The Observer.

SAINT JOHN, FEBRUARY 13, 1849.

ENGLISH MAIL.—The letter portion of the English Mail of the 27th January, per steam ship *Niagara*, was received in this City early on Sunday morning, and the newspapers yesterday morning. The Niagara arrived at Halifax at one o'clock, on Friday.

Trade in the United Kingdom generally, and at many places on the Continent, continued to improve, and the prospects of a good business in the spring, and throughout the year, were cheering the spirits of all classes throughout the Mother Country.

The Cholera appeared to be subsiding in England and Scotland.

London Trade Report.—On the whole, looking to the magnitude of the events which disturbed the commerce of the world during the past year, we cannot but acknowledge that it has shown wonderful elasticity. Already has Trade began to flow in its usual channels, though Italy is still unsettled, and the rest of Europe, to say the least, uneasy.—At home, we find our textile artizans finding almost full employment; and though work is scarce in some other branches of our manufactures, there can be no doubt but that a continuance of full employment to the former classes will shortly lead to a similar state of prosperity in those who now suffer under depressing influences.

The year 1848 closed, however, under more favourable auspices as regarded the future than did 1847. A very general impression prevailed that when the produce market re-opened in January, 1849, a decided improvement would be manifest, and this anticipation was amply fulfilled. During the first week of the year, although no great improvement in prices was apparent, there was such firmness displayed by importers, and such a desire to go into stock exhibited by dealers, that it became evident that any alteration in price which might take place, the sellers must have the advantage.

The general tone of feeling in the commercial circles of every grade is altogether of a better character than has prevailed for the last two years, and we are disposed to think that the confidence thus displayed is well-founded.

As regards the future, we anticipate that the year 1849 will be one of very decided commercial prosperity, arising not only from its ordinary causes, abundant food and raw materials of manufactures, a sound state of credit and commercial confidence, peace at home and abroad, but also from the certainty, that whatever be the result of the discovery of the gold mines of California to the prosperity of the United States, the general commerce of the world must receive an impetus which cannot but prove of the highest advantage.

As regards the general range of prices, we think that, in addition to some improvement from usual causes, the cause to which we have just alluded must certainly give an upward tendency; but until it be ascertained, with some degree of certainty, what amount of gold bullion will be received annually from this newly-discovered source of supply, it will be impossible even to guess at the result as regards prices in general.

Money.—Eventful as has been the past year in those causes which usually produce great changes in the value of money, it cannot be said in this country that such changes have been more than commensurate with the exciting causes. The price of Consols, which is more the barometer of public opinion as to the *future* plentifulness or scarcity of money than of its present value, has of course exhibited very great susceptibily during the foregoing year. Opening at 85½ in the early part of February they had risen to 89½. The intelligence received on the 25th of February from Paris drove down the price on the 26th to 88—no great depreciation, but further intelligence immediately created a panic, and Consols were quoted in March at 81¾. In April they stood still lower, and at one time touched 79. They steadily improved until August, when they were done at 87. In September they had declined full one per cent., and until the end of November were very feverish, but since then there has been a steady improvement, with very little re-action, and are this day quoted at 89 7-8 to 90.

Exchanges since the middle of last month have remained almost stationary, and the remarks then made will therefore apply to their present position; at one moment only the increased demand for Bills on Paris appeared to threaten an export of gold, but since then they have become more plentiful, and there is nothing going at present. The export demand for silver still continues good, sufficient to take off the large amounts that have been received, and any that may still offer; the price has advanced. Money is exceedingly plentiful; first-rate Foreign Bills are discounted at two per cent., and a fraction above. Gold continues to accumulate in the Bank of England; the total stock of buillion is now upwards of fifteen millions.—*Laing & Bruxner.*

LIVERPOOL, Jan. 27.

STATE OF TRADE.—In our last publication we were enabled to state that a general improvement had taken place in trade and commerce, and we are now called upon to record not only its continuance but extension during the past two weeks.—The favourable alteration which has taken place in political affairs on the continent, exercises a beneficial effect in this country, and tends to allay any fears that may have been entertained as to the probability of a continental war, or further tumults throughout Europe. Our recent advices from Germany and Holland inform us that manufacturers are getting busier, with produce in greater demand and prices advancing. In most of the French markets home and colonial produce has been in good request—business operations have increased, and orders could not be executed on former terms—Letters from Lyons state that a vast number of orders for manufactured goods have been received at that city. It is also satisfactory to be able to report that Money was getting more plentiful in the business cities of the continent; and from the liberal spirit evinced by the various rulers throughout Europe to enact wise and popular laws, confidence was getting founded on a firmer basis among all classes of the commercial community.—The Produce markets of the United Kingdom have been very steady. A large business has been going forward in all our leading markets, whilst higher prices have been paid for several articles of consumption. The Cotton trade has manifested activity, and large sales are going forward at better prices. The Grain trade, although dull, has lately exhibited greater firmness. The supplies are plentiful, and prices continue to rule at a low figure. Iron of all kinds is in better request, and higher prices are paid. Money continues very abundant; the rate of discount is yet 2 1-4 to 2 1-2 per cent. for prime bills, with an easy market.—Railway property is daily advancing in value, and the Public Securities have also undergone a considerable improvement since this day fortnight. Altogether present appearances are very encouraging, and a splendid trade during the ensuing spring and summer is expected.

The accounts from the manufacturing districts, both of Yorkshire and Lancashire, are satisfactory and encouraging. In Manchester and the surrounding Cotton districts greater activity prevails.

The improved tone which has taken place in commercial affairs is also observable in the state of our Public Securities. The price of Consols has been gradually but slowly advancing. At the sailing of the last steamer we quoted Consols for money and account at 89½ to 89 3-8, and now they are 91 3-8 to ½ for both money and account, having advanced fully 2 per cent. during the fortnight.

The British Parliament will be opened, it is expected, by her Majesty in person, on Thursday next, the 1st of February. Lord Bruce will move the address in the House of Lords, and Lord Bateman will second it.

The whole of the Cabinet Ministers are assembled in London, and repeated Cabinet councils have been held to decide upon the policy of the parliamentary campaign of 1849.

Sir Francis Baring has been appointed to the vacancy at the Admiralty, and the right hon. gent. has been sworn into office, vacating his seat for Portsmouth, for which place he will no doubt be re-elected

It would appear that the Government have wisely resolved to meet the wishes of the people, as demonstrated through the Financial Reform and other associations, to reduce the expenditure of the several departments of the State considerably, yet without impairing their efficiency. On this subject the London *Times*, of the 26th, commenting in their city article upon the rise of the funds, says the reductions contemplated in the army and navy were the chief cause of the buoyant feeling throughout the day, indicating as they do, not only economy, but also that the maintenance of peace is relied upon.

The *Globe* also says—it is stated, upon what is considered the best authority, that the arrangements at the Government offices for carrying into effect important savings are most active. In some cases revisions, as alleged, have been made more than once after the lists of proposed reductions have been sent in to the Chancellor of the Exchequer from particular departments. In the Ordnance great efforts are making to apply the pruning knife, and the consolidation of the Customs and Excise boards will effect a material saving. We give these *on dits* merely for what they are worth, because in the city judicious retrenchment is so much thought of, although indiscriminate reductions would by the majority be condemned.

Mr. Cobden has thrown his whole energy into the newly-organised movement in favour of a retrenchment of ten millions in the expenditure of the country, and there will be a great effort made in Parliament to reduce the estimates. We have no doubt much good will be effected without impairing the efficiency of the Army or Navy.

A free trade banquet will be held in Manchester on the 31st, instant. Upwards of thirty members of Parliament have signified their intention of being present. All the chief free-traders will unite in the banquet.

We have for some time observed that the question of the Navigation laws has been found much too difficult to solve by mere rhetorical flourishes; but we were scarcely prepared to see in one of the most free trade of our contemporaries, that their abrogation was pronounced "an exceedingly hazardous experiment."

The Postage Treaty, which went out by the Europa, for ratification by the President and Senate of the United States, was brought back by the same steamer, having been duly ratified, and has now become the law of both countries. Its ratification has been received with general satisfaction by all the trading communities of Europe.

It is understood that the Navy Estimates for 1849, already in course of preparation for Parliament, will be on a considerably reduced scale, so as to save a million on that branch of the public expenditure as compared with the last year. It is generally believed that Government intend to make a reduction in the army of 10,000 men.

The Bank of England accounts present the usual features which generally mark the period of the payment of the dividends. There is an increase of circulation with a small decrease of bullion. Money has become more abundant, and the chief brokers refuse to take deposits at call at 1 1-2 per ct.; discounts of the best bills are not higher than 2 per cent.

The British and North American Royal Mail Steam Ship *Europa*, Captain Lott, which sailed from New York on the 10th instant, and Halifax on the 13th, reached the Mersey on the morning of the 22nd, a little after nine o'clock, making the passage from New York to Liverpool, at this boisterous season of the year, in a few hours *less than twelve days!* This, all things considered, is the most astonishing passage on record.

Instances of the superiority of British steam-vessels over those yet built in America, now so frequently occur, that we should think they are pretty well satisfied that they are no match for Uncle John in this department.

The public will be gratified to learn that two new vessels, which will surpass all the others in size, splendour, and speed, are about being laid down by the British and North American Company, to replace the Acadia and Britannia, which have been sold.

Liverpool Annual Timber Report.—It is with a feeling of relief we record the fact, that the memorable year of 1848 has passed, and with it we hope the many disturbing causes which so crippled and paralysed the general trade of the country, and kept us in a state of uncertainty thro'-out the whole year.

The Timber Trade this year, we are sorry to say, forms no exception to the general depression, having at length felt the full effect of the limitation of railway works, and the almost entire cessation of all building operations, which were the necessary consequences of the commercial embarrassments of 1847, and which, as is usual with the timber trade, were felt at a much later period than by other branches—that trade being the last to feel, as also the last to recover from such a state of things. The new year, however, opens with brighter prospects. With a revived and prosperous state of trade in the manufacturing districts, and the likelihood of money continuing abundant and easy, we may hope to see a moderate and gradual return to our usual demand, and, while the sufficiency of stocks of most articles forbids any sanguine calculations as to prices, there is no cause for despondency, and we trust that, with moderate views, a healthy and improving business may be fairly calculated on in the coming year.

The import this year has been more than last, the Foreign and Colonial Timber Trade having employed 397 vessels, 216,349 tons, against 398 vessels, 198,991 tons in the previous year. A large proportion of this tonnage was engaged in carrying Spruce Deals, which were imported here to such excess as to drive down prices to unprecedentedly low rates. There were large quantities of Sleepers also, so that when allowances are made for these, the import of Square Timber has been much short of an average of years, although fully equal to our reduced requirements. The total import, as above shown, is in excess of last year and of all previous years (except the two remarkable years ending February, 1846 and 1847). The consumption has not only fallen short of last year, but is not even an average of the five previous years, but the stocks of Colonial Woods, with the exception of Deals and Planks, are less than last year, or an average of years; but taken together, however, and estimating the stocks of Colonial Fir, in Logs and Planks, they would appear to be equal to 110,000 loads against 96,000 loads, or 14 1-2 per cent. more than last year; and the consumption, estimated in like manner, is only 169,000 loads against 192,000 loads; thus showing that while the Import has exceeded last year by 20 per cent. the consumption has fallen off 12 per cent.—a lamentable proof of the prostration of trade, notwithstanding the low prices which were current throughout the year.

There has been considerable difference in the ruling of prices during the year, while for Quebec Pine the price varied but little, say from 14d to 15 1-4d, with a few cargoes under the lower rate. St John Pine, which at the opening ruled at 15 1-4d per foot for 18 inches average; in March 18 7-8 inches was sold at 18d; in June the price for 18 in. had again fallen to 16 1-4d; and this month the last sale was of a cargo of 18 1-4 inches at 15d. Spruce Deals, which ruled at £8 5s. to £8 10s. per standard, fell during the season to £6 5s. to £6 10s, and now rule at £7 5s. to £7 10s. per standard. Indeed, some Halifax spruce Deals were sold as low as £5 2s. 6d. per standard.

The arrivals from 1st February, 1848, to 1st February, 1849, were—From Quebec, 165 vessels, 76,557 tons—from St. John and other ports, 211 vessels, 113,629 tons—from the Baltic, 21 vessels, 26,163 tons—Total, 397 vessels, 216,349 tons.

American Pine Timber.—The import this year is greater than last, being 5,175,330 feet against 4,172,319 feet last year; the consumption is considerably less, being 5,249,330 feet against 5,949,519 feet, but the stocks are lighter, being 3,285,000 feet against 3,359,000 feet last year. The stocks of Pine analysed consist of 1,898,000 feet Quebec, 1,110,000 feet St. John and other Ports, and 277,000 feet Red Pine. The sales of the month consist of one cargo of St. John, 19 inches average, at 18¼d. and another cargo 18½ inches, at 18d. both without stowage.

New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Planks, &c.—The import of Planks has been great beyond precedent, being 20,798,887 feet of 2 inches, against 17,976,460 feet in the previous year, and far beyond our ability to cope with them under the depressed state of trade during the year. In any ordinary times, with such low rates as ruled for the greater part of the season, we should not have failed to have made a greater impression on the stocks than we have done, such is the estimation in which colonial Spruce is held in this market, but last year's depression was beyond the reach of even low prices, and we consequently find the stocks to be 11,200,000 feet of 2 inches, against 7,170,000 feet in the previous year, or exceeding it by 671,666 cubic feet: The consumption, although large, say 16,768,887 feet, is much less than the previous year, which was 19,073,460 feet, and this gives hope that with renewed activity in the manufacturing districts, we shall yet be able to give a good account of the stocks, large as they now appear. The fluctuation in price, as before noted, has been very extreme; the latest sales this month have been of a cargo of Spruce from Shippegan, at £7 5s.; a cargo of yellow Spruce from Miramichi, at £8; a cargo of Richibucto yellow at £8 2s. 6d.; and a cargo of Shippegan yellow Pine at £9 9s. per standard. With cargo, a parcel of Prince Edward Island Spruce was sold at £6 15s per standard. A cargo of Pugwash Spruce has been sold at £7 per standard.

Boards and Scantling.—The import is a good deal less than last year, being 307,719 feet of 2 inches against 386,577 feet. The consumption has been much less.

Birch forms an exception to most articles this year, being in good demand, and for good quality full prices being obtainable. The import is less than last year, being 207,388 feet against 246,412 feet.

CORN TRADE.—The imports of Breadstuffs, both from America and the continental ports, into the United Kingdom, although not extensive, have been very steady during the past fortnight. The Grain trade has, therefore, not been active; indeed speculators will not venture on a single transaction until after the 1st February, when the duties on Corn, &c., will finally cease. At Liverpool the trade has been rather inactive, and prices declined. Yesterday, however, the market wore a more cheerful aspect, and full prices were paid for Wheat, Flour, and Indian Corn; indeed, during the last few days Flour in bond has gone off to some extent at 25s. 6d. to 25s 9d., and to-day at 26s. per barrel has been obtained for the best Western. Indian Corn Meal 14s. 6d. to 15s.

LONDON.—The transactions in almost every description of Grain and Grain produce have been very limited since the date of our last report.

COTTON.—The Cotton market has again advanced. The sales are large, and the trade closed yesterday with a degree of animation and much firmness. The sales of the week ending January 26, are estimated at 58,290 bales, making the total transactions of the fortnight 95,610 bales. Compared with our last quotations prices of American descriptions are now from three sixteenths to one-fourth of a penny per lb. dearer. At the usual meeting of the Cotton Brokers' Committee, held yesterday, the following were declared as the price of fair Cotton:—Fair Uplands 4 3 8d., fair Mobile, 4 3 8d., fair Orleans, 4 5 8d.* A large business was done yesterday afternoon after the week's sales were returned, and the operations of the day are estimated at 15,000 bales. The import since the 1st inst. has been 170,000 bales, of which 140,000 is from the United States; and the stock in this port is about 437,000 bales, 271,000 of it being American.—*Liverpool paper.*

The Iron trade is active. At Liverpool a good business is doing at advanced rates. In Wales the price of common Bars has advanced to £5 5s. per ton, and in Liverpool to £5 15s. A large business is doing in Scotch Pigs, and the price of No. 1 Gartsherrie is now 51s. per ton, cash. Tin Plates have been in very active demand. In other Metals a good business is doing at former rates.

DUBLIN.—We continue to have a succession of dull declining markets; every article in the way of breadstuffs cheaper, which must continue for some time, as all our seaports are more or less crowded with shipping, ready to discharge their cargoes on the 1st of February. The question now is not how to procure food, but the ways and means wherewith to purchase, from the present disorganized state of the country becoming every day more and more worse. We have much more confidence in trade than when we last wrote on all the leading articles of commerce.

CORK.—Throughout the past fortnight there has been an improved feeling manifested in the several departments of trade and commerce, but at the same time the transactions in the produce markets are only to a limited extent. Breadstuffs sell steadily, and prices are well maintained.

GLASGOW.—Since our previous report, dated Jan. 11, trade has continued in a satisfactory position, and the feeling of confidence and of returning good trade then generally expressed has not abated.—Cotton has been in good demand, and prices are not only maintained, but have an upward tendency. The market for goods and yarn is steady but quiet.

MANCHESTER.—Our market is beginning to exhibit more signs of animation, owing chiefly to the favourable nature of the commercial news received from India.

ANTWERP.—The latest accounts from this city report business generally of an improved character.

AMSTERDAM.—The yearly commercial accounts just published, relative to the commerce of this port, show that it, with other places, has suffered considerably by the commercial panic of 1848.

DANTZIC.—The annual accounts state that 1083 vessels, of which 532 were English, comprised the maritime trade of that port, during the year 1848.

INDIA.—The commercial intelligence by the India mail is again regarded as satisfactory, the demand for cotton manufactured goods being especially active both at Calcutta and Bombay. The report of the Chinese markets is not so favourable, but there appears to be no great apprehension of a continued decline.

The dates from Hong Kong are to the 30th November. Everything remained quiet at the various settlements in China.

CHOLERA.—The progress of the cholera on account of its alarming appearance in the New Orleans, and the loss of life which has taken place amongst the children who were attacked with the malady at Tooting, near London, is now watched with undiminished anxiety. Its ravages have not, however, been more extensive during the last fortnight. The total number of cases reported up to Wednesday last were 8854; whereof 3961 had proved fatal, 2118 had recovered, 2775 were under treatment, or the result was not stated. Within the entire scope of the limits of the Registrar-General, including Scotland, the new cases which appear daily fluctuate between about 160 and 200, whereof from 10 to 20 may happen about the metropolis, the provinces furnish about the same average, whilst the residue appear to be embraced within the confines of Scotland. The weekly deaths from cholera within the metropolitan district hover about 62. The general health of that district has improved during the last week, the deaths being 103 less than the previous one, but still leaving an excess of 176 above the weekly average of the last five years. The inquest which was empanelled to enquire into the cause of the deaths of the children, who perished from having contracted the malady at Tooting, has brought in a verdict of manslaughter against the proprietor of the establishment, who "farmed" the pauper children of various parishes in London, and he stands committed for trial.—From the evidence taken little doubt can be entertained but that cold, insufficient clothing, want of cleanliness, and a deficient dietary were the predisposing causes to the malady which proved so destructive to the innocent victims who were swept away in a few days. No sooner were the survivors removed and properly clothed and fed than the malady disappeared.

A Manchester paper says it is highly probable that her Majesty will make a visit to that town during the ensuing summer.

Dr. Bowring, recently appointed British Consul at Canton, embarked at Southampton on the 20th instant, for China.

Letters from Malta state that immense damage has been done there by a terrific storm.

It is stated that Mr. Robert Stephenson is now in Egypt, at the instance of the British Government, to survey and report upon the practicability of making a railway across the isthmus of Suez.

An extensive fall of the chalk rock from Shakspeare's Cliff has taken place. The fall left an indentation in the Crown of this classic cliff of something like an acre. The quantity of chalk detached may be estimated at about 100,000 tons.

The number of paupers in Great Britain is about 4,000,000, or a seventh of the population of the whole empire;—in Ireland, 2,200,000; England, 1,500,000; Scotland, 200,000. Since 1816 the people of England have paid £200,000,000 for the relief of the poor.

Dickens is rapidly becoming popular in France. His last Christmas story, for example, is being translated in two or three newspapers, and is reproduced from them in more than one periodical.

IRELAND.

The Judges of the Queen's Bench have overruled the errors assigned in the cases of Mr. W. S. O'Brien and his fellow-prisoners. The court was unanimous in its decision; and it remains to be seen whether the unhappy men will persevere in carrying their hopeless appeal to the House of Lords. It is confidently stated that application has been made for the requisite permission from the Lord Lieutenant in the case of Mr. O'Brien, but that Mr. Meagher declines to proceed further, and is resolved to submit to his fate. Any hopes of overturning the verdict must prove delusive.

In the case of Mr. Duffy, the application of the Attorney-General for final judgment on the partial overruling of the demurrer, has been refused, and the prisoner is allowed to plead over. He is not yet admitted to bail, but efforts will even be made to procure his unconditional discharge, upon the ground of his not having been tried at the commission pursuant to his petition, and therefore entitled to be liberated at its close. This will furnish the lawyers for a fresh interminable argument upon the provisions of the Habeas Corpus Act.

But whilst political agitation is in abeyance in Ireland, a vast revolution is silently proceeding in the transfer of property from the embarrassed landlords into the hands of their mortgagees. Patrician families, of reputed wealth, are fast sinking into poverty, whilst their broad lands become the property of those to whom they have been pledged for years past. It is deplorable that the incendiary fires to which we alluded in our last number as so prevalent in Ulster, continue to occur. Major Browning, the deputy-general of constabulary, has been dispatched to the counties of Down and Antrim, to investigate into the causes of these sudden and alarming attacks upon property, in districts hitherto so remarkable for tranquillity and security.

Lord Clarendon, at a recent meeting of the Dublin Society, intimates the intention of the Government to establish Schools of Design in Ireland, with a view to promote the arts and manufactures. His Lordship said—"that the Irish were, in his opinion, more apt to learn—they possessed much greater ingenuity and much more natural taste than the English," his Lordship accordingly thought "they would not be behindhand in the race of competition, where application and ingenuity, correctness of eye, and facility of hand are indispensable to successfully unite beauty and utility, and to adapt them to objects for which there is a constant demand." This is pointing out to Ireland the real path to political and commercial greatness.

We have to record the death of two Roman Catholic Bishops, Dr. Maginn, of Derry, and Dr. Walsh, of Cloyne and Ross.

The incendiary fires in the province of Ulster are still going on. Last week a daring act was committed by two young women named M'Veagh, near Knockbreada, in the county Down. They kept watch on their father's premises, one armed with a sword and the other with a fowling piece. Two incendiaries came to set fire to the stack-yard, when a scuffle ensued; one of the young women shot one of the villains, and the second stabbed the other. Through some cause or other the wounded men decamped, and no trace has been found of them since.

A person named Simpson has been committed for trial, in the county of Down, charged with being concerned in the incendiary system, which is causing such wide-spread alarm. A meeting in the town of Belfast has been convened by the mayor, to take steps for the suppression of those atrocious outrages. There has been another attempt near Holywood, where the property of Miss Simms was fired, but the flames were got under.

It is stated that Alderman Meagher (father of one of the state prisoners) is about to retire from the representation of Waterford, and that Mr. Wyse, one of the Secretaries of the Board of Control, who formerly represented the city, is likely to become a candidate.

The Limerick papers which we have lately received contain lists of outrages in various parts of that county, chiefly in the houghing and maiming of cattle, and the plunder of sheep.

There is also an extensive plunder of provisions from vessels on the Shannon.

Dean Coll, the parish priest of Newcastle, has written to Sir Edward Blakeney about the conduct of Mr. Dunbar, an officer who marched the soldiers out of chapel, when Dean Coll made an elaborate harangue against the new colleges, and what he calls "the proselytising schemes of Protestants."

The mighty convulsions which have shaken the continent during the last twelve months, have subsided into a deceitful calm. The Frankfort Assembly has fairly cast the apple of discord amongst the Princes of Germany. Austria, whilst recovering her rebellious Hungarian provinces, has a new field of controversy opened to her in the threatened rivalry of Prussia for the German throne; her tenure of the provinces of Lombardy will again become probably the subject of quarrel with the King of Sardinia. The question of the Danish Duchies is as unsettled as ever. Naples and Sicily are still as far removed from an amicable settlement of their disputes; whilst Russia, which has so long remained silently prepared for action, seems deeply plunged in intrigues, with a view to an extension of her power towards the south, and to intimidate our own unpopular Foreign Secretary; so that it will require more than his usual address and sagacity to circumvent the Autocrat's plans, and continue to preserve, as he has hitherto contrived to do, the general peace of Europe.

The Frankfort Assembly, on the 19th instant, after several days' debate, has decreed that "The dignity of the Head of the Empire is given to one of the reigning German Sovereigns." The decision was come to by a majority of 258 over 211 votes. It is generally believed that the next vote will declare the title of Emperor to be hereditary.

Since our last Prince Windischgratz has entered Buda-Posth without firing a shot, and the subjection of Hungary must inevitably follow. Kossuth has retired before the conquering imperialists, and Windischgratz has captured Count Batthiany, one of the chief insurgent leaders, and confiscation and extermination are the order of the day. The Diet at Kremsier has resumed its sittings, but a vote of want of confidence which it passed proves that very little harmonious action can be anticipated between that body and the military leaders who now sway the destinies of Austria. Martial law has been proclaimed in Gallicia, in which direction the notorious Bem has escaped.

In Prussia tranquillity prevails, but the domestic disputes of the Prussians keep up a certain degree of excitement.

Respecting the proceedings of the Pope we can furnish but very little authentic information. The expedition contemplated by France to support his cause has, we believe, been relinquished, and propositions by the Court of Spain to hold conferences for the purpose of settling the affairs of Rome, seem also to be abandoned; everything is left to the decision of the congress which is about to assemble at Brussels with that object. Sir Henry Ellis will represent England, but we already discern a great reluctance on the part of Austria to be dictated to at all upon the subject of Lombardy, and she will doubtless be just as refractory about the affairs of Rome. The unlucky Lord Palmerston is sadly abused by all parties for not composing all the quarrels on the continent, and it is more than hinted that some of the abuse which has been lately heaped upon him might have its origin in St. Petersburgh. We feel quite satisfied that if England were to withdraw her disinterested moral influence, expressed through Lord Normanby and Lord Palmerston, and seconded by the ablest men of all parties in Parliament, that the excited people and princes of Europe would again be at blows before three months are expired. But Russia, true to her policy, keeps her eye upon the Dardanelles, and will, we fear, seize the first moment to make encroachments upon Turkey. Every other object is subordinate to that; and Lord Palmerston, perceiving plainly that such an attempt must inevitably lead to a general European war, nips the scheme in the bud, hence the abuse of him in the antagonistic journals.

The French and Anglo mediation still keeps the Neapolitans and the Sicilians from open warfare. The King of Naples spends the whole of his time at Gaeta with the Pope, and the activity of the negotiations which are carried on with Vienna, portends a speedy intervention of some kind, in order to put down Sterbini and his party, who are the present rulers at Rome. The Pope has threatened his subjects with excommunication, which will be probably fulminated against them as soon as he finds the Catholic Princes of Europe are in a position to come effectually to his aid.

The Sultan of Turkey has taken a great stride in religious toleration, having issued a decree, according to Christians the privilege of attaining the highest dignities, even that of Pasha and Vizier.

We hardly know how the English Parliament will be able to resist the admission of the Jews into the House of Commons after this; or our Mahomedan fellow-subjects of India either?

THE GERMAN EMPIRE.—The continental advices allude to a gigantic project, in contemplation at the present moment, which, if carried into effect, will have a remarkable influence upon the maritime power of Germany. It is to unite the Baltic and the North Sea between Kiel and the estuary of the Elbe. Without this communication, independent of the ports in the power of the Danes, namely, the Sound and the two Belts, the maritime power of Germany, it is mentioned, will never be what it ought. The central power at Frankfort sent Captain Moring, a deputy of the Chamber, to the spot some time back to make surveys, and who, having executed his task, proposes that the line of communication shall be by a canal without lock, to pass between Kiel to Brunsbuttel on the northern bank of the mouth of the Elbe, and, on the other side, to Cuxhaven, on its southern bank, and which would be protected from every attack by the line of the Eider and the ancient canal. The preliminary surveys, it is mentioned, show that the ground offers few difficulties, being through a flat country, and which is nowhere raised much above the level of the sea. The execution of this work will be entrusted to the Imperial troops, to be collected in large numbers in the Duchies during the spring. Kiel is considered as singularly adapted for such a work, affording a ready vent to German commerce, whilst at Cuxhaven a fine naval harbour might be constructed by the outlay of about five millions of dollars, by which means Germany would be enabled to wield a powerful navy, commanding both the Baltic and the North Sea.

PRUSSIA.—We have intelligence from Berlin up to the night of the 23rd inst. On the previous day the majority of the primary elections terminated in the capital in favour of the democratical party.

From Berlin we learn that business was inactive Money and stock were both dull, and wearing a declining aspect. A late communication states that "such negotiations have taken place with the Ministers of the Empire, on the subject of the formation of a German navy, that a Prussian envoy will shortly proceed to America for the purpose of purchasing sailing vessels and steamers, which will be officered and commanded by Americans, until such time as German officers, duly qualified, shall be found."

FRANCE.

France makes but very slow progress towards a settled and satisfactory administrative system.—The incompatible functions of an absolute Assembly and an independent President clog the wheels of good Government. The preliminary motion upon the question of the dissolution of the Assembly, so much desired by the nation, has been carried by a slender majority of 400 against 396, and has been referred to the *bureaux* to report upon.—The reporters appointed by the various committees upon the question were almost all adverse to the dissolution, and it is said that they have decided upon moving the order of the day whenever the proposition is moved in the Assembly. It will be some days before the report is made, and the forms of the Assembly will prevent the question being carried through, so as to allow the elections to take place before April.

Upwards of 60 departments have already manifested their opposition to the existence of the present Assembly, and the electors of the Gironde are determined not to re-elect their representatives if they do not immediately resign their functions.

The new Vice-President of the Republic, M. Boulay, is a moderate man in political opinions, but remarkable for his Bonapartist predilections.

The *Moniteur* announces that the President of the Republic, on the recommendation of the Minister of the Interior, has pardoned 63 women, confined at St. Lazare, and who, having been implicated in the insurrection of June, had been sentenced to transportation.

The President of the Republic has ordered one of the balls of the Elysee to be fitted up as a chapel for divine service, and appointed the Abbe Orsini his chaplain.

The President of the Republic has made a donation of 150,000 to the society formed in Paris for the erection of buildings, in different quarters, as lodgings for the working classes.

On Monday evening, at least two thousand persons were present at a ball given by President Louis Napoleon. There were few foreigners in the room, and, excepting Lord Normanby and his party, hardly any English. It is said that Louis Napoleon will soon give an entertainment expressly in honour of the foreigners in Paris.

The President of France was entertained at dinner, on Thursday, by the Minister of the Interior; and in the evening a large party, including a considerable number of ladies, were assembled to meet him.

The President of the French Republic has taken a box by the year at the Grand Opera, and another at the Comedie Francaise. In these two theatres he has taken the box formerly assigned to the royal family.

We understand that the ex-ministers of the ex-King Louis Philippe have returned to France, except M. Guizot, who, it is understood, intends to return to that country early in the spring.

Extensive naval and military preparations are being made at Marseilles, Toulon, and other ports, and the object is presumed to be that of interfering in Italy.

It is said that the Prince of Canino has lately written a letter to the President of the Republic, threatening that if a French expedition were sent to re establish the Pope, he, the Prince of Canino, would publish documents which would compromise Prince Louis.

Prince Joseph Poniatowski, Colonel of the Tuscan Civic Guard, and Ambassador Extraordinary to London and Paris, has arived in Paris. On passing through Turin, King Charles Albert is said to have intrusted him with a special communication to the President of the French Republic.

M. Callimachi has presented to the President of the Republic his credentials as Minister Plenipotentiary of the Sultan.

It is said that never were the hopes of the partisans of the house of Bourbon higher than at the present moment. They speak openly of the return of Henry V. as a matter of certainty, and the period to which they look forward as that of the restoration is by no means remote. An opposition to the new President has been organised by the very parties who were recently his warmest supporters, and is becoming every day more and more dangerous. It is stated that the partisans of the elder branch of the Bourbons, and those of the house of Orleans, have made up all their differences, and now go heart and hand together for the restoration of Henry V. It is asserted that M. Guizot is one of the most ardent supporters of this reconciliation, and that he has written to his friends in Paris, strongly advising them to forget their past dissensions, and to labour in the common cause. It is believed that the Bourbonists do not approve of opposition to the powers that be, by means of the Constituent Assembly, as they think that the present Assembly, if it should, in opposition to the wishes of the President and of his Ministers, persist in prolonging its existence beyond what is absolutely necessary, will only strengthen the enthusiasm of the people in favour of Louis Napoleon, and lead, perhaps, to the re-establishment of the empire.

THE DUTCH NAVY.—The official report of the Minister of Marine shows that the royal navy of the Netherlands consists of two ships of 84 guns, five of 74, two of 60, one of 54, eleven of 44, two of 38, six of 28, seven of 26, two of 22, one of 20, ten of 18, nine of 14, four of 12, one of 8, five of 6, four of 4, three of 3, thirteen war steamers of 7 and 8 guns, four iron steamers of 1 mortar and 3 guns, thirty-five large gun-boats, and thirty small gun-boats.

TURKEY.—It is stated that the Sultan has issued a firman in which he accords to Christians the privilege of attaining to some of the highest dignities, even that of pasha or vizier. The Mussulmans have manifested great indignation at the publication of this firman.

The *Constantinople Journal* mentions that the cholera had made its reappearance in that city. The cold weather having, however, set in with unusual intensity, it was hoped that the disease would diminish.

DEFEAT OF THE SIKHS BY THE BRITISH

The first blow has been struck in the Indian campaign. By the Overland Mail we have dates from Bombay to the 20th December, with advices from Calcutta to the 10th, and Madras to the 12th, together with news from Moultan to the 5th, and from the commander-in-chief's camp at Ramnuggur, to the 7th December. Lord Gough joined the army of the Chenab on the 21st November; but the heavy guns did not arrive until the 30th, having been detached to make a detour to compel the unconditional surrender of a rebel fortress on the road. We lay before our readers the main incidents which occurred after he joined the army. On the 22nd, his lordship determined upon a surprise before daybreak, with a view to ascertain the strength of the enemy. The Sikh forces were posted mainly on the right bank of the river Chenab, with a considerable detachment on an islet in the middle of the stream, whilst from the islet to the left bank ran a shallow branch of the river, by which a large body of Sikhs were enabled with facility to communicate with the left bank where they were posted. The position of the Sikhs on the left bank was protected by the formidable batteries on the right bank of the river, which took a bend at the spot, as well as by the guns which were placed upon the islet. In the reconnaissance our troops, in attempting to pass the shallow watercourse or "nullah" mentioned, got one of the guns embedded in the sand, and the deadly aim of the Sikh batteries was so severe that we were compelled to spike the gun and abandon it. A large body of the Sikhs having now crossed over to the left bank, daring our troops to battle, Lord Gough resolved to dislodge them from their position. In effecting this dangerous service the gallantry of our troops led them too far, and they were betrayed into an ambush of Sikhs concealed in the "nullah," and suffered most severely. In this inconsiderable skirmish, which lasted but twenty minutes, the Sikhs, with their unerring matchlocks, killed several of our best officers, amongst whom were Major-General Cureton, Colonel Havelock, and Captain Fitzgerald of the 14th dragoons, besides many who were severely wounded. The list of these sad casualties will be found below. The left bank was, however, cleared of the enemy, whose guns and matchlocks made us pay dearly for the advantage. On the 30th, the heavy guns having arrived, General Thackwell was detached with about 7000 men to a ford up the river, with orders to cross the Chenab and come down the right bank, whilst Lord Gough attacked the enemy with his main body in front. Through some unavoidable causes General Thackwell was compelled to go up as high as Vizierabad before he could cross the river, by which a day was lost, and the troops too wearied out to attack the enemy immediately. On the 2nd and 3rd, General Thackwell, having marched 19 miles, commenced the heavy cannonade, which was the signal for Lord Gough to commence operations whilst the attention of the Sikhs was directed to our troops on their own side of the river. The Sikhs advanced whilst Thackwell's troops halted. Thus encouraged, the Sikhs moved to the attack, attempting to turn the flanks of the British, when they received such a destructive fire from us as completely to silence their guns and frustrate all their operations. The general battle, owing to the exhausted state of our troops, was deferred till the following day, but during the night of the 3d the whole of the Sikh force precipitately fled, or, at least, completely disappeared, carrying away their guns and exploding their magazines. The whole of General Thackwell's loss did not exceed 40 men. Lord Gough pushed across the river in pursuit. Shere Singh has fled towards the next of the five rivers, the Jhelum, where, doubtless, there will be another battle. The Sikhs seem to have acted throughout with their accustomed bravery, and we cannot hope that they will be altogether subjugated except at a considerable loss of human life. These desultory skirmishes, since they can scarcely be dignified as battles, however distinguished by the loss of some of the bravest of our military heroes, cannot have much effect on the issue of the campaign. The general impression is that Shere Singh will rally his forces at some advantageous spot, or retire to the hills and harrass us with a guerilla warfare. The column of troops from Bombay, despatched to eject Moolraj from Moultan, would arrive about Christmas, by which period it is not improbable that Moolraj will have evacuated the place and moved towards the hills. Narain Sing had already quitted his camp with a large body of men and two guns. Moolraj, who is said to be quite dispirited, will endeavour to follow unless we can cut off his retreat. It is satisfactory to hear that Attock still held out bravely, and Captain Abbott maintained himself stoutly in the Hazareh district. Major Lawrence and his family had, however, been given up to Chutter Singh by the chief with whom he had taken refuge at Kohat, but was respectfully treated. The Major's letter announcing his detention was dated at Neshera, by which the position of Chutter Singh is ascertained. Some disturbances have also broken out in the Jullunder Doab, so that the British authorities have their work carved out for them for some time to come. A decisive battle with the Sikhs would tend more to tranquillise the country than any other event. Lord Dalhousie was to leave Umballah on the 9th December in progress to Loodiana.

The following is, we have every reason to believe, a nearly correct list of the casualties at Ramnuggur, of which no official return has been published:—Brigadier-general Cureton, C. B., killed (shot through the heart).—Her Majesty's 14th Light Dragoons: Col. Havelock, killed; or, at least, his body had not been found up to the 1st inst. Capt. Fitzgerald, wounded in five places by sword cuts, chiefly about the head and neck (since dead). Captain Gall, wounded. Captain M'Mahon, wounded in the neck. Captain Scudamore, wounded. 27 men killed or missing; 22 men wounded.—Her Majesty's 3d Dragoons: Captain Cautley, wounded. Seven men wounded.—5th Light Cavalry: Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander, right arm so much injured as to render amputation necessary. Was saved by the gallantry of Sergeant-Major Drinkwater. Captain Ryley, wounded; hit by a spent ball in the leg. 27 rank and file killed and wounded.—8th Light Cavalry: 35 men killed and wounded.—Her Majesty's 61st Foot: One man killed.—Artillery: Two men killed, and several wounded.—45th Native Infantry: Ensign Hardinge, A. D. C., wounded severely, shot through the shoulder.—12th Irregular Cavalry: Captain Holmes, wounded whilst trying to carry off the body of General Cureton.

Amongst those mentioned as wounded, but whose names have not previously appeared, are Brigadier J. Hoggan, Captain Barnes, 3rd Dragoons; Captain Newbolt, Commissariat; and Cornet Chetwynd.

LEGISLATURE.—In order to give as large a quantity as possible of the news by the English mail, which will be found both important and interesting, we have this week omitted the Legislative intelligence, but will devote a large portion of our next paper to that subject.

On the 3d inst., Mr. Taylor moved for leave to bring in a Bill to repeal the Act for Incorporating the City of Fredericton.

On the 5th, the Hon. Mr. Hazen brought in a Bill, on the management of the Provincial Lunatic Asylum; and the Hon. Attorney General introduced a Bill on salt mines.

On the 6th, the Hon. Provincial Secretary laid before the House copies of several Despatches from the Home Government—one stating that the Post Office Department would be placed under the controul of the Colonies as soon as a bill for that purpose could be passed in the Imperial Parliament; another related to the mode of imposing discriminating duties in this Province, and stated, that as the Home Government had for many reasons abandoned the discriminating policy in Great Britain, such policy could not in future be permitted in the Colonies. Earl Grey intimates that he has not advised her Majesty to disallow our last Revenue Bill, but plainly states that any similar Bill will in future be disallowed. A third despatch related to the Navigation Laws, and a fourth to the Electric Telegraph.

In reply to a question from Mr. Ritchie, the Hon. Attorney-General stated that a Bill to amend the Bankrupt Law was under the consideration of Government. It was also stated, in answer to inquiries, that the next Mail from England would probably bring some instructions relative to filling up the vacancies in the Legislative Council.

On the 7th, Mr. Ritchie presented a petition from the Rev. Samuel Robinson and others, of St. John, praying that the Rev. Mr. R. D. Very may be permitted to solemnize marriage in this Province.

On the 8th, the Honorable Attorney General brought in a bill for reducing Official Salaries.

On the 9th, on motion of Mr. End, the House passed a resolution, 15 to 12, against granting any money for paying Reporters during the present Session.

MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.—On Friday last, P. LeSueur, Esq., concluded his excellent historical view of the Compilation of the *Sacred Canon*. These lectures, comprehending as they do a most valuable summary of the matter of which they treat, and which are to be found by the Student only on a careful perusal of several volumes, we will endeavour, according to a hint given us by a Member of the Institute, to obtain them for publication in our paper.

Last evening, Mr. John Boyd lectured to an over-crowded house on the *Importance of a Right Knowledge of Character.* We were highly gratified with this Lecture; and we trust that the praiseworthy example set by Mr. Boyd will stimulate many of our talented youth to cultivate those powers of mind with which they are gifted, that they may become a real benefit to Society at large.

Next Monday evening, Mr. James Agnew will deliver a lecture on the "*Duties of Man.*"

THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH line was completed yesterday afternoon, and communication was held with New Orleans and other southern ports.

The house of Mr. Gurney, at Jacksontown, near Woodstock, was destroyed by Fire on Tuesday morning last, including 60 or 70 bushels potatoes.