

mencing with Jamaica. A junction was effected off Dominique between the French and Spanish squadrons, and as the troops had been crowded on board the transports a pestilential distemper had broken out amongst them which rendered all operations impossible for the time, both fleets returned to Port Royal where the troops were landed. After remaining for several weeks the combined fleets put to sea in the night of the 5th July, without making signals or showing lights, and directed their course to San Domingo—here they separated, the Count de Guichen with the French fleet putting into Cape Francois, whilst Don Solano with the Spanish fleet proceeded to the Havannah. The French fleet remained at Cape Francois till the homeward bound trade from the French islands had assembled, when taking it under protection it sailed directly for Europe. Sir George Rodney concluding that the French fleet only intended to convoy the trade fleet to a certain latitude and then proceed to America to execute the plan concerted with General Washington, sailed for New York with eleven ships of the line and four frigates where he arrived in September. As has been already stated, the fact was that the French fleet was so roughly handled and so damaged in the different engagements with Sir G. Rodney, that it was found necessary to return to Europe as speedily as possible for repairs.

The treachery of the agents of Congress and the Dutch were brought to light in a striking manner during this season: The Congress had appointed their late President Henry Laurens as their Ambassador and Minister Plenipotentiary to Holland, he embarked at Philadelphia on board a Dutch vessel which was captured by a British ship of war, when Mr. Laurens endeavored to throw his papers overboard, but were prevented from sinking by a seaman, and disclosed the fact that in September, 1778, a private interview had taken place at Aix la Chapelle between William Lee, an agent of Congress, and one of those who, with Richard Penn, had endeavored impudently to enforce on the British Parliament a lying statement of the feeling and resources of the revolted Colonies, and John de Neufville, a merchant of Amsterdam, acting under powers delegated to him by Van Berkel, Grand Pensionary of that city; the object of which interview was to plan an outline of a commercial treaty between the revolted Colonies and Holland. A series of articles were agreed upon, and in order to negotiate a loan of which Congress stood in much need Laurens was sent with those papers for ratification to the Dutch Government. On his arrival as a prisoner in London he was examined before the Secretaries of State and committed as a close prisoner to the Tower. As no satisfaction could be obtained from the Dutch Government for this flagrant violation of public faith, war was declared against the Republic on the 20th of December.

The Beacon lighthouse, St. John, N. B., was nearly carried away in a late gale.

EXTRAORDINARY PHENOMENON ON LAKE ST. CLAIR.

We are credibly informed by an eye witness—indeed yesterday we saw for ourselves tangible evidence of the truth of what is told us—that on Thursday, the 13th of January last, a most extraordinary and sudden rise of the waters of lake St. Clair occurred and was particularly observable in the vicinity of the mouth of the River Thames and along the South shore of the Lake to and beyond the River Ruscom. Parties resident on the Lake Shore inform us that at first two loud reports were heard, resembling the reports from cannons fired at a distance, after which was experienced a sensation as if from a gentle swaying to an uproar, as though an earthquake had been awakened from a century's repose. Upon visiting the water line, it was discovered that the ice had been suddenly shoved upon the shores and piled up several feet in height, carrying with it trunks of trees and logs, which had for a quarter of a century lain embedded in the sand of the beach. At the mouth of the River Thames and vicinity the ice was thrown to the height of two or three feet, while at the River Ruscom it was raised at least four feet above its ordinary level. As we intimated before, so sudden was the action of the water in the Lake that the ice and trees and logs were absolutely piled in a jumbled mass several feet in height along the Lake Shore for a distance of several miles, but was most observable on the South and South East quarter. At the mouth of the River Thames the waters fell to their natural level in less than two days; but in the vicinity of the River Ruscom it was fully a week before they had retired to their ordinary boundary.

Now, what could possibly have caused this wonderful freak of the elements? We cannot tell. Perhaps some of our savants can explain. Could it have been any volcanic action beneath the waters? Could it have been produced by the atmospheric elements above? Or could it possibly result from a field of ice making its way down the Detroit River and becoming checked in its onward course to Lake Erie? Perhaps. But it seems most extraordinary that this last circumstance—supposing it ever did occur, but of which we have no knowledge—could bring about the very wonderful effect which were most unmistakably for several miles along the South and South East Shore of Lake St. Clair. For our own part we don't pretend to be posted on these intricate and debatable matters, and do not feel disposed at present to discuss them. We prefer to leave their investigation and elucidation to others who have more time on their hands and whose bent of mind naturally leads them to find causes for astonishing and hitherto unexplained effects. We profess to be the pre-eminently practical—*Chatham Planet*.

ST. PATRICK'S BIRTH-PLACE.

Where was St. Patrick born? asks the *London Daily News*. The question, we are persuaded, will appear to the vast majority of our Irish brethren as ridiculous as to the comparatively few students of ecclesiastical history who have taken the pains to ascertain the acknowledged fact of the case. Nine-tenths of Irishmen, we fully believe, and Englishmen too, for the matter of that, would treat it as a joke of the "festive season" if we ventured to suggest that the

great apostle of Ireland was anything but an Irishman native and to the manner born. The idea of St. Patrick being an Englishman, a Welshman, a Scotchman or a Frenchman! Why, every Dublin boy knows that Nelson and Wellington were Irish heroes. One might as well pretend that the first of the royal race of O'Brien was a native of Middlesex, as that St. Patrick was born out of the Emerald Isle. It so happens, however, that while there has never been the slightest reason to believe that St. Patrick first saw the light in Ireland, the controversy about his birthplace, has raged amongst English, Scottish, Welsh, and French antiquaries almost as freely as the contest among the Islands of the Ægean Sea for the birthplace of Homer. Was the Saint born at Dumbarton, at Bristol, at St. David's, at Boulogne in France or Glastonbury? In the preface to the second volume of the collection of Ancient Laws and Institutions of Ireland, the Irish editors of the "Senachus Mor" have thoroughly examined the interesting question; and have arrived at the conclusion, supported as it seems to us by the incontrovertible testimony of the Apostle's own confession, that St. Patrick was born at or near Glastonbury, in Somersetshire, and that he returned in his old age to end his days in the land of his birth, and amid the scenes of his early youth, and was not buried according to the prevalent belief in Ireland at Downpatrick near Saul, "where he made his first convert and founded his first church in Ireland." It will rather be a shock to Irish patriotism to learn that their patron saint was the descendant of Roman colonists, a young Somersetshire gentleman, and son of the Roman Decurio, or Mayor of Bath. But it may console them to reflect that Glastonbury,

"Where the winter thorn Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of our Lord," and where Joseph of Armathea had deposited.

"The cup, the cup itself, from which our Lord, Drank at the last sad supper with his own."

under the shadow of the Tor of St. Michael was no unfitting or unworthy birthplace for this immortal confessor of the Christian faith.

The *Minnesota Tribune* says: "We have now employed in our office a man who has been in the English army for thirty-five years, was at the siege of Lucknow; had both of his ears cut off while sticking his head out of a sally port. He afterward served on the staff of Wellington at Waterloo, and subsequently accompanied Bonaparte in his celebrated Egyptian campaign, where he was arrested for conniving at an elopement with the Sphynx, and was confined in the Pyramids for three years. He has been in 481 pitched battles, and a great many that were not pitched. Everybody has read of the butcher who was killing a beef for the Commissary when the Balaklava charge was sounded, and who seized an axe, mounted a horse, and went through the battery and back safely. Well, this is the man we are writing about. He relates that thrilling episode in his checkered history with much enthusiasm. He used to have a medal, but a grizzly bear snatched it off his shirt bosom while he was laying the last tie on the China and Siberian railroad, Eastern Division. He says he is now tired of travel and adventure, and proposes to settle down and it is the general opinion that he will. He neither smokes, chews, drinks whiskey or swears, and can set type as well as he used to fight.