

its bed the high road from Palermo to Messina, and it is feared that it may fall into the torrent of Simeto, which is quite close to the road from Aderno to Leon Forte, and which falls into the Gulf of Catania, where it might cause grave accidents. The road from Palermo to Catania is intercepted by the lava. All the cantons round Etna are afflicted with an atmosphere of ashes, which obscures the sun's rays. The subterranean rumblings of the volcano are heard as far as Catania, and the ground has a sort of quivering motion, which leads the inhabitants to fear an approaching earthquake. A curious circumstance took place at Catania the night before the eruption. A fine rain fell which changed the colour of the silk in the umbrellas, and burnt it. A professor of chemistry having analysed this rain, found that it contained a large quantity of muriatic acid. The eruption commenced, as already stated, on the 17th of November, about half-past two, in the desert region of Monte Rosso. A thick smoke, mixed with sand, was sent forth, and rocks hurled into the air showed that the force below was most active. A constant undulating motion was felt in every part of the mountain. Lava was soon perceived to make its appearance, and it descended rapidly to the woody region, where it divided into three streams, the northern one proceeding towards the wood of Maletto, the southern one towards Bronte, whilst the third menaced the district of Aderno. During the day, the smoke increased tremendously, and being collected above Etna, covered it completely. A quantity of sand fell from it continually on the eastern part of the mountain, and did much injury to the shrubs and crops. A strong smell of sulphur was perceptible, even at the bottom of the mountain. On the 19th the lava continued to make its way towards Maletto, and the tilled grounds of Bronte. The whole population were alarmed. The southern branch approached Basiliari, four miles from Bronte. An excessive activity continued to prevail in the crater, and sand still fell over the whole southern and eastern sides. On the 20th the stream of lava, which had threatened Bronte, appeared to direct its course towards the south, over the old lava of Monte Egitto. The other two currents pursued their course, one towards Aderno, and the other towards Maletto. On the south and east Etna is entirely covered with smoke."

Another letter, dated Palermo, 4th inst., in the *Augsburg Gazette*, states that the lava had swept away several houses and destroyed 67 persons.

SOMETHING OF THE MARVELLOUS—Extract of a private letter from Ross-shire:—"By-the-by, I'll tell you a story from lack of other news, which savours somewhat of the marvellous. The old folks here and in Sutherland remember, when children, to have been told by their fathers that the 'Sagairt Ruadh,' or Red Prophet, forewarned the people of Sutherland to look to themselves when a certain stone, or natural arched rock, would fall into the sea. Strange to say, this rock, which stood on the shore of the Atlantic, and long served as a beacon for the sailor to steer by, fell with a tremendous plunge into the sea on the very day of the disruption at Edinburgh. An ash tree was also foretold to grow out of a certain rock before troublous times, and, strange to say, the tree has grown out of the identical rock, and to the precise height foretold, although no appearance of a tree was to be seen there in the memory of many now living. You may rely on the accuracy of these stories. It savours of superstition to credit them altogether, and yet it is by no means easy to explain them."—*Nairnshire Mirror*.

DIALOGUE.

Parishioner.—It amuses me why ministers don't write better sermons; I'm tired of these dull prosy affairs.

Parson.—But it is no easy matter, my good woman, to write a good sermon.

Parishioner.—Yes, but then you are so long about it. I could write one myself in half the time, if I only had the text.

Parson.—O, if a text is what you want, I will furnish that. Take this one from Solomon:—"It is better to dwell on the house-top than in a broad house with a brawling woman."

Parishioner.—Do you mean me, sir?

Parson.—O, my good woman, you will never make a good sermonizer; you are too quick in your application.—*Zion's Herald*.

GOING TO PARTIES OR TO CHURCH.

MR EDITOR.—We are a strange people! An invitation is received for father, mother, daughters, &c., to a song party. It is accepted. The day comes, the hour approaches. Alas! alas! What is to be done? The mother's silk will be spoiled, and the daughter's hair disordered past endurance. A coach is hired, and all is well: the expence is a trifle, and the disappointment could not be endured. Sunday morning comes; the bells from the sanctuary summon us to church. A slight rain is falling, and all around is wet and dreary. Father feels a disinclination to go out, mother has a slight cold, and daughters cannot show off their finery! A coach is so expensive, too. The party is an attraction too strong to be resisted: the visit to the house of God is a secondary consideration! Take, again, the man alone. No matter how pitiless the storm: the snow may fall, the sleet may drive, the rain may pour down in all its force, he is punctual to the hour at his place of business. Distance, combined with other disagreeable matters him not: he braves them all. How is it on the Holy Day that calls us to think of God and all his mercies? A slight fall of rain, the mere apprehension of a storm, suffices to keep him from the house of God, and to make him disregard the things of eternity. There is, there can be no excuse for this mode of procedure: it is a disgrace to our reasoning faculties, and places us before God in the attitude of countenancers of his Holy Word.—*N. Y. Churchman*.

CIVIL INTELLIGENCE.

FOUR DAYS LATER FROM ENGLAND.

Letters from Constantinople of December 17th, say that the Porte had sent a commissioner to Mossoul, to enquire into the attacks of the Kurds upon the Nestorians.

The "Frankfurter Gazette" contains a letter from the frontiers of Russia, dated Dec. 16, which says—"The ukase ordering the removal of the Jews from the frontier districts into the Interior, is at this moment being carried into effect. Nearly 100,000 persons are affected by this measure. They receive passports which indicate their place of residence and they are expected to have all their property sold off within a few days after."

THE NATIONAL DEBT.—The actual surplus revenue of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, beyond the actual expenditure thereof, for the year ended the 10th day of October, 1843, amounted to the sum of £908,541 11s 9d.

IRELAND.—**THE STATE TRIALS.**—Great complaints are made that the Crown should have struck off every Catholic that turned up from the ballot-box, which is considered equivalent to packing a jury, as the traversers will now be tried by a jury composed entirely of Protestants.

Mr. Steele has given instructions to have Sir James Graham, the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robt. Peel, and Lord Lyndhurst immediately summoned to give evidence on his trial. Sir James Graham is his principal English witness, we believe, in consequence of the fact that Mr. Steele was a member of the Birmingham Political Union when the present Secretary of the Home Department was a Whig. So decided is Mr. Steele's purpose of compelling these 4 Ministers of the Crown to undergo his personal examination, defending himself as he did before, without counsel, that, notwithstanding his perfect knowledge of the extent of English prejudice at present against O'Connellites and Repealers, he will, after examining Lord Plunket, offer to go to London and take his trial before a jury of Englishmen if the Cabinet Ministers should try to deprive him of justice by evading coming to Dublin.

Her Majesty has presented to the British Museum five chests of Chinese books, captured by the troops during the war in China.

Master A Harvey, a boy under nine years of age, has been lectured on astronomy at Bath, and, it is said, with great success.

There is a young lady in Liverpool, who is only nineteen years of age, but who has already crossed the Atlantic twenty-eight times.

The Grand Council of the Canton of Geneva

has just adopted, by a great majority, the system of trial by jury for every kind of offence.

In the hospital at Gex, in France, on the 7th ult, a patient supposed to be dead was about to be buried, when a noise being heard in the coffin, the lid was removed, and the man taken out alive.

The *Mark Lane Express* says that the speech of Earl Spencer in favour of the total repeal of the corn laws, has produced great "excitement amongst the agriculture class," and that "the high estimation in which the noble Earl is held in this country, gives a more than ordinary weight to his opinions."

The *Morning Herald* announces, as from authority, that until the Brazilians consent to negotiate on a basis of "humanity," "all their efforts to gain admission for their slave-grown produce into this country must fail so long as a Conservative ministry is in power."

A few days ago, a woman, 26 years of age, the wife of a furniture broker, at Fountainbleau, in the absence of her husband, suffocated herself, her daughter, aged nine years, and her son, aged five, with the fumes of charcoal. When the husband returned, he found them all dead.

A British surveying party at Cloudy Bay New Zealand, which was accompanied by a military detachment, was attacked by the natives, in June last and about twenty persons were killed, including two captains.

According to the last intelligence from Siberia, the enterprise of gold washing has extended itself from the eastern side of the Ural mountains to the Altai, and layers of gold sand have been found to extend along the Chinese frontier over a space of 80,000 sq. miles, of which the 200th part in the Ural district alone furnishes an average of 300 pounds (the pound is 32-3lb) a year—equal to 15,000,000 of paper roubles.

FROM THE EAST.—By the overland mail, which reached London on the 4th of January, advices from Bombay to the 1st of December were received.

Sickness prevailed fearfully at Hong Kong and in Scinde. In the latter country 4000 men, out of a force not exceeding 20,000, were in the hospitals.

The Panjab was still distracted, but accounts thence were imperfect and contradictory. A British army of 15,000 men was assembling on the Sutlej, probably to interfere.

Dost Mahomed, of Cabool, had not been murdered as was reported. He had appointed his Akbar Khan Governor of the hill country about Jellalabad, and was supposed to be meditating a descent upon Peshawur, with a view of recovering that province from the Sikhs.

In Gwalior and Bundelkund there were commotions and disturbances which seemed to afford the Anglo-Indian Government available pretexts for taking final and open possession of those countries.

CHINA.—The news from China extends to the beginning of October. The most important intelligence was the arrangement of a supplementary treaty between the Chinese and the British Governments; one clause of which is for the purpose of guaranteeing to all foreign nations the same privileges of trade as to the British themselves. This will have the effect of rendering unnecessary all negotiations between the Chinese Emperor and the other powers. The Chinese government is said to be sincere now in its determination to abide by the regulations of the treaty, which will prevent all discussions with other foreigners.

The Rev. Mr. Gutzlaff has been appointed Chinese Secretary, in the room of Mr. Morrison.

Amongst the deaths in China are mentioned F. R. Foote, Deputy-commissary-general, and Captain Haviland, of Her Majesty's 56th foot.

A seminary is now about being established in Northampton, where the rudiments of agriculture and of agricultural chemistry, as propounded by Liebig, Playfair, and others, are to be taught, combined with a classical education.

The Bishop of London is president of a new association, for "promoting the relief of destitution in the metropolis, and for improving the condition of the poor, by means of parochial and district visiting."

Blasphemy.—We understand that Miss Roalk, a young lady who some weeks ago opened a shop in Nicholson street for the sale of irreligious publications, was apprehended on Monday last, and lodged in gaol, preparatory to her trial for blasphemy.—*Scotsman*.