

The Emperor, while he pointed out to Europe the dangers of a situation in deep commotion, indicated the method of averting the dire calamities which he foresees, and at which he less than others, perhaps, would have reason to take alarm, for the questions out of which at the present time war may arise, interest France but indirectly, and it would depend on herself alone whether she would take part in the struggle or stand aloof from it. This he did by addressing all the Sovereigns in full confidence and simultaneously, without previous understanding with any of them, in order the better to testify his sincere impartiality, and to enter upon, free of every engagement, the important deliberations to which he invites them. Himself, the youngest of Sovereigns, he considers he has no right to assume the part of an arbiter, and to fix before hand for the other Courts the programme of the Congress which he proposes. This is the motive of the reserve which he has imposed upon himself. It is, moreover, so difficult to enumerate the questions, not yet solved, which may disturb Europe.

A deplorable struggle is bathing Poland in blood, is agitating the neighbouring States, and threatening the world with the most serious disturbances. Three Powers, with a view of putting a stop to it, invoke in vain the Treaties of Vienna, which supply the two sides with contradictory arguments. Is this struggle to last for ever?

Pretensions, opposed to one another, are exciting a quarrel between Denmark and Germany. The preservation of peace in the north is at the mercy of an accident. The Cabinets have already, by their negotiations, become parties to the dispute. Are they now become indifferent to it?

Shall anarchy continue to prevail on the Lower Danube, and shall it be able at any moment to open anew a bloody arena for the dispute of the Eastern Question?

Shall Austria and Italy remain in presence of each other in a hostile attitude, ever ready to break the truce which prevents their animosities exploding?

Shall the occupation of Rome by the French troops be prolonged for an indefinite period?

Lastly, must we renounce, without fresh attempts at conciliation, the hope of lightening the burthen imposed on the nations by the disproportionate armaments occasioned by mutual distrust?

Such are, sir, in our opinion, the principal questions which the Powers would doubtless judge it useful to examine and decide.

Lord Russell surely does not expect us to specify here the mode of solution applicable to each of these problems, nor the kind of sanction which might be given by the decisions of the Congress. To the Powers there represented would pertain the right of pronouncing upon these various points. We will only add, that it would be in our eyes illusory to pursue their solution through the labyrinth of diplomatic correspondence and separate negotiation, and that the way now proposed, so far from ending in war, is the only one which can lead to a durable pacification.

At one of the last meetings of the Congress of Paris, the Earl of Clarendon, invoking a stipulation of the Treaty of Peace which had just been signed, and which recommended recourse to the mediation of a friendly State before resorting to force, in the event of dissent arising between the Porte and others of the Signatory Powers, expressed the opinion "that this happy innovation might receive a more general application, and thus become a barrier against conflicts which frequently only break forth because it is not

"always possible to enter into explanation, and to come to an understanding." The Plenipotentiaries of all the Courts concurred unanimously in the intention of their Colleague, and did not hesitate to express in the name of their Governments, the wish that States between which any serious misunderstanding may arise, should have recourse to friendly mediation before appealing to arms.

The solicitude of the Emperor goes further; it does not wait for dissensions to break out in order to recommend an application to the actual circumstances of the salutary principle engraven on the latest monument of the Public Law of Europe, and His Majesty now invites his allies "to enter into explanations, and to come to an understanding."

Accept, &c.,

(Signed) DROUYN DE L'HUYS.

No. 5.

*Copy of a Despatch from Earl Russell to Earl Cowley.*

*Foreign Office,*

*November 25, 1863.*

MY LORD,

HER MAJESTY'S Government have received from the Marquis of Cadore, the copy of a despatch addressed to him by Monsieur Drouyn de L'Huys, in answer to my despatch to your Excellency of the 12th instant. Her Majesty's Government having obtained an answer to the enquiries they made, will not any longer delay giving a definitive reply to the invitation addressed by the Emperor of the French to Her Majesty the Queen, to take part in a Congress of the European Powers to be assembled at Paris.

I enclose a copy of the Emperor's letter of invitation to the Queen which is similar to one which has already appeared in the "Moniteur," addressed to the German Confederation.

Her Majesty's Government fully recognize in this step the desire of the Emperor of the French to put an end to the disquietude which affects several parts of Europe, and to establish the general peace on foundations more solid than those on which, in his opinion, it now rests.

The Emperor declares that France is disinterested in this question; that he, for his part, seeks no aggrandizement, and that the interests to be secured are those, not of France, but of Europe.

Her Majesty's Government may also declare that Great Britain is disinterested in this matter, that she seeks no aggrandizement, and that she has only to counsel moderation and peace.

But France and Great Britain being thus disinterested themselves, are bound to consider what is the position, and what, in a Congress, will be the probable conduct of Powers who may be called upon to make sacrifices of territory or of pre-eminence and moral strength.

It would be little to the purpose to say on this occasion anything more of the Treaties of 1815.

Practically, the Emperor of the French admits the binding force of many portions of those Treaties; and Her Majesty's Government as readily allow that some portions of them have been modified or disregarded, and that other portions are now menaced or called in question.

Her Majesty's Government understand from the explanations given by Monsieur Drouyn de L'Huys, that, in the opinion of the government of the Emperor, it is obvious to every one that there are several questions, not hitherto solved, which may disturb Europe. Of this nature are the following:—