

NEWS.

On Wednesday last the mail, which had been anxiously expected for some days previously, arrived, bringing nearly a month's intelligence at once: an arrangement which must be very unsatisfactory to all on this side of the Atlantic.

The news are of considerable importance, and may be considered in the following order:—

1st. The scarcity in Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland increases with the advance of winter, and though national and private efforts are making on all hands to alleviate the sufferings of the people, they appear to be scarcely adequate to the object. In the former country several deaths from starvation are recorded, and many murders, growing out of the reckless spirit of the suffering peasantry. The drain upon the public purse is going on to the extent of £350,000 a month in the shape of wages for labour, and yet it is said there is not *n.o.e* labour done than on some years when government did not interfere at all, if as much.

2d. The scarcity in Ireland and elsewhere has the effect of draining the large British markets of bread stuffs, and this combined with a short supply, (*i. e.* short of what was expected from the United States), has the effect of rapidly raising prices. The advance on flour, for instance, has been 5s to 6s sterling per barrel, and it has been even greater, in proportion, on Indian Corn, and many other articles. All kinds of provisions are also stiff in price, and gradually advancing. Notwithstanding all these adverse circumstances, however, the money market was easy, business generally prosperous, and prices, especially of cotton and cotton goods, advancing.

The policy of the Whig administration is being farther developed. In view of the disturbed state of Ireland, the ascendancy of the physical force party among the repealers, (O'Connell's influence being, it is said, nearly extinguished), and the extensive arming of the peasantry; there is to be a considerable addition to the army, and the new soldiers are to be enlisted only for ten years, in imitation we believe of the plan generally adopted on the Continent. The threatening appearance of affairs in Ireland had also induced the Cabinet to call parliament together for the 19th of January last, being a fortnight earlier than usual.

The remonstrances of the West India Planters against the diminution of their protection on sugar, has induced government, as a compensation, not only to permit the free importation of labourers from Africa, but to send government steamers to transport them. We fear that, however well intended and carefully guarded, this may prove only a modification of the slave trade.

It is affirmed, on various authorities, that Lord John Russell will bring a national plan of education before the next session of parliament.

Specie is flowing largely from Britain to the United States, in payment of corn and flour. The last steamer brought out, it is said, nearly half a million. The advices by the packet have given great impetus to prices of grain, &c., in the United States and Canada markets. The American telegraphic communication was, however, broken, as it invariably is on the arrival of a mail bringing accounts of a rise, and our friends in Canada west who depended on the American line of telegraph were of course, as well as the Western States, left in ignorance. We trust if ever we have a telegraphic communication through the lower Provinces and Canada, that it will not be abused in the same manner. Flour has gone up to \$7, wheat to \$1.50, and freights to 6s. 9d. sterling per barrel in New York.

There appears to be a serious difference between the Mr. Polk and General Taylor. The latter censures the conduct of the administration, and the administration are desirous of recalling him. This is supposed to be one of the reasons of the strong inclination manifested by the President to have a Lieut. General appointed; a measure which our readers will remember failed. It is thought that the recall of General Taylor after his victories, would insure him the presidency at next election, and yet this is the only alternative, unless the administration choose to have their war managed by one who condemns their conduct.

The Message of General Salas, interim President of Mexico, to the Mexican Congress, breathes a determination to resist American invasion to the last—a determination which seems to be general in Mexico.

The Governor General, Lord Elgin, arrived in town on Friday, and was sworn in on Saturday. His Excellency enjoys good health after his fatiguing journey.

It is reported on the authority of a passenger who crossed the Atlantic with Lord Elgin, that his Excellency expresses himself very freely in favor of three great measures, which would prove of incalculable importance to Canada. First, the free navigation of the river St. Lawrence; second, the consolidation of the customs; and third, the remodelling of the post office after the British plan. Should his Excellency be able to carry these measures, his administration will constitute a marked era in Canadian history.

On Friday a numerous and highly respectable meeting was held in the office of the Montreal Assurance Company to consider the propriety of forming a new Gas Company, and a numerous and influential committee was appointed to canvas the gas consumers of the city for support.

On Thursday last the "Sydenham" and "North America" steam-

boats, heretofore plying between Montreal and Quebec, were sold—the former to D. Torrance, Esq., for £1000—the latter to James Gilmore, Esq., for £3 600.

The admirals of Lord Metcalfe intend to erect a monument to his memory, and it is suggested that it be a house of industry or other charitable institution. Such monuments are, we think, by far the best.

A meeting is to take place on Wednesday afternoon, at three o'clock, at the office of the Montreal Assurance Company, St. James Street, to take steps for the formation of a company to provide a Protestant Burial Ground, upon a scale commensurate with the wants of the city. This is an important object.

THE SEA SERPENT.—The Norwegian papers contain a series of statements touching the appearance of the "sea serpent," in the larger fiords. The monster has been seen quite close, in different places and at several different times, by about sixteen persons. The accounts agree in representing the creature as dark in color, about 50 feet long, and of the circumference of a man's head. It is described as showing itself only in calm weather, and as then swimming with its head elevated, in vertical undulations of its body, like a leech.

The English Mail brought in on Wednesday, consisted of fifty-one bags and four boxes of newspapers, and eleven boxes of letters, making a total of seventy-two packages; the average weight of each is 70 lbs., giving a total of 5040 lbs., or 45 cwt. Each bag contains about six hundred newspapers, which, multiplied by fifty-five, gives a total of thirty-three thousand. Each box of letters contains about twenty-six hundred, and, multiplied by the number of boxes, gives a total of twenty-nine thousand letters. While on this subject we must not omit to mention the zeal and activity displayed in the department, in the assortment and distribution of the letters. The revenue derived from the newspapers, viz., 33,000 at 3d., is £68 15s.; and from the letters, reckoning each at 1s. 4d., £1,933, making a total of £2,001 15s. This calculation will be found tolerably correct, as the franks and double letters cancel each other.—Times.

A VOLCANO AT WORK.—We have, last week, recorded a very wonderful convulsion of Lake Ontario. We have this week to mention one equally wonderful, as having taken place in Rice Lake, 12 miles to the north of the town. Last Thursday the Lake was seen to be in great commotion, the ice (18 inches thick) undulating in every direction. Presently it burst with a noise like thunder, and a large iceberg from the centre of the Lake was, in a few minutes, thrown up in a pile to the height of ten feet, in which position it now lies. This is no doubt related to the earthquake which caused the awful commotion in Lake Ontario at Grafton.—Cibourg Star.

Monies on account of People's Magazine and Weekly Journal.

Clarence, J M D, 5s.—Embro, A R, 5, J H, 5s; J S M, 5s; D M, 5s; G G, 5s.—Fergus, J W, 2s 6d.—Ganarogue, C W, 5s; W L, 5s; N R, 5s.—Lloydtown, J G, 2s 6d.—Lacolle, A F, 2s.—Mariposa, G D, 5s.—Metis, C C, 5s.—Milton, J L, 5s.—Phillipsburgh, I J R, 5s.—Quebec, Sergt W, 5s.—Springfield, J W, 30s.—Sorel, R S L H, 5s.—Trois Pistoles, Mr S, 2s 6d.

PRODUCE PRICES CURRENT—MONTREAL, Feb. 1, 1847.

	s.	d.	s.	d.		s.	d.	s.	d.
ASHES, Pots, per cwt			Nominal.		BEEF, Prime Mess,				
Pearls,.....			do.		per brl. 200lbs.	47	6	a	0 0
FLOUR, Canada Super-					Prime,.....	42	6	a	00 0
perfine, per brl.					Prime Mess, per				
196 lbs.			Nominal.		tierce, 304lbs.	00	0	a	00 0
Do. Fine,.....	30	0	a	32 0	PORK, Mess, per brl.				
Do. Sour,.....			none		200lbs.....	72	6	a	75 0
Do. Middlings, .			none		Prime Mess.....	55	0	a	60 0
Indian Meal, 168lb.			none		Prime,.....	50	0	a	52 6
Oatmeal, brl. 221lb.			Nominal.		Cargo,.....	40	0	a	00 0
GRAIN, Wheat U.C.					BUTTER, per lb. ...	0	7	a	0 .74
Best, 60lbs. ...	6	6	a	0 0	CHEESE, full milk,				
Do. L. C. per min.			Nominal.		100 lbs.....	40	0	a	50 0
BARLEY, Minot,...			do.		LARD, per lb.....	0	5	a	0 6
OATS, " " " "			do.,		TALLOW, per lb....	0	6	a	0 64
PEASE,.....			do.						

THOS. M. TAYLOR, Broker.

TERMS OF THE MONTREAL WITNESS:

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