

TELEGRAMS.

(From our Daily Contemporaries.)

London, October 16.

Russia has rejected the Porte's offer for an armistice for six months, and proposes an armistice of six weeks.

London, October 17.

It is reported that an alliance between Russia and Austria is imminent; also, that a Russian loan of 300,000,000 roubles is announced. Four thousand Cossacks have joined the Servians. Russian stocks have fallen heavily.

The Home Press recommends England to be watchful and prepared in case of war. Lloyd's war risk is 5s per ton on British ships between Australia and the East. Transports for India have been ordered to touch at Gibraltar and Malta for orders.

London, October 16.

The Great Powers support Russia's proposal for a six weeks' armistice, which is identical with the English proposal. A calmer feeling now prevails, and stocks are recovering.

London, October 20.

Yesterday the Cabinet decided that as no ultimatum had been received, or intention to declare war announced, an autumn session of Parliament was not considered to be necessary. Nothing was resolved upon justifying the fears that Great Britain will join in the war. The policy of the Government is neutrality and protection of British interests.

The reported alliance of the three Empires—Russia, Germany, and Austria—is re-affirmed. The situation, however, is more pacific.

Lord Loftus goes to Swabia to facilitate the negotiations between England and Russia.

The failure of the monsoon rains in India threatens a fearful famine.

Obituary: The Marquis of Tweeddale.

GENERAL NEWS SUMMARY.

Ex Sultan Murad is dead.

An enthusiastic meeting of Grecians resolved that the position of the Greek provinces in Turkey is intolerable, and it was resolved to strengthen their army.

Russia proposes the occupation of Bulgaria. The London 'Times' declares that in insisting on this the Emperor has mistaken the mind of Europe. In overtures made by Russia to Austria the Porte grounds its resistance to the proposals of the Great Powers on its inability to control the mob, and a massacre of Christians is threatened.

At a meeting at St. James's Hall, Mr. Gladstone condemned the Cabinet for pursuing a policy opposed to the wishes of Parliament and people, and expressed his conviction that making Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Bulgaria independent of the Ottoman Empire would settle the difficulty.

England proposed a conference between the Great Powers re the Eastern difficulties, but the matter fell through. It is understood that Russia's demands were such as could not have been met by the conference. Russia offered Roumania absolute independence for permission to march her troops through their territory, to which Roumania consented. War preparations in Russia are very active. Servia claims some successes in minor engagements with the Turks.

Lord Derby, in reply to a deputation, expressed his strong belief in the permanency of peace. He favored local autonomy.

A fire occurred at Pickering and Abbot's cotton mills, Blackburn. Damage, £20,000.

The Industrial Bank, Newcastle-on-Tyne, has suspended payment. Deficiency, £100,000.

Cape advices state that the position in the Transvaal Republic is alarming. Owing to the defeat of the Dutch troops, the natives became unmanageable. The Kaffres have driven back the Boers, and latest telegrams confirm the report that there is an absolute panic in that out-lying district. The Kaffres triumphed all along the line, and while a friendly tribe of Kaffres behaved with reckless bravery, the Dutch citizens and troops displayed the white feather. President Burghers was so disgusted with the cowardice of the Boers that he implored them to shoot him there and then, that he might not survive the ignominy of defeat. According to the last intelligence, Dutch people fear Kaffir invasion, and there is a panic throughout the Transvaal. Gulf King is leading 40,000 men to attack the Transvaal, and has threatened a wholesale massacre to Boers. For the present, there is no danger of a native outbreak at the Cape, but it is manifest that Transvaal boers will require military assistance from us. For this reason, reinforcements have left for Capetown.

Cape news states that a Kaffer town has been taken, 170 were killed, and 5000 huts burned.

Lord Derby has despatched to Sir Henry Elliott, British Ambassador, re Bulgarian atrocities, directing him to demand a personal interview with the Sultan, communicate Mr. Baring's report, and demand reparation and justice to Bulgarians, the immediate rebuilding of houses and churches, and provision for restoration of industries, and assistance to persons reduced to poverty. The Sultan was favorable to the acceptance of Lord Derby's programme for the autonomy of the Provinces; but the Turkish Government is so exasperated by the Russian influx into Servia, that the Sultan would have been deposed had he accepted. Russia chose to interrupt the programme, assuming the virtual dismemberment of Turkey, which also prevented its acceptance.

In the battle of 28th September, one Servian battalion went into battle 900 strong, next day only 40 answered to the roll call.

At the Philadelphia Exhibition the following New Zealand awards were made up to 3rd October. Other exhibits remained to be examined. Canterbury (five awards for wool)—W. H. Peter, Saul Bealey, John Hall, J. C. Mason, T. M. Rickman. For wheat and cereals, Christchurch—W. D. Wood, R. Wilkins, E. H. Banks, P.

Cunningham, J. Cox. Phormium fibre, Chas. Chinnery. Nelson, award for wool—George Ansley. Wellington, wool—A. Braithwaite. Feathers, furs—Hector Liardet. Kauri Pine—Walter, Auckland. Wood extract—W. S. Praying, Taranaki.

Disraeli, in his speech before the Buckinghamshire farmers, defended the Government policy, and attributed Servian declaration of war to the action of Servian societies.

Meetings protesting against Turkish atrocities and Government action continue throughout England.

Further news of Chinese persecutions is to hand from Syechin. Placards, hostile to Christians and Europeans, were posted in various places in the market, about nine o'clock on the morning of the 20th. Four or five thousand armed men drew round to prevent the Christians from escaping. They manufactured a large wooden cross, and tied on it all the Christians they could catch, and then cut them to pieces. The number of persons killed was eight. The houses of the Christians were pillaged. About 30 other persons are missing. On the 22nd they murdered four more Christians.

London, October 28.

Russia, in a demonstrative manner, is demanding the autonomy of the insurgent provinces of Turkey. The Commissioners, protected by armed forces, are watching the execution of promised reforms. The 'Times' advises the Porte to yield to their demands, in the hope that if reform continues war may be averted.

A plot to murder the Grand Vizier was discovered.

The situation is at present very uncertain.

The meeting of Parliament is further prorogued to Dec. 13.

A Republican conspiracy was discovered in Spain.

THE RUSSIAN ARMY.

RUSSIA has not been behindhand in the great race of military improvement which has been so general in Europe in later years, and she is now spending more money upon her army than any Power of the Continent, if we except the large sums that France is devoting to the remantling of her fortresses. For Russia has adopted the compulsory system of Germany, and her large population will tend to make that system in time especially formidable. Military service is obligatory in the twentieth year, and no less than 700,000 youths annually attain the prescribed age. And Russia has gone ahead of Germany in the military claim that the State lays upon the people; for every man is subject to military service for twenty years—viz., six years in the ranks, nine in the reserve, and five in the Opolchengi or second reserve. Of the large number of young men who annually attain the prescribed age 420,000 are found available for military service. At first only about 150,000 really passed into the army, but the six years of active service was found to press so heavily that it is reduced. The effect will only be to pass more men through the ranks, and to increase in the course of time the formidable numbers of the Russian army. Any calculation founded upon a system that is constantly changing must evidently be uncertain, and as the new Russian system has only recently been introduced, it must take eighteen more years to give it a full development. But there can be no doubt that, unless political difficulties should call for its action before its organization, the Russian army will become the most terrible embodiment of military power the world has ever seen. The cadres before the new system was carried out were by no means adequate for the large number of trained men that will be produced, and fresh cadres are being added. Russia has then a field army of 612 battalions, 56 regiments of cavalry, 1,400 field guns, and 400 mitrailleuses. This did not include her reserve battalions, garrison battalions, and frontier forces, which number 56 squadrons, 153 battalions, and 16 batteries in addition. Nor does this include the large number of Cossacks and irregulars who are employed in maintaining the extended Russian frontier, and are computed at over 400,000 mounted men. And we must not imagine that the Cossack is a mere wild irregular horseman, for many of these frontier Cossacks are amongst the finest and best-disciplined men in the Russian service. They do all the orderly work both for the civil and military officers, who supervise with such marvellous precision the immense and sterile territory which owns the Russian sway. They are planted in large and growing colonies all along her extended frontier, and thus military ideas and habits are nurtured from their earliest youth. Near the old Circassian boundary their services have become almost a dead letter, and Russian officers complain that the speciality for the performance of outpost work, which resulted from constant practice and incessant watchfulness, is passing away in the new generation. In fact, the organization of this mass of irregulars is one of the most serious questions now occupying the attention of the Russian staff; for it is felt that they may become a cumbrous body of indifferent cavalry, instead of the active and useful horsemen that have been of such great service in the past military history of the country. Russia is taking successful Germany as her great model in the new organization; but a military system is not built up in a day or two, and Russia, like France, requires time. The difficulties which existed in introducing obligatory service over widely extended, and in many instances recently conquered, dominions have been surmounted with great judgment and considerable success.—'The World.'

Two handsome stained-glass windows have recently been erected in the apse of Douglas parish church, County Cork, in memory of the Rev. D. Canon Foley, the late parish priest, by the parishioners and other friends. The subjects are—The Sacred Heart, and the Blessed Mother of God. A large painting of the Crucifixion, executed by Mr. F. B. Cunningham, has been also presented to Douglas church by Alderman Hegarty, as a memorial of a near relative interred in the adjoining cemetery. The sacred subject is rendered nearly life-size, and has merits as a work of religious art. Including the massive gilt frame, the picture measures 10 feet by 7 feet.