

Communications.

To the Editor of the Gleaner,

SIR,—I should be guilty of something very closely resembling hypocrisy were I not to confess my participation in the mingled surprise and indignation expressed by fully nineteen out of twenty men whom I meet, on the subject of the late Dissolution of Parliament. But though I participate the feeling so generally expressed,—so universally expressed, excepting when the speaker is one of the hangers on and expectants of those very odd sort of Conservatives who would fain prevent us from getting anything worth Conservation, I must at the same time, confess that I am very far, indeed, from looking upon the late singular commentary upon what some people seem to consider the genuine article in the way of Responsible Government, as an unmingled matter of regret. On the contrary, though I blame the procedure of the Executive as being essentially hostile to the true principle of Responsible Government, and indicative of a back-stairs influence possessed by men to whom the country sternerly, and no less wisely, denies the open management of its affairs, I am very much inclined to look upon our apparent calamity as being, in truth, a very real and a very great blessing. "Out off this nettles danger we will pluck the flower safely;" and "being forewarned we are forearmed." Had the back-stairs clique of nominal Conservatives but terribly real Obstructives known how to wait,—that grand power in political warfare!—I believe it is not at all unlikely that the people would by and bye have been an easy prey to the deceivers who go about doing the work of that old oligarchy which is only "scotched, not killed." For, how, in fact, can we expect a people to be watchful over, and brave in defending, a great political right of which they continually hear the name but of which, neither by Parliament nor by its betters, the Press, are they taught to comprehend and ponder upon the principle? Responsible Government is, as you know, Sir, a phrase to which all of us are continually giving utterance; but do you think that the meaning of that phrase is clearly understood by ten per cent of all those who speak the phrase so glibly? For my part, Sir, I much fear that, instead of ten, we should be puzzled to find even one per cent of our adult population who clearly, fully, and in all its remote as well as immediate tendencies and inevitable practical results, comprehend the great principle of Responsible Government.

You are aware, sir, that the gentlemen who so pertinaciously and facetiously miscall themselves Conservatives, improving upon the good old plan of shutting the stable door after the steed is stolen, are very anxious to preserve nothing very carefully. You are aware, sir, that these conservative gentlemen, at all events, hold rather peculiar opinions upon the subject of Responsible Government, which, to suit their book at all, must be a multitudinous parliamentary King Log, humbly registering the decrees, good, bad, or indifferent, of such good, bad, or indifferent King Storks, executive or ministerial, as Heaven, for our sins, may inflict upon us and our posterity.

Sic volo, sic jubeo, stat pro ratione voluntas, "to the deuce with your reason and argument, do as we want you and you cannot go wrong"—that is the Old Foggy interpretation of the phrase Responsible Government. And small blame to Old Foggyism for trying, by giving that interpretation to the phrase, to render it contemptible to the people; and by thus damaging the name, take the first and the most difficult step towards depriving the people of the benefits of the principle. I say small blame to Old Foggyism for thus acting, because, however dirty a creature's sole means of subsistence or defence may be, it is sheer nonsense to blame the creature for using those means.—No man who has ever had the ill luck to start a skunk will desire to repeat the experiment; yet surely no reasonable man will blame the skunk for stinking himself out of danger!—No, no, we will not blame Old Foggyism for trying this by no means novel dodge—only we will take care that Old Foggyism shall have its labour for its pains. In dissolving the House on the plea which is put forward as—for want of a better—the mere stalking horse for the real motive, a blow is struck at the very principle, at the life, the soul, the vital principle of Responsible Government, properly so called. If the Government be not to the fullest extent responsible to the people's representatives in parliament, and if those representatives be not fully responsible to their constituents, the words Responsible Government, are mere words which may be well enough to round a sham patriot's sentences, or form a lesson in recitation for a Parrot—but certainly have neither political meaning nor political value. Whether the majority in Parliament be right or wrong is not the question. I, for one, think that the majority which passed the Liquor Law, did a very bad thing. I believe that a total suppression of the Liquor trade is impossible, and that the partial suppression which is possible would be very dearly purchased at the expence of encouraging treachery and perjury, and, at the same time, giving a premium to increased adulteration. But the parliamentary majority is only to be got rid of by a side wind in utter defiance of the principle of Responsible Government.

Had the Government not acted as it did—had it consented to allow the old oligarchy effectually to shoot its poisoned arrows from behind its stalking horse, the cause of both material and moral progress would have received a terrible if not an absolutely fatal injury. The conduct of

the whole of the ministers was excellent, and I happen to know that at the crisis the energy of the late Solicitor General was as decisive as his sagacity and foresight had for months past been remarkable. But it is to very little purpose that that gentleman and his late colleagues have acted disinterestedly, and at the same time with a most profound good judgement, if their wisdom in the Council Chamber be thwarted and nullified at the Polling Booth.—Factionary men, weary of their absence from the seat of power, and hungering and thirsting for the good things of quarter day, have caused the dissolution on speculation; they hope to alter the balance of parliamentary power by trashy appeals to the enemies of the Liquor Law. But we must teach them that, in politics as in other things, honesty is the best policy. The Liquor Law was enacted by the majority of the people's representatives; it has been found to be a failure, (partly, perhaps, because it in fact has never been fully acted upon,) and the majority here can do as the majority have done in Maine—repeal a law which is at once unpopular and inoperative. But we can repair an error of detail without destroying our governmental principle; a Liberal ministry is no obstacle to the repeal of a bad law; but that repeal would be dearly bought, indeed, by the return to power of those greedy and incapable men who quite evidently have not in their enforced leisure learned anything of the popular spirit, or forgotten anything of their own shamelessly corrupt official traditions.

We are loud enough in calling upon our patriotic leaders to be watchful, energetic, and, above all disinterested, let us not forget that we also have our duties; and shamefully shall we neglect our duty if we do not send back to the House those ministers who have so nobly and so usefully resigned in such wise and with such Parliamentary Colleagues as shall render it impossible for the old back-stairs influence to make even a show of attempting to mis-govern us. WE MUST SEND BACK SUCH A PARLIAMENT AS SHALL COMPEL THE RECALL OF THE LATE MINISTRY; in doing that we shall do three things; we shall warn the crown; crush the clique that would fain prey upon both Crown and people; and make the great principle of Responsible Government a living principle of action, and not—as the clique wishes us to believe it, a mere by-word for the profit of sham patriots who have no thing particular to say—or who do not very well know how to say it.

Your Obedient Servant,

JOHANNES BOS.

News of the Week.

From English Papers to May 10.

EUROPE.

NEWS BY THE CAMBRIA AT HALIFAX.

Ratification of the Treaty of Peace.—The Conference Documents.—The documents presented on Monday night to both houses of Parliament consisted of:

1st. The general treaty, and three conventions annexed thereto.

2nd. A declaration respecting maritime law, signed by the plenipotentiaries.

3rd. The protocols of the conferences.

The Conventions.—We give the official text, so far as the active clauses are concerned, of the conventions annexed to the treaty of peace:—Convention between the Queen, the Emperor of Austria, the Emperor of the French, the King of Prussia, the Emperor of Russia, and the King of Sardinia, on the one part, and the Sultan, on the other part, respecting the straits of the Dardanelles and of the Bosphorus.

Art. I.—The sultan, on the one part, declares that he is firmly resolved to maintain for the future, the principle invariably established as the ancient rule of his empire, and in virtue of which it has, at all times, been prohibited for the ships of war of foreign powers to enter the straits of the Dardanelles and of the Bosphorus; and that so long as the porte is at peace his majesty will admit no foreign ship of war into the said straits. And their majesties the Queen of the united Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the Emperor of Austria, the Emperor of the French, the King of Prussia, the Emperor of all the Russias, and the King of Sardinia, on the other part, engage to respect this determination of the sultan, and to conform themselves to the principle above declared.

Art. II. The Sultan reserves to himself, as in past times, to deliver firmans of passage for light vessels under flag of war, which shall be employed as is usual, in the service of the missions of foreign powers.

Art. III. The same exception applies to the light vessels under flag of war, which each of the contracting powers is authorised to station at the mouths of the Danube in order to secure the execution of the regulations relative to the liberty of that river, and the number of which is not to exceed two for each power.

Convention between the Emperor of Russia and the Sultan, limiting their naval forces in the Black Sea.

Art. I. The high contracting parties mutually engage not to have in the Black sea any other vessels of war than those of which the number, the force, and the dimensions are hereinafter stipulated.

Art. II. The high contracting parties reserve themselves each to maintain in that sea six steam-vessels of fifty metres in length at the line of flotation, of a tonnage of eight hundred tons at the maximum, and four light steam or sailing vessels of a tonnage which shall not exceed two hundred tons each.

Convention between the Queen, the Emperor of the French, and the Emperor of Russia, respecting the Aland Islands.

The Emperor of Russia, in order to respond to the desire which has been expressed to him by their majesties the Queen of the united Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Emperor of the French declares that the Aland Islands shall not be fortified, and that no military or naval establishment shall be maintained or created there.

Maritime Law.—Another paper, entitled 'Declaration respecting Maritime Law, signed April 16, 1856,' is as follows:—

The plenipotentiaries who signed the treaty of Paris of the thirteenth of March, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-six, assembled in conference,—considering:—

1. That maritime law, in time of war, has long been the subject of deplorable disputes;

2. That the uncertainty of the law and of the duties in such a matter, gives rise to differences of opinion between neutrals and belligerents which may occasion serious difficulties, and even conflicts.

3. That it is consequently advantageous to establish a uniform doctrine on so important a point;

4. That the plenipotentiaries assembled in congress at Paris cannot better respond to the intentions by which their governments are animated, than by seeking to introduce into international relations fixed principles in this respect.

The above mentioned plenipotentiaries, being duly authorised, resolved to concert among themselves as to the means of attaining this object; and, having come to an agreement, have adopted the following solemn declaration:—

1. Privateering is, and remains, abolished.

2. The neutral flag covers enemy's goods, with the exception of contraband of war.

3.—Neutral goods, with the exception of contraband of war, are not liable to capture under enemy's flag

4. Blockades, in order to be binding, must be effective, that is to say, maintained by a force sufficient really to prevent access to the coast of the enemy.

The governments of the undersigned plenipotentiaries engage to bring the present declaration to the knowledge of the states which have not taken part in the congress of Paris, and to invite them to accede to it.

Convinced that the maxims which they now proclaim, cannot but be received with gratitude by the whole world, the undersigned plenipotentiaries doubt not that the efforts of their governments to obtain the general adoption thereof, will be crowned with full success.

The present declaration is not and shall not be binding, except between those powers who have acceded, or shall accede, to it.

The Protocols.—The protocols of the sittings of the conferences, twenty-four in number, extend from the first sitting, on Feb. 25th, to the sitting of April 16th, and form, with their several translations, 112 pages of parliamentary print. As these documents, though highly interesting as a record of the proceedings of the conferences, are necessarily full of repetitions of the articles of the treaty which is their result, often given in a crude form, their reprinting would be a waste of space which would be more usefully devoted. The sitting of the 8th ult. entered into the European question generally, and as we have already given the substance of Count Walewski's speech on that occasion, we now furnish a summary of the proceedings of the conference.

The Russian plenipotentiaries preserved an ominous silence; they are watching events. But the representatives of Austria and Prussia gave vent to the selfish utterance of despotism and ambition; while those of England and Sardinia, in firm though guarded language, asserted the cause of liberal opinion; and the French ministers played the part of the bat in the fable of the beasts and birds—as was but natural in the representatives of a despotism sprung from a recent revolution.

We pass over the paltry consideration of Greece, The essential topics of debate were Italy and Belgium. With reference to the threat of coercion held out by Count Walewski to the latter power, Lord Clarendon very properly remarked: 'The representatives of a country in which a free press is, so to say, one of the fundamental institutions, cannot associate themselves to measures of coercion against the press of another state.' Count Buol, on the contrary, declared that the 'repression' of the Belgian press 'must be considered as an European necessity.' Here then we have already avowed antagonism on a vital question of civil policy between the English government and people on the one hand, and the governments of France and Austria on the other. With regard to Italy, England and Sardinia are entirely in accord; and France professes to adhere to them. Austria, on the contrary, avowedly clings to her monstrous claims to keep down permanently the spirit of liberty in Italy by bayonets. The Prussian plenipotentiary embraced the side of Austria in the conversation regarding Italy, and sneakingly threw in a claim to have Neuchâtel again subjected to the tender mercies of his royal master. Lord Clarendon and Count Cavour took up their ground on the Italian question, with sound judgment, and with equal firmness. The former declared that it would be advantageous to recommend to the pope 'the secularisation of the government, and the organisation of an administrative system in harmony with the spi-

rit of the age;' he declared that this might be accomplished immediately in the legations, and urged in recommendation of such a step that it would enable Austria to withdraw her troops from those provinces; he recommended that the congress should press upon the King of Naples 'the amelioration of his system of government, and require of him an amnesty in favour of the persons who have been condemned, or who are imprisoned without trial, for political offences.' Count Cavour was equally explicit. He demanded that 'the opinion manifested by certain powers, in regard to the occupation of the Roman States, should be recorded in the protocol;' he declared his wish that the French occupation of the Roman States should cease, as well as the Austrian, but pointed out how infinitely less menacing the former was to the independence and liberties of Italy than the latter; he expressed his entire acquiescence in Lord Clarendon's and Count Walewski's views regarding Naples; and he disdainfully exposed the pettifoggish plea of the Austrian plenipotentiary in behalf of the continuance of Austrian bayonets in the legations, by saying that Sardinia would willingly withdraw her fifty soldiers from Monaco if the prince would venture to return to his deserted dominions.

When the different plenipotentiaries had spoken, Count Walewski congratulated himself on having induced the plenipotentiaries to interchange their ideas on the questions which had been discussed. He had supposed that it might have been possible, perhaps with advantage, to express themselves in a more complete manner on some of the subjects which have fixed the attention of the congress. But such as it is, he says, the interchange of ideas which has taken place is not without advantage. The first plenipotentiary of France states that the result of it is, in effect:—

1. That no one has contested the necessity of seriously deliberating as to the means for improving the situation of Greece, and that the three protecting courts have recognised the importance of coming to an understanding among themselves in this respect.

2. That the plenipotentiaries of Austria have acceded to the wish expressed by the plenipotentiaries of France for the evacuation of the Pontifical States by the French and Austrian troops, as soon as it can be effected without prejudice to the tranquility of the country and to the consolidation of the authority of the holy see.

3. That the greater part of the plenipotentiaries have not questioned the good effect which would result from measures of clemency opportunely adopted by the governments of the Italian Peninsula, and especially by that of the Two Sicilies.

4. That all the plenipotentiaries, and even those who considered themselves bound to reserve the principle of the liberty of the press, have not hesitated loudly to condemn the excesses in which the Belgian newspapers indulge with impunity, by recognising the necessity of remedying the real inconveniences which result from the uncontrolled licence which is so greatly abused in Belgium.

That, finally, the reception given by all the plenipotentiaries to the idea of closing their labours by a declaration of principles in the matter of maritime law, must give reason to hope that at the next sitting they will have received from their respective governments authority to adhere to an act which, while completing the work of the congress of Paris, would effect an improvement worthy of our epoch.

UNITED STATES.

There has been a very serious accident on the Panama railroad, by which upwards of fifty persons were killed, and one hundred wounded. The New York Tribune contains the following account from an eye-witness. It is dated Aspinwall, May 7:

'Yesterday morning the passengers from New York who left that city April 21, started from this place for Panama, in three separate trains of cars. The first contained the mails, express matter, and the passengers' baggage; the other two were filled with passengers. After proceeding something more than half way to Panama, the engine of the freight train ran off the track in such a position that it could not be replaced without a good deal of delay; so the conductors of the passengers' trains determined to run back to Aspinwall. We were within about two miles of this place when the terrible crash occurred. I was seated in one of the rear cars, and immediately looking out of the window, I could see the cars rushing upon each other until nine in number were utterly demolished. Every car was crowded with passengers, containing at least sixty persons each. At present it is impossible to estimate the number of killed and wounded, or give their names, but there were not less than five hundred persons in the cars that were shivered to atoms, and it must be a low estimate to say that fifty were killed, and at least a hundred, perhaps many more, badly wounded, and it seems almost miraculous that so many escaped with their lives.

The New York Shipping List says that the shipping interest continues to languish, and there would seem to be no prospect of improvement during the summer months. Indeed, not until the general state of trade shall have recovered from the lethargy by which it has been characterised during the greater portion of the past two years, can we reasonably expect the carrying business to assume its wonted prosperity.

We wish the Administration would either dismiss Mr Crompton at once, or abandon all further proceedings in the enlistment matter.