

## CURRENT EVENTS.

## ENGLAND.

THE LATE LORD CHELMSFORD. — Frederic Thesiger, one of the sons of the late Mr. Charles Thesiger, Collector of Customs in the Island of St. Vincent, was born in July, 1794. He entered the Royal Navy as a midshipman on board Her Majesty's ship Cambrian, and as a boy of thirteen witnessed the second bombardment of Copenhagen by the expedition under Sir James Gambler. The death of his uncle and his elder brother, and the destruction of his father's property in St. Vincent by a volcanic eruption, imposed upon Frederic Thesiger the duty of retrieving the family fortunes, and accordingly he determined to abandon the naval for the legal profession, and in 1818 he was called to the bar by the Society of Gray's Inn. His career as a junior barrister was remarkably successful, and in 1834 he became enrolled on the list of Queen's counsel. The Dublin election inquiry which resulted in the unseating of O'Connell and Ruthven, afforded an opportunity for the display of his sagacity and ability, which firmly established Mr. Thesiger's reputation, and he was urged to enter the Parliamentary arena. In 1840 he unsuccessfully contested Newark, but a few weeks later he was elected for Woodstock which he represented until 1844, when, having been appointed Solicitor-General, he became member for Abingdon. In the following year, on the death of Sir William Follet, he was appointed to the office of Attorney General, which he vacated on the resignation of Sir Robert Peel in 1846. The accident of a day or two deprived him of the Chief Justiceship, which became vacant by the death of Sir Nicholas Tindal, and which fell into the patronage of the new government. From February to December, 1852, Sir Frederic Thesiger again held office as Attorney-General, and when the conservatives came into power in 1858 he abandoned a splendid practice at the bar in order to become Lord Chancellor with a peerage as Lord Chelmsford. He again succeeded to the woolsack on the return of Lord Derby to office in 1866. In February, 1868, he retired and was succeeded by Lord Cairns. From the year 1840 down to his accession to the Chan-

cellorship there was scarcely an important case in which the name of Sir Frederic Thesiger did not appear on either the one side or the other. His name will be remembered as a leader in the trial of "Tom Provis" for those daring and ingenious forgeries by which he endeavored to establish himself as heir to the estates and baronetcy of the late Sir John Smyth of Long Ashton, near Bristol—a trial exceeded in notoriety only by the more recent trial of Arthur Orton; in the strange action for libel brought by Achille against Dr. Newman, in which he was for the prosecution; in the extraordinary issue directed out of Chancery in respect of the last will and testament of the Duchess of Manchester, and in the prosecution of the directors of the Royal British Bank in 1857. One of the most important decisions which marked his Chancellorship was that of the great Shrewsbury peerage case.

TREASURE TROVE. — The *Solicitor's Journal* calls attention to the singular state of the law as regards treasure trove. Treasure trove, as Coke says, "where any gold or silver, in coin, plate or bullion, hath been of ancient time hidden, wheresoever it be found, whereof no person can prove any property, doth belong to the king or to some lord or other by the king's grant or presumption;" and it is the duty of the coroner to inquire who are the finders of treasure trove, and where it is, and whether any one be suspected of having found and concealed a treasure—which, saith an old statute of 4 Edw. 1, "may be well perceived where one cometh riotously haunting taverns and hath done so of a long time." Concealment of treasure trove is, it appears, punishable by fine or imprisonment; but it has been laid down that "the taking of goods whereof no one had a property at the time cannot be felony; and, therefore, he who takes any treasure trove \* \* before [it has] been seized by the persons who have a right thereto is not guilty of felony." 2 Hawk. P. C. 149. But the better opinion seems to be that, although the sovereign or lord has no definite property in treasure trove till he has seized, yet the true owner, though unknown, who has lost the money, may still have a property in it. 2 East's P. C. 606. And it is, of course, clear that unless the appropriator has reasonable grounds for supposing that the owner cannot be found, his taking the