

by the displacement from power of men who were inadequately impressed with the importance of the trust committed to them, who were making something worse than a plaything of constitutional government, and who were periling the character of the most valuable political institutions. It is with this view that we may regard a Ministerial crisis in a colony at the antipodes as not unworthy of attention.

DENMARK AND GERMANY.

(From the Morning Post.)

The United Committees, appointed by the Diet at Frankfort to report upon the latest phase of the Schleswig-Holstein question have just published the result of their labours. The decision at which they have arrived has, to say the least, the merit of being clear and unambiguous. They were required to point out to the Confederation the most fitting course to be taken in respect to the recent policy of the Danish King in his quality of Duke of Holstein, and they have fulfilled the duty imposed upon them, if not with discretion, certainly with confidence. The solution of that great political puzzle, the Schleswig-Holstein question, may, in the eyes of European statesmen, have its difficulties, and impartial observers may succeed in counterbalancing the pros of one side by the cons of the other; but for the United Committees at Frankfort these difficulties had no existence, and to their eyes the simple story of German wrongs and Danish oppression was too clear and convincing to admit of reply. But one course is open to the German Powers—but one remedy is left at their disposal. Diplomacy is assumed to have exhausted itself, and, if the Confederation would obtain redress, it is to be found alone in what has aptly been termed the *ratio ultima regum*. Seize on the Duchy of Holstein by means of an army composed of Saxon and Hanoverian soldiers, supported by an Austro-Prussian reserve, and conduct its administration until its refractory Sovereign shall see the error of his ways and subscribe to the reasonable demands of his puissant confederates. Such is the pithy recommendation of the United Committees at Frankfort. The advice is clear and precise, and, to avoid confusion, is made entirely independent of any contingencies. No *locus penitentis* is offered to the delinquent Duke of Holstein; the administration of his dominions is unconditionally transferred into other hands. The United Committees have spoken, and it only remains for the Diet to carry their decree into execution.

Were it not for the proverbial slowness of the German powers in all that regards aggressive warfare, one might be inclined to believe that the peace of Europe was seriously imperilled by the report of the the committees appointed by the Diet to investigate the grievances of the inhabitants of Holstein. In the majority of cases deliberative assemblies accept the recommendations which are offered to them by their committees; and one might consequently expect that the Diet at Frankfort would be prepared to endorse the suggestion tendered by those whom they delegated to inquire into and report upon the merits of the Holstein dispute. If the Diet act upon the advice of their Committees, then the whole power of the German Confederation is forthwith directed against one of its members. But, as we have already observed, the German Powers are much readier to devise than to execute, and, notwithstanding the positive recommendations of the United Committees, we may still hope that the threatened federal execution will remain, as it has long done, *in futuro*. It is not, however, impossible that the oft-repeated threat may be carried into execution; and as the Diet will take the report into consideration on the 1st of October; and as, in anticipation of the German Powers acting on the recommendations submitted to them, the Danish Government have just issued instructions for raising the regimental lists of the army to the war standard by that date, it may not be out of place to consider the actual position of affairs in Northern Europe, and the probable consequences of an army of 6000 Saxon and Hanoverian soldiers seizing on the administration of the Duchy of Holstein.

Into the merits of the dispute between the German Powers and the Danish King it is unnecessary to enter, because, in the first place, they have already been amply discussed, and, in the second, because the report of the Committees at Frankfort has now placed the matter beyond the pale of debate. But, whether the complaints of the German Powers be just or unjust, and whether the inhabitants of Holstein have or have not reason for feeling aggrieved at having a constitution forced upon them which placed in their hands the administration of their duchy, and secured to them the fullest enjoyment of civil and religious liberty, the consequences of virtually dismembering the Danish monarchy cannot but possess a lively interest for the European Powers. Before, therefore, the Diet think proper to adopt the report of their Committees, they would do well to remember that they are not simply engaged in enforcing domestic discipline. To the Diet, Holstein may seem fair prey, and possibly Schleswig also, but by Great Britain the matter would be regarded in another light. A few nights before the Parliamentary session came to a close, Lord Palmerston had occasion to offer some remarks upon the possible action of her Majesty's Government in case the oft-threatened Federal execution was carried into effect. We would recommend the statement then made by the Prime Minister to the most careful consideration of the Federal Diet. It said Lord Palmerston, an attack should be made on Denmark, the aggressive power will find that it is not alone with Denmark that it will have to contend. Much misconception was created in Germany a twelvemonth since by an unfortunate despatch addressed by Earl Russell to the British Minister at Copenhagen for communication to the Danish Government, but no misunderstanding can possibly exist as to the course which would be taken by this country if any attempt were made to coerce the Danish Sovereign by violently confiscating his possessions. Every one knows that Holstein would only be in name the territory against which hostilities would be directed. The population of that duchy have no grievances; the German Powers can demand for them nothing which has not already been granted by the King of Denmark. In truth, Holstein is to be occupied in order that the screw may be the more easily applied in Schleswig, or in the hopes that an armed resistance to the Federal execution in the former duchy may supply a pretext for taking possession of the latter. But, if these are the designs of the German Powers, we can only say that it will require a much larger Austrian and Prussian reserve at the back of the Saxon and Hanoverian contingent, than the confederation will be enabled to bring into the field to carry them into effect. The policy of this country, as is well known, is not warlike. We are, in fact, willing rather to make sacrifices than be obliged to take up arms. But however peaceful we may be we could not view with indifference an attempt to crush Denmark. Policy, independently of the ties of ancient alliance and modern connections, would besides render it impossible for Great Britain to remain an indifferent spectator of the disintegration of the Danish monarchy. The "balance of power" in Europe is something more than an empty expression; and the Diet would do well, at their approaching deliberations, to reflect upon the unfortunate consequences which have invariably followed all attempts to disturb it.

EUROPEAN ORDERS AND DECORATIONS.

(From the Globe.)

A rather singular congress has just been held at Berlin. A large number of persons, possessing decorations of some kind or other, assembled for the purpose of establishing a central "Institute of Orders," for the registration and control of all marks of honour, the drawing up of an international code of laws respecting them, and the prosecution of offenders and impostors. It was stated in the course of the deliberations on this highly important subject, that there are at this moment no less than one hundred and nine different orders and decorations in Europe, and that the fortunate wearers of these badges of modern chivalry amount to more than two millions.

The most interesting question connected with the meeting was a list read by one of the members of the respective value of the one hundred and nine badges of honour in the gift of the reigning—and sometimes not reigning—sovereigns of Europe. As a rule, it seems, all orders and decorations are valued according to age. Thus, the Order of the Garter is the highest in England, the Order of the Black Eagle the first of Prussia, and the Order of the Golden Fleece the greatest of Austria. But there are exceptions to this rule. The Bavarian decoration of St. Hubertus, established in 1444, is not valued as highly as the Order of St. George, of the same country, founded in 1729; nor is the Portuguese decoration of "Jacob with the Sword," invented by King

Alfonso I. in 1177, to be compared in distinction with the Order of Christ, founded by King Dionysius in 1317. There are a thousand circumstances which enhance or detract from the real or imaginary value of a decoration. The first point, of course, is the smaller or greater number of individuals to whom the token is given; and the second the rank and position of the class to which it is usually awarded. A third condition of value is the number of different decorations in the gift of any particular sovereign; and a fourth the extent or political influence of the country thus represented. For example, the King of Bavaria has eleven different orders to give away, the oldest dating back to the fifteenth century, and the youngest founded in 1803. None of these Wittelsbach decorations are distributed with too great liberality, yet all, nevertheless, are far inferior in value to the single order of France, the Legion of Honour, which has been given away in bushels these ten or fifteen years. Political circumstances, again, influence the value of orders as much as they do the funds. The conquest of the Two Sicilies by Garibaldi brought the six decorations of the then reigning House down to a fearful discount. No law has yet abolished these six orders, and King Francis II. continues to distribute his stars and ribbons with considerable pomp at Rome; notwithstanding which they are very low in the market of honours. Decorated mankind is disturbed by awful rumours that some, or all of these Neapolitan ensigns of merit are bought and sold at shops like groceries; and the additional report, that the trade is a flourishing one, by no means allays these anxieties. It was mentioned at the decorative congress that there are certain agents at London, Paris, and other large towns, who dispose of the orders of St. Jannarius, of the Holy Ferdinand, the Holy George, and even of the most ancient of all European decorations, the order of Constantine, founded Anno Domini 317, at a fixed price for hard cash. The name and address of one of the trading knights—not a hundred miles from "Millbank, Pimlico, London"—was given with some appended statistics, showing that the great Nation of Shopkeepers is as gullible as any in the matter of stars and ribbons.

The enormous increase of decorations in modern times, and in almost all countries, is one of the most curious features in connection with the history of orders. The Republic of Switzerland is the only country in Europe at this moment which has no marks of honour to give, and the citizens of which professedly—whether *de facto* is doubtful—accept none. The sister Republic of San Marino established a decoration of its own as late as the year 1830; and all the other civilised States of the Old World possess from one to a dozen. At least two-thirds of these orders were founded in the present century, more or less in the wake of Consul Bonaparte's *Legion d'Honneur*. It was an attempt, on the part of the rulers of nations to re-erect some of the old barriers swept down by the storms of the French Revolution; to properly separate class from class; and to mark by an outward sign patrician blood from the plebeian. The modern knight, no more on his high horse and in glittering armour, but walking through the streets of busy towns in black broadcloth, like the humblest of subjects, was to be distinguished from his fellow men by a star on his coat, a gold chain round his neck, or, at the least, a piece of coloured ribbon in his button-hole. It was upon this principle that the greater number of the hundred and nine orders, which now bring happiness to two millions of human beings, were established, and if the "idea" was not carried out to perfection, it was not the fault of the original founders, but that of their too ambitious successors. The demand for decorations being great, the too obliging sovereigns of Europe, and particularly of Germany, thought it incumbent upon them to make the supply adequate, and, creating order after order, soon brought complete confusion into the multitude of marks of honour. Thus, the first act of the first King of Holland, on his accession to the throne, was to create an order, that of William of Orange, and on the Dutch liking the thing, he founded, a year after, another mark of honour, called the Netherlands' Lion. His successor, William II., set up a new order of his own, that of the Crown of Oak; and the next king, the present monarch, made one more, the Golden Lion. At present there is not a Dutchman, above the rank of peasant or mechanic, who has not got a decoration. The Dutch Government was among the first to discover that orders are the most economical mode of payment; and, keeping this in view, are given largely to schoolmasters, dissatisfied employes, and unfortunate half-pay officers. Prussia's monarchs have become aware of the same truth, and the nine decorations of the kingdom are now made to stop many a demand on the Royal exchequer. His present Majesty established two new decorations within the first year of his reign, the "Order of Hohenzollern," and the "Order of the Crown;" and it was thankfully acknowledged at the decorative congress that the whole matter of distribution has been arranged in the most satisfactory way in the military model country—demand and supply being adequately balanced, according to the true rules of political economy. All the rest of the German States are more or less provided for after the manner of Prussia. Hanover has two, Baden three, the kingdom of Saxony four, Electoral and Grand-Ducal Hesse six, Austria nine, and Bavaria as many as eleven different orders and decorations of honour. Compared with the Teutonic Confederation, the princes of which have fifty-six distinct orders to distribute, or more than half of all existing, the other States of Europe are but ill provided. France and Belgium have but one each, Denmark two, Holland four, Sweden five, Portugal six, Great Britain—including India and Ionian Islands—seven, Russia eight, and Spain, ten orders. Imitating the example of their Christian brethren, the present and the two last sovereigns of Turkey have also each founded an order, and the *Medjidié* and *Osmanié*, as well as the "Order of Glory," are very liberally distributed, alike to believers and unbelievers. All this is fairly legitimate business; but what was complained of at the Berlin Congress was, that sovereigns who are no more sovereigns should continue to give away or sell their marks of honour. The rulers of Parma, Modena, Tuscany, and the Two Sicilies, it was remarked, very unfairly swamp the market with their decorations, thus depreciating the value not only of their own but all other orders. There is clearly room for the working of a international Herald's College, if not an international police.

SIR ROBERT PEEL AND THE ELECTORS OF TAMWORTH.

The contest at Tamworth is becoming a little exciting. There was a spirited meeting of Mr. Cowper's supporters, on Wednesday night, at which Sir Robert Peel spoke. Sir Robert, on presenting himself, was received with mingled cheers, laughter, and hisses—the cheers predominating. He said—Gentlemen and brother electors—

A Voice—"What?"

Sir Robert Peel—I speak to you for the—

Voices—"You'd better shut your mouth," and "Will you turn us out of our houses?" (Laughter and confusion.)

Sir Robert Peel, after a pause, said that as a Burgess of the constituency he had a right to speak, and he insisted upon exercising his right. If anyone insisted on interrupting him, there were those in the room who would silence that person. (Confusion.) He was not at all likely to sit down, and upon that score they need not alarm themselves in the least. Let them recollect that for the last seventy years a Peel had stood upon that platform—

A Voice—"A better man than you." (Laughter, and disapprobation.)

Sir Robert Peel—To address the electors of the borough. Before he made any remark with reference to the possible candidates for the borough, he wished to bear testimony to the admirable manner in which the late member, the Marquis of Townsend, had performed his Parliamentary duties. (Cheers.) He could bear testimony to the regularity of his attendance in the House of Commons during the last session, because, during the last session, no one had been more assiduous in their attendance to their Parliamentary duties than he (Sir Robert) had.

A Voice—"Ob, gammon!"

Sir Robert—I have been obliged to, in the first place, and, in the second, I did it *com amore*.

A Voice—(Palmerston makes you do it.)

Sir Robert (turning to the quarter from which the last, as well as many of the former, interruptions had come)—Now, Mr. Barracough, will you be silent. I know your voice very well. (Confusion.) Directly the vacancy occurred there were numerous candidates in the field. There were Mr. Bracebridge and Mr. Sleight amongst the first, and he had hoped to have seen a gentleman who, on one occasion contested the borough with him—he alluded to Mr. Daniel, Q.C. He met in Mr. Daniel a straightforward antagonist, who did not countenance such men as the blunder-headed bullies who were now bellowing out every sort of misrepresentation about coercion. (Cheers, laughter, and confusion, which lasted some time.) Mr. Cowper was the popular candidate, and if anyone dared to use intimidation, there were thousands—hundreds at all events—who would come forward and support the old— (Cries of "Freedom and free trade.") (Cheers.) Mr. Cowper was no nominee of his; for he gave the meeting his word and honour that, until that gentleman came forward, he (Sir Robert) had not the advantage of his personal acquaintance.

A Voice—What means the notice at the foot of the bill calling the meeting, "Sir Robert Peel is expected to attend?"

Sir Robert said that he should attend when Mr. John Peel expressed his views, just as he was present at that meeting. He held in his hand a copy of Mr. Cowper's address, and he asked them whether it was not better for them to vote for a man who held and expressed such views as those contained in that address, than for a man who traded upon the name of Peel and talked about coercion.—("Yes, yes," "No, no," hisses, and uproar.) Immediately upon Mr. Cowper coming out, Mr. Bracebridge withdrew.