Black Sea, if necessary, to protect the territory, as well as the integrity, of the Ottoman empire.

Private letters from Paris, received in London on Thursday, state that, if the weather permitted, it was expected that the Black Sea would be entered by the fleet about the 3d or 4th of the present month. In the official circles of Paris it is believed that war is inevitable. The decision of the Emperor Nicholas, with respect to the Vienna proposition, is stated to be known, though not officially. If we (Times) can credit what is said, his Majesty's remark when he heard of being asked to send an envoy to the Conference, was that he never would send any general of his to sign his own commendation and his own dishonour.

The Chronicle's Paris correspondent writes—"The fact of the Emperor of Russia's refusal to accede to the propositions of the conference of Vienna is at last beginning to be admitted generally in Paris, and in consequence war is more believed in. I understand that the Russian families inhabiting France have received orders to return to Russia; also that M. de Kisseleff, having been asked yesterday if he had received orders to demand his passport replied that no note had as yet reached him on that particular point, but that he expected to hear something from one moment to another.

By order to the Sultan, a Grand National Council was held on the 18th of December, composed of the present and former ministers, the principal Ulemas, the high military and naval functionaries, both in actual service and non-activity, and all the generals and colonels then in Constantinople. The deliberations continued on the 19th, and it was the 20th or 21st that the note now brought by the Caradoc was signed.

A Russian man-of-war schooner, driven by stress of weather into the Bosphorus, was captured by Colonel Moustafa Bey, commandant of the fortress of Anadolu-Kavak. The Russian capt. before falling into the hands of the Turks threw his guns and ammunition into the sea, in the hope of being taken for a merchant vessel; but her papers and her name, Alopka (a village belonging to Prince Woronzoff), betrayed her. The Alopka was commanded by Captain Davidoff, three officers and thirty sailors, all made prisoners. She now bears the Ottoman flag, and will be got ready for active service.

The 17th December her Majesty's ship Ocean anchored at Bchichtach from Malia.

M. Poujade, the French consul-general in the Danubian provinces reached Constantinople, from Galatz, on the 15th. He brought with him all the diplomatic papers of the consulate. The British consul was daily expected.

In conformity with orders received from government, and owing to the inclemency of the season, the Turkish troops which besieged Fort Akiska have retired to Kars, where they are to take up their winter quarters. The irregular troops being very undisciplined, were badly treated by the Cossacks during the retreat.

Letters from Persia, of the 30th Nov., declare that the Persian government was said to have given way to the energy displayed by the English Chargé d'Affaires, and to have given full satisfaction; and, for the moment at least all the prospects of Russia are reported to have failed.

CONSTANTINOPLE, Dec. 19.—Riza Pasha is appointed minister of marine and high Admiral in the place of Mahmood Pasha resigned. Halil Pasha is made member of the divan.—The sieges of Akiska and Alexandropoi have been raised: 20,000 Turkish irregulars have been repulsed. Abdi Pasha, the commander-in-chief, has resigned. Ahmed Pasha replaces him. A company of Wallachian militia had seized their newly-appointed Russian officers,

beat them soundly and then deserted with five of them to Kalafat.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.—By the Bosphorus we have advices from the Cape of Good Hope to the 21st of Nov., at which date everything was quiet in that colony, and general appearances betokened a willing acquiescence on the part of the Kaffirs to submit to the arrangements laid down by his Excellency General Cathcart for their future government. The shipping interest at the Cape was suffering considerably by the increasing number of deserters. During six weeks, no less than 186 seamen were taken before the Magistrates charged with this offence.

From Willmer & Smith's European Times, January 7.

RUSSIA AND TURKEY.—A private letter from St. Petersburg, of the 19th ult., announces that a treaty, offensive and defensive, between the Emperor of Russia and the Shah of Persia, had been signed on the preceding day.

The Journal de Constantinople expresses itself as follows relative to the interruption of diplomatic relations between England and Persia:—"In consequence of a serious difference, the representative of Great Britain in Persia, demanded in an energetic note, prompt satisfaction from the Persian government. The Shah seemed inclined to grant it, but the Russian embassy, by its intrigues, succeeded in turning him from that course. In consequence, the representative of her Britannic Majesty at Teheran considered it his duty to interrupt all diplomatic relations with Persia. The extreme agitation which now exists among the Afghans disquiets not only Persia, but even Russia. Something was said some time back of an Afghan embassy from Dost Mehommed Khan to Persia; that embassy has arrived at Teheran. Dost Mehommed is an implacable enemy of Russia, and opposes, with the greatest resolution, the policy of the Czar in Persia and in the rest of Asia. His ambassador is charged with a mission of the greatest importance, and the Prince of Afghanistan desires ardently to have this mission crowned with success."

PERSIA AND AFGHANISTAN.—Dost Mehommed who is well known to be no friend to Russia, has sent two ambassadors to the Shah of Persia, in the persons of Mirdat Khan and Cohendeli Khan, to demand that the 16,000 men the Persian garrison at Herat, be withdrawn; and that the Sheik Heidar, governor of Herat, and son of the Persian Sheik and Reschet be dismissed, and the government given back to Hussein, son of the late Viceroy of Herat, Yar Mahomet who died poisoned two years ago. The ambassador from Afghanistan further stated, on making these demands, that their powerful sovereign had the intention of firmly supporting the ill-acknowledged rights of Prince Yar Hussein.

The Imam of Muscat has refused to pay tribute to Persia for the salt mines of Sendarabassiz.

The following appeared in the Official Journal of Persia, No. 134:—"His Majesty the Shah of Persia has intimated the *charge d'affaires* and *personnel* of the British legation at Teheran to proceed with him to Solkan, Kerteh, and to Talkan, and from thence to the military camp at Soutanic." This is assigned as the cause of difference between the British representative and the Shah.

SWEDEN.—The diet, through its secret committee, is much occupied with the propositions submitted to it for an increase of the military force and the means required for the defence of the country. The King presides over a special committee, which deliberates on the question of neutrality. The Swedish army, in time of war comprises 85,000 foot, 5564 horse, 4416 artillery—in all 94,000 men, to whom must be added 8000 militia from Gotland; the force being ten times greater than what it is in time of peace.

HAMBURG, Jan. 3.—The courier from Stockholm has arrived with intelligence from the Swedish capital, of the 27th ult. King Oscar has imparted to the secret committee of the Diet the treaty concluded with Denmark, for assuring the co-operation of the two countries in maintaining their common independence.

UNITED STATES.

NEW YORK, Jan. 16.—The Steamer Europa was seized to-day by the officers of the customs. Two individuals, one of them the steward, were detected in smuggling lace.

LETTERS FROM KOSSUTH.—New York, Jan. 17.—Private letters received here from Kossuth state that he had postponed his departure for Constantinople, in order to make further preparation.—He stated explicitly that he has been invited to Turkey by the Government, and adds that provision will be made to transport thither from the United States all Hungarians who desire to go.

FORTNIGHTLY STEAMERS FROM LIVERPOOL.—The steamer "Charity," 1,590 tons burthen, left Liverpool for Portland on the 12th inst., and will be followed fortnightly for the winter months by other boats of the Canadian Steam Navigation Company. The "Charity" is a new first class boat and has been purchased by the company.

The demand for ocean steamers is without