

At a recent meeting of the Royal Society of Literature, Sir John Dorrill, Vice President, in the chair, Dr. Vaux read a paper, communicated to him by Captain Ormsby of the Indian navy, "On the Name given by Pharaoh to the Patriarch Joseph." The object of Captain Ormsby's paper was to show that the translation, in the margin of our Bibles of the name "Zaphnath Paneah," (the title conferred upon Joseph)—viz: "Revealer of Secrets"—was not confirmed by the analysis of the name itself; but that, on the other hand, a much more natural one was discoverable. Captain Ormsby, reduces the words "Zaphnath Paneah" to their equivalents in hieroglyphical characters, and shows, by a comparison of words in the "Book of the Dead" that they may be interpreted "The Sustainer of Life," or, "Support of Pharaoh." The same result he proved to follow from an analysis of the title as spelt in the Septuagint.

ACTIVITY AT REMBROKE DOCKYARD.—Four ships of the line, four frigates of the heaviest classes, and five smaller vessels, are on the stocks at this dockyard. Several are ready for launching and others more than half completed.

COAST DEFENCES.—Several troops of Artillery are just arrived at Eastbourne, and taken possession of the Martello tower and the fort, which is being placed in a state of defence. It has also been determined to fortify the western side of Littlehampton, Bournemouth, and the new battery, which is to be constructed in the parish of Climping, has been contracted for.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—An extensive movement has taken place among the workmen and seamen employed on the Tyne and Wear, for a further advance in the already increased wages paid them. The dockworkers of the Tyne and Wear have given notice to the shipbuilders for an advance from 80s. to 86s. per week; and the seamen of those ports and Hartlepool have also issued the following notice:—"From Jan. 20, 1854, the wages in the coasting trade to be 11s. per voyage; and at the expiration of fourteen days from the above notice the wages in the coasting trade to be 18s. per voyage. Run in new vessels to be regulated by the above advance of wages—namely, 18s. more than the half-voyage."

Most of the members of the British Government are advanced in life. The Earl of Aberdeen is seventy; Lord John Russell, sixty-two; Lord Palmerston, seventy; and the First Lord of the Admiralty, sixty-two. The youngest of all, Earl Granville, is in his fortieth year; and the ages of the others, Newcastle, Sydney Buxton, Gladstone, Clarendon, and Wood, vary between forty-three and fifty-four.

PROPOSED UNIVERSAL ALPHABET.—A meeting was held last week at the house of the Chevalier Bunsen, including Sir J. Herschel, Sir C. Trevelyan, Professor Owen, and representatives of most of the Literary, Asiatic, and Ethnological Societies, for the purpose of considering whether they could devise a uniform system of expressing foreign alphabets by Roman characters. The conference was adjourned.

The admiralty have appointed Sir Peter Wellington, Master R. N. to commission the *Hecla*, steam sloop, and eight half a dozen masters in the royal navy and a complement of men, to proceed to the Baltic to make soundings and surveys of the approaches.

SPAIN.

EARTHQUAKE IN SPAIN.—A terrible earthquake happened at Finaua in Almeria in Spain, on the 13th of January. The Spanish papers say:—"The town of Finaua has just been visited by a frightful misfortune. On Friday last between two and three o'clock in the evening, during complete darkness and while every one was asleep, the soil was suddenly shaken and violently turned over by a series of violent shocks following each other in rapid succession, and accompanied by a prolonged noise resembling the rolling of thunder followed by numerous fissures. It crumbled down the greatest part of the Alcazaba (an ancient castle of the Moors), broke houses to pieces, and caused great damage in nearly all the streets. Eight persons were afterwards dug out in a terrible state of mutilation."

SWITZERLAND.

A new railway is about to be constructed in Switzerland, which will lead from the canton of Ticino into that of Grisons, and will be the first railroad to span the Alps. This gigantic undertaking includes a tunnel of eighteen miles under the most elevated part of the passage—thus avoiding the obstacles of the mountain's height and of the winter snow, by what appears to be the most stupendous labour that man has ever yet undertaken.

TURKEY.

A private letter from Constantinople of the 17th announces that a squadron of frigates and transports, belonging to the Turkish and Egyptian fleet, had just sailed for Alexandria to ship the new reinforcements ordered at the disposal of the Porte by Abbas Pacha. These reinforcements consist of two divisions, each containing six thousand men, all of whom have been sent for several months. Among these troops there are a regiment of heavy artillery, the want of which has been much felt, and one regiment of sharpshooters. The viceroys has supplied the rifles himself.

INDIA.

The sum of the particulars relating to the Persian army that have arrived by the Overland Mail, are not very distinctly made out. The army, 60,000 strong, and which was supposed to be intended to support the Russians in Georgia, has instead marched southwards to Shiraz and Bushire, appearing to threaten Bagdad. The Bombay authorities have prepared to act upon orders that they may receive from the Governor-General, who is now at Pegu. We are reminded that the coasts of Persia are completely at the mercy of the Company's steamers, and that the Arabs, who are devout Sunnis, would only be too delighted for an opportunity of displaying their hatred to the Persians, whom they hate and despise as heretics. They do not appear, however, to be aware at Bombay that the influence of the English representative is again all-powerful at the Court of Teheran.

A plot has been discovered at Rangoon, headed by the purse-bearer and sword-bearer of the King of Ava, to massacre the British garrison of the place. As Lord Dalhousie is on the spot, speedy justice on the conspirators will be done.

By the death of the Rajah of Nagpore, without natural heirs, the whole of the magnificent valley of Berar lapses into the possession of the paramount authority. The Nagpore State is half the area of the Madras Presidency, and is, perhaps, without exception, the finest country in the world. Immediately on the death of the Rajah, five companies of the 10th Native Infantry, and a detachment of artillery, were marched into the city, where all was peaceable on the following day, when our advices left. The body of the late Sovereign was burnt with the usual ceremonies.

UNITED STATES.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24.—The French and British Ministers visited Mr. Marcy yesterday officially to enter their protests against American vessels being employed by Russia as privateers. It was further stated that their respective governments would treat all such as pirates.

The Navy department has received advices from Commodore Perry, dated Macao, Dec. 8, announcing the loss of Lieut. John Matthews and thirteen men while fishing at Borneo Islands.

The Russian officers, Messrs. Grynwald, Lockoff and Tiernstein, returned to the city Sunday. They have been on a visit to Washington and the Norfolk Navy Yard.—*New York Herald.*

Thursday, Deputy Inspector Wooldridge, of the Customs, arrested the steward of the British steamship *Africa*, on a charge of being concerned in the smuggling of a large quantity of lace goods for an importing house in this city. The merchant's store has been searched, and the whole of the goods are now under the supervision of Capt. Rynders, deputy surveyor, who had been assigned by the collector for that special purpose. It is said that a large amount of property has already been seized.—*Ibid.*

FINE TIMES FOR THE IRON MEN.—The iron men are doing a fine business, so good that they say not a word about a tariff. There are thirteen thousand miles of railroad in operation, three thousand miles additional it is estimated will be built this year. For double tracks one hundred thousand tons will be required this year. The quantity of railroad iron therefore, in use by the end of this year, allowing one hundred tons to the mile, will be one million seven hundred thousand tons, which at \$65 per ton, the present price, gives a total of \$110,500,000 invested in railroad bars now in use. Eight per cent. is estimated by the *Railway Times* to be the wear and tear of the rails in use, which would require an outlay for this item alone of more than eight millions of dollars annually, or in the course of ten years over eighty millions of dollars. By January 1860, there will in all probability be in operation in the United States 30,000 miles of railway. Between now and that period there will have to be furnished by our manufacturers, the iron for some nineteen thousand miles of new track, and as much as 8 per cent. per annum of the amount now in use. This magnificent amount, with the multiplied uses for iron, cars, locomotives, steam engines, machinery, steamboats, iron sailing vessels, iron buildings, &c. gives to the iron trade the most flattering prospects, if nothing intervenes to stop the progress of railroad construction.—*Ibid.*

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 27.—The will of the late Elliott Cresson distributes \$127,000 for philanthropic objects—including \$50,000 for the American Sunday School Union; \$10,000 for the School of Design; ten thousand dollars to the Historical Society; \$10,000 for a monument to William Penn; \$10,000 to the Episcopal Mission to Port Cresson, Africa; \$5,000 to the Episcopal Seminary at Alexandria; \$5,000 to the Hospital for the Insane; \$5,000 to Philadelphia city for planting trees. Besides sums to various benevolent institutions of the city.

[From the Portland Advertiser, Feb. 24.]

INTERESTING FROM CHINA.—Letters have been received in this city by a friend of one of the officers which we have been kindly allowed to look at, which

state that the following was the disposition of Commodore Perry's Japan squadron on the 10th of December, the day the overland mail left Hong Kong.

United States steam frigate *Surquois* and *Powhatan*, and ships of war *Macedonian* and *Plymouth* at Hong Kong; steam frigate *Mississippi* and steamship *Supply* at Macao; ship of war *Vandalia*, and store-ship *Southampton* at Loo Choo; and ship of war *Saratoga* at Shanghai. The Commodore purchased a small English steamer, *The Queen*, to lie before, and for the protection of the American factories at Canton, and the American schooner *Branda* to protect American residents at Amoy. One of the ships, probably the *Plymouth*, will be stationed at Shanghai when the squadron moves North in the spring. Lieutenant Taylor, of the *Mississippi*, has been ordered to command the *Queen*. The steam vessels have all been fully coalled, and all the ships are ordered to hold themselves in constant readiness and full provisioned for a six months cruise.

It is thought the Commodore will make an early start for Loo Choo, and after some exercise and drill proceed to Japan, in March or April. The store-ship *Lexington* is said to have arrived at Manila Bay, in the Straits of Macassar, and was daily expected at Macao. As she brings out the railroad, and other presents for the Emperor of Japan, her arrival had been anxiously expected.

Col. Marshall was at Macao, awaiting his successor. A report was that the Emperor of Japan, the "moco," or spiritual Emperor, was dead. Ringgold's exploring squadron was also expected to join in season to sail with Perry's squadron for Jeddo. The Governor of Hong Kong and the English Admiral have orders from their government to facilitate by every means in their power a successful result to Commodore Perry's mission. The French Commodore is reported to have similar orders. The Russian Admiral was at Shanghai with his squadron, having recently returned from Nagasaki. The prospect of the war with Turkey involving England and France against Russia, was very annoying to him, situated as he was, so far from home, and with a force so inferior to those Powers in these seas. The United States squadron is the largest in China, both in number of vessels, tonnage and weight and force of metal. Several vessels would return to the United States after the visit to Japan.

(From the Cape Breton News.)

OUR COASTING TRADE.—A gentleman whose opportunities of ascertaining the actual extent and nature of the Trade of the Port of Sydney, and other Ports of the Island of Cape Breton, and whose ability to demonstrate and accurately apply such information, in the manner most conducive to the welfare of our Island, are coequal with his earnest wish to stimulate and encourage every laudable effort to promote the prosperity of its people, has favoured us with the subjoined sketch, exhibiting the value and extent of our coasting trade. The perusal of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor's Report to the Colonial Secretary, has induced our friend to lay before the public this information, which does not appear in His Excellency's Report.

Considerable surprise has been expressed at the statement published of the Trade of the several Provincial Ports as contained in the Lieutenant Governor's Despatch. It may be as well to explain as far as Sydney is concerned, and Cape Breton generally. The published statement is, to say the least, unfortunate, as the Trade with Nova Scotia, which forms so considerable a part of its trade, is excluded from the Returns contained in the Despatch; and Cape Breton therefore contrasts unfavorably with places whose trade is very inferior; as for instance, a port on the western coast within 40 or 60 miles of New Brunswick has a large portion of its trade engrossed by that Province, and therefore the whole of the trade of that port appears in the Returns. But the same description of trade in Cape Breton as naturally flows into Nova Scotia, which by the annexation has become merely a coasting trade, and is therefore excluded; had such a trade been included the trade of Sydney alone, without including the stations at Bras d'Or or St. Ann's, would show an export of about £63,000, and an import of £115,000 over and above the published Returns. In this trade 300 voyages are made annually each way and averaging the vessels even at 40 tons, the tonnage employed would be 20,000 each way. It is, however, nearly 30,000 tons to add to the Returns published. All the export of fish, a large proportion of the agriculture, and about 25,000 tons of coal, are thus not accounted for, the imports are lost in the same way; a large proportion of the goods from the United Kingdom come by ships to Halifax and pass to account in the same way. If the internal trade were shown, the exports of Cape Breton would be upwards of £180,000—the value of her fishery being nearly £60,000; the imports about £220,000. It may be said that this might apply to the trade of other ports also: but to none of them would it apply to the same extent. The trade with Halifax from Nova Scotian ports on the western shores is very trifling and none of those on the eastern are so completely crippled by the centralization as Cape Breton. Yarmouth on the south, Windsor on the west, and Pictou on the east, have had the accommodation afforded by Branch Banks but Cape Breton has none of these, and the result is that a direct trade is almost impossible for want of money facilities. The banking system of this country being a monopoly, the difficulty of conducting mercantile operations on any large scale except through the Capital of the Province, is nearly insurmountable."