

TRADE WITH PORTUGAL.

Lord John Russell moved the order of the day for the House going into a committee on the Registration Bill, when

Mr Robinson wished to ask whether the Government had any official cognizance of a decree which had been promulgated in Portugal, which was exceedingly unfavourable to our commerce with that country; and if they had not, what their intentions were as to the course to be pursued by this country under such extraordinary circumstances?

Lord Palmerston, in answer to the question which the hon. gentleman had just put, would state that his Majesty's Government had received from their commercial agents cognizance of that which the hon. gentleman had described, not only unfavourable to British commerce, but unfavourable to the commerce of Portugal itself. (Hear from Dr Bowring.) It would have the effect of turning the commerce of Portugal into a contraband trade, and would thus prove materially injurious to our interests. What his Majesty's Government might think proper to do on this subject, the hon. member for Worcester, he was sure, would not expect him then to state. It was a subject of great importance and was now under the consideration of his Majesty's Government. (Hear.) Whether the Government would be found to resort to any measure of retaliation, he was not then prepared to state; but there had been another decree issued imposing tonnage duties on British ships, and he was quite prepared to state, that as soon as his Majesty's Government had ascertained that that decree had come into effect, and that those duties had been established in Portugal, they would have recourse to the power which was vested in them, and would issue an order for duties corresponding to those in Portugal, adverse as much to Portuguese ships coming here, as their duties were to British ships going to Portugal. (Hear.)

Mr Robinson was not at all surprised at this hostility on the part of Portugal. Indeed, he had predicted as much at the time the present Lord Spencer had altered the duties on wines from Portugal.

Mr Hume thought if our commercial engagements with Portugal were now to be inquired into, it would be a fit time to consider all our other relations with that country. (Hear.) This country was, it would be recollected, put to great expense in maintaining a treaty entered into with that state, and he thought the Noble Lord had now a fair claim for a liberal interpretation of our commercial relations with that country. He hoped, however, that it would not be necessary to resort to what the Noble Lord stated as a sort of revenge upon that Government in case they refused to act a fair part. He would rather share them into better and more equitable line of policy.

(From Liverpool Courier March 1-16.)

The ministerialists hug themselves nightly upon their majority of 80 in the division on the Irish municipal corporation bill. For our own part, it puzzles to come at the grounds of their triumph. Who anticipated any other result? Who expected that anything but faction, and self-interest, and hypocrisy would triumph in the present House of Commons? The question was decided before the debate began. Who could blame the Conservatives, if, with no chance of victory, they declined remaining to grace the triumphal procession of the victors? Indeed, the great wonder to us—the great praise of the Conservative members—is, that fully conscious they were fighting a losing battle—feeling that the harnessed and hired majority were as invulnerable to reasoning or persuasion, as the walls that enclosed them—243 individuals should have patiently waited until three or four o'clock on the third night of a tedious debate, simply to enjoy the mortification of recording a condemned and useless vote. As it is, the ministerial majority is thus partly accounted for; the number of Conservatives absent was 53—of ministerialists, 36.

But the majority exhibits an increase of 16 upon the corresponding majority of last session—what say you to that? What do we say to it? We say, in the first place, that besides the reason already assigned, a difference of 16 votes, in a house of 564 members, may be brought about by a hundred temporary or accidental causes; and the inferences tell sadly for the hungry and lean necessities of the party which takes so much pains to parade as trumpets an advantage. What do we say to it? We say, paradoxical as it may sound, that it is a further proof and consequence of the unpopularity of the government. It is a part and parcel of the reaction that has been going on against the revolutionary policy of Ministers and their incendiary tasmasters. A few words will be sufficient to make this clear. The present House of Commons is anything but a representative of the constituencies. In England, wherever the constituencies have had an opportunity of declaring their sentiments, they have flung from them with disdain the betrayers of their confidence and the plotters against the li-

beries and the peace of the country. Elsewhere, though Radicalism has prevailed at the hustings, in almost every instance the return has been followed by a petition. In Anglesea, Mr. Owen Stanley is to be petitioned against, and in Longford, Mr. Luke White is not only petitioned against, but has expressed a determination not to defend his seat. Can it be supposed that the only men unobservant of these events are the members "by accident"—(we thank Lord Morpeth for the idea)—of the house of Commons—the men who, having got into Parliament under false pretences, and a false excitement of public feeling, look upon a dissolution as the death-warrant of their misbegotten elevation? Can it be supposed that they are so stupid as not to see the application of the lesson to themselves? No, no; they see it too well. They see that what has taken place on a small scale, would, in the event of a dissolution, take place on a large scale—that numbers who now sit in Parliament, would sit in it no more; and the consequence is, their readiness to vote for any measure, provided it state off, for ever so short a period, the ignominious reckoning which they know awaits them on their return to their respective constituencies.

It has been likewise pointed out, that in the last division upon the same subject, namely for receiving or rejecting the Lords' amendments, Ministers had a majority of 86,—making their present majority a loss of 6, instead of a gain of 16. The government prints deny that this is a fair comparison, the two cases not being parallel. Others may think differently. They may think it highly probable that all who voted against the bill, with the Lords' amendments, would have voted for the bill, without those amendments; that therefore the majority of 86, being as fairly to be considered a measure of the intrinsic strength of ministers upon this question as the previous majority of 64, upon substantially the same issue, does denote a positive decrease, as compared with the present majority of 80, of six votes. But we return to our former position. What are the votes of men who have ceased to be the representatives of any thing but their own places in Parliament, and who vote, not for the good of their constituents, but for the prolongation of an office which is now become little better than a usurpation.

Then comes the question.—What will be the effect of this decision upon the fate of the measure in the House of Lords, and upon the ultimate fortunes of the Ministry? We answer at once, the Lords will act according to their consciences and unbiased judgment of what is right. They will not be shaken by menace, nor caught by the clap-net of words without meaning, or meant only to cozen and delude. They will know that "Justice to Ireland" signifies no less than O'Connell's tyranny, and destruction to the Protestant Established Church, because it has been affirmed over again by a venal and factious House of Commons.—They will know that the Irish are no more fit for popular municipal institutions than they were last session, by having been subjected another year to the inflammatory influence of demagogic excitement—by having had their passions more roused, their animosities more embittered, their hatred of everything English and Protestant fomented by all the arts of seditious agitation and priestly cunning. It is scarcely possible to deal in patience with this lying and hypocritical cant about "Justice to Ireland!" What is the translation that its authors give us of it? Uniformity of institutions with England and Scotland! Why, then, do they not cherish and defend the English Established Church in Ireland, instead of clamouring for its overthrow? Why, if they are dissatisfied with the English Establishment, do they not cry out for a Presbytery with Scotland? "Oh," they tell you, "the majority of the Irish are Catholics; therefore she ought to have a Catholic Establishment." And pray, upon what is the claim of Ireland to a Catholic Establishment founded but upon a diversity of circumstances between her and England. This diversity they loudly plead when Ireland is to be granted an established church, but they absolutely refuse to admit it when she is to be denied popular municipal institutions.—The basis of the municipal institutions of Great Britain is self-government. Self-government requires that those who are invested with it should be qualified, not only by intelligence, to think for themselves, but also, by free agency, to act for themselves. If it could be shown that that description of the inferior orders in Ireland in whom it is proposed to lodge the control of corporate affairs, the distribution of corporate patronage, and the direction of the combined influence of corporations to certain political objects, were qualified, either by education or by local acquaintance, to form correct notions of the proper management of public affairs, or of the fitness of public men, or, having formed such notions, were at liberty to act upon them according to the dictates of their conscience, then, we admit, one main objection to the Irish municipal corporation bill would be removed. But when the case is notoriously the reverse—when the lower class in the Irish towns are,

according to the representations of the Liberals themselves, deplorably destitute of education—when the very genius of their faith subjects them to the grinding and slavish control of bigoted and often malevolent and disaffected priests,—when the concession of more privilege would only subject its helpless possessor to a more goading tyranny—we think "justice" consists rather in withholding from the poor Irishman a power of which he would be the nominal possessor, but by which the lawless, the disloyal, and the despotic intriguer alone would benefit. It suits, however, with the characteristic inconsistency of those who style themselves Liberals, that, with indignant abhorrence of coercion or interference with the purity and freedom of election upon their lips, they are compassing sea and land in order to inflict upon Ireland one of the surest instruments of coercion—one of the most potent obstructions to freedom and purity of election that could possibly be devised.

The Lords, we say, will be aware of these things. They will look to the country, and not to the votes of the House of Commons. They will remember that the House of Commons, as a body, remains the same, while the indications of a change of opinion and of feeling in the nation have been strong and frequent. They will continue the firm and patriotic course they have hitherto pursued, and they may safely look to the nation for a final verdict in their favour.

FRANCE.—The *Moniteur* announces the detection of another plot for the destruction of the King. The crime was to be committed by the means of something which the journalists call "an infernal machine." The artificer of this machine, to whom appears to have been assigned by his accomplices the task of perpetrating the assassination, was a journeyman mechanic, named Champion. Being taken into custody, the wretch confessed his guilt and the circumstances connected with the meditated crime, and then anticipated justice by hanging himself. The *Journal des Debats* adds to these details, that it appears certain that the infernal machine which Champion sought to construct was copied from the model of that of Fieschi, but with this difference, that the gun-barrels, placed in the form of a fan, made a demi-circumference, and thus rendered the firing more certain and deadly. It was, it is said, in a house situate on the route from the *Champs Elysees* to Neuilly that Champion proposed to place his machine. The *Courrier Francais* says, that Champion was a locksmith, and was a man of great enthusiasm, and extreme violence. He had long indulged a most senseless hatred of the King, and he did not endeavour to conceal this in his language.

(From the London Courier, March 16.)

SPAIN.

BAYONNE, MARCH 13.—Half-past three p.m.—Gen. Evans made an attack on the morning of the 10th, and successively obtained possession of the heights of Ametzagana and all the Carlist entrenchments. He afterwards made some demonstrations whilst awaiting the movements of Generals Espartero and Saarsfield. The loss was equal on both sides. General Saarsfield marched on the 11th, with 10,000 men, and encamped the same day in the plain of Izuzean. Espartero entered Durango on the 11th. One of his columns took 500 prisoners. (Interrupted by night-fall.)

ST. SEBASTIAN, MARCH 10.—This morning the 10th English battalion, seconded by another Spanish battalion, took by assault the fort of Ametzagana. The carnage was horrible. The *cerca* of Ametzagana was taken by the Christians at 8 o'clock this morning. At 10 o'clock the Carlists had retaken it; the heat of action took place at this spot. At 5 o'clock in the evening no positive result had taken place, although the line had been broken. The Christians had advanced nearly as far as Astigarraga. Irun was in a state of consternation. It is said that Espartero had commenced his movement, and that his co-operation was expected. Iriarte is advancing towards the Bastan. The movement may be considered general. Two hundred and fifty wounded have already been brought into the town. The combat is as bloody as it is desperate.

BERGIA, MARCH 10.—As I anticipated in my last, the long-expected move commenced in the direction of Hernani. At 6 o'clock, under the cover of the guns on the Alza and Ametz heights, about 3,000 men, consisting principally of Spanish troops, advanced on and took, after little or no resistance, the celebrated Ametzagana hill. This was achieved at 7 in the morning. They then advanced on a redoubt erected by the Carlists on a hill between Ametzagana and Renteria. This, after a sharp combat they took; but it was subsequently retaken by a Carlist battalion, who suddenly pouncing upon two companies of Chappellgorris in charge of it, almost cut them to pieces. Afterwards this same redoubt was taken and retaken three times, but in the end was secured by the Queen's troops, who with little further resistance then made their way to Oyarzun, thus

cutting off the road between Irun and Hernani. This occurred about mid-day. During all this time, ten battalions of the Queen's troops were drawn up on the ground near the Antigua Convent, waiting for the taking of Oyarzun, as a signal to advance.—On its capture being announced, they were put in motion, keeping the right bank of the river Urumea, and being little troubled by the factious until they reached the bridge at Astigarraga. Here a frightful combat took place during nearly two hours; but in the end the Queen's troops gained the position and crossed the river. Here they were met by a detachment of the troops who had taken Oyarzun, and during a short pause measures were taken to secure Astigarraga and the road leading from thence to Oyarzun. This was about 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The troops now took a circuitous route, and for a time it appeared as if a move on Andoin was contemplated. The real object in view was, however, soon discovered, namely, to take Hernani in flank. This was soon perceived by the Carlists, and a great effort was made to prevent the manoeuvre. Contending for this great point—the principal point of contact being between Urbieta and Hernani—the latest accounts received at St. Jean de Luz, and I may add day-fight left the two parties. I cannot of course guarantee this narrative as being correct in all its points; but comparing the result of my own observations (taken on the highest ground on the French frontier) with the stories told by the *patrons* of the several boats who crossed during the day, I am inclined to think it pretty accurately describes the line adopted. The day must have been dreadful to both parties, and I fear on both sides frightful loss of life will be recorded. Up to 11 o'clock about 250 had been brought into St. Sebastian, and the accounts stated the slaughter to have been dreadful. The Carlists brought up their men fresh and fresh to the attack. At the commencement of the attack in the morning not more than a thousand men left Irun and Fontarabia; but as the day advanced, both those important posts were almost entirely without defenders. A single battalion landed near Fontarabia towards evening, would have taken it by assault. I understand that the guns which were embarked with the view of being brought to Socoa were carried up during the high tide to Renteria, and from thence by the road moved on to Oyarzun, where towards 1 o'clock they were mounted. An immense number of houses appeared to have been set on fire during the day. This, as well as I could judge, was the work of the Carlists in their retreat.—*Correspondent of the Morn. Chron.*

The proceedings of the House of Lords during the earlier portion of the week were unimportant, but, on Thursday evening, a somewhat interesting discussion took place in reference to the ministerial plan for the abolition of Church Rates. The Archbishop of Canterbury, in presenting some petitions on the subject, stated that fifteen Prelates, the whole at that time in London, had met that morning, and had unanimously resolved to oppose the measure. Lord Melbourne intimated his intention of persevering in the face of all opposition, from whatever quarter it might arise. It is plain that the measure will be warmly resisted—with what success remains to be seen.—*Greenock Advertiser, March 13.*

The debate upon the affairs of Lower Canada, which, as we stated in our last, was adjourned from Monday to Wednesday last, was closed on Thursday morning, when Lord John Russell's resolutions were supported by 318 votes, and Mr. Leader's amendment to make the Legislative Council Elective by only 56. We are happy to state that not one Scottish member voted in the minority. The sweeping majority which supported Ministers must satisfy the leaders of the Canadian party that their extravagant views meet with no sympathy among the people of this country; and that however Messrs. Hume and Reebuck may write or speak in reference to the matters in dispute, the Imperial Parliament will never sanction a course of policy which would eventually go to the seclusion of the natives of the United Kingdom from a British Colony.—*Ibid.*

Dreadful Storm at Valparaiso, South America.—A dreadful tempest