

Since Mr. Henry Richard carried, by a majority of 10 (100 to 90), in the British House of Commons a motion in favour of international arbitration as a substitute for the horrors of the sword, similar motions have been successfully introduced and carried in both Chambers of the United States Legislature, in the Italian Parliament at Rome (without one dissentient), and in the Lower House of the Swedish Diet, at Stockholm. By the following letter, just received by Mr. Richard, it will be seen that another Parliament—that of Holland—has also followed the example of the English House of Commons:—

“The Hague, Nov. 27, 1874.

“Dear Sir,—I have the satisfaction to inform you that this day, after a two days' debate, we have carried our motion on international arbitration (of which we gave notice on the 12th of October) by a majority of 35 against 30, in the Second Chamber of the States General of the Netherlands, 15 members being absent.

“It appears that some of our opponents made a political question of it. But a proposition to adjourn the discussion until a later day was rejected in favour of my counter-proposition to leave our motion to its own inherent merits, without any further defence from our side, and to close all further discussion and vote at once. This proposal being adopted, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, whilst approving the principle of our motion, disputed its opportuneness, and doubted the advisability of a small country like ours accepting it and so taking an initiative so important. After his speech, the debate being closed, the motion was carried, as above stated.

“I hope, dear sir, that although this success may not be a brilliant one, all our English friends of kindred mind with ours will rejoice in it, and that you, dear sir, in particular, will acknowledge that M. van Eck and myself have redeemed the pledge we gave you during your visit to this country that we would do our best in this direction.—I remain, dear sir, your most truly,

“T. P. BREDIUS, M.P. for Dordrecht (Dort).

“To Henry Richard, Esq., M.P., London.”

THE JAPANESE MINISTER IN FRANCE.—*Le Français* states that M. Sameschina, Japanese Minister in Paris, has returned home, his native air having been ordered for him by his physician. M. Niviano, his first secretary, will have charge of the embassy during his absence.

THE TRANSIT OF VENUS.—Professor Th. von Oppolzer of Vienna has calculated that the transit of Venus will be visible at Vienna in its very last stage and under most unfavourable circumstances. The last contact of the sun and Venus will take place exactly a minute after sunrise. The phenomenon can, however, be watched without much difficulty from some points in the close vicinity of the Austrian capital; and at the professor's instance the Vienna Academy of Sciences has granted him a vote of 300 florins for making the necessary preparations. The *North German Gazette* learns that Professor Auwers, the German gentleman commissioned to observe the transit of Venus at Thebes, in Egypt, arrived at Cairo about a month ago. To his dismay he ascertained on inquiry that the Nile steamers do not ply before December, so that if he were to have waited for them he must have been too late for the transit. He soon found he was not the only sufferer by this arrangement. Councillor Doellen, the Russian astronomer, bent on a like task, met with the same disappointment. The two astronomers resolved, rather than miss the transit, to hire a sailing-boat, (*dachsie*) for the journey up the Nile. The Khédive, with his usual kindness and liberality, placed a Government tug at their disposal to tow the boat up faster. While waiting for the boat the astronomers made the acquaintance of the English astronomer, Admiral Ommaney, who happened likewise to be at Cairo, and who agreed to join them. The *North German Gazette* is glad to learn that the three learned men will make their observations together, and prognosticates a satisfactory result from their joint labours.

SNOWFALLS IN SWITZERLAND.—In the Grisons masses of snow interrupt communication, and cut off a portion of the canton from intercourse with the outside world. The Julier, Albula, St. Bernardine, and Splügen passes are closed; the hardy postmen, not easily daunted, have had to retreat before the frequency of the avalanches; and the main postal route of the Oberland, seldom interrupted, is also closed, whilst telegraphic communication with Milan was temporarily interrupted. It is some years since the mountain passes have been so effectually blocked as they are at this moment. In some parts snow lies to the depth of eight feet; small chalets have been entirely covered; the roofs of stables have been pressed down by the weight of snow upon the animals beneath; whilst great danger exists from the numerous avalanches to the men and cattle still *en route* from the heights, and, what adds to the difficulty, fodder is scarce. According to the latest accounts the snow had ceased falling, and numbers of workmen were engaged in attempting to open passages along the most important routes.—*Continental Herald*.

MARRIAGE IN PARIS.—On Saturday was celebrated at the Madeleine the marriage of the eldest son of M. Dufaure, formerly a Minister, with Madlle. Marie Jobez. The benediction was pronounced by M. Roquette, and among those present were M. Thiers, Madlle. Dosne, MM. Casimir Périer and D'Audiffrett-Pasquier, Admiral de Montaignac, Admiral Fourichon, M. Vautrain (president of the Municipal Council), Comte Daru, M. Cuvillier Fleury, M. Cézanne, M. Tambour, General Valuze, General Langlois, M. Jules Simon, several deputies and members of the Academy, &c.