

OUR COLONIES.—From the Board of Trade issue three large volumes of statistic tables relative respectively to the United Kingdom, to foreign countries, and to the colonies. The annual volumes relating to the British colonies and possessions has made its appearance within the last few days. It states the area of these possessions to be no less than 3,319,649 square miles, or nearly 30 times the area of the United Kingdom. Of this vast dominion 933,722 square miles are in India, 1,587,434 in Australia, and 523,162 in N. America.

The population, according to the latest returns, was 144,490,761, or five times the population of the United Kingdom. Of this number 135,634,244 are the estimated population of British India. Where the progress of population can be traced it is very remarkable. Excluding India from consideration, it will be found that in the colonies in the temperate climates, and settled by Europeans—that is to say, in British North America, Australia, and South Africa—the population in 1838 was but 1,575,616, and 20 years afterwards it had more than trebled itself, and was 4,920,790. In the tropical colonies and colonies with small European populations—the West Indies, West Coast of Africa, Ceylon, Mauritius, Hongkong, St. Helena, Bermuda—the population in 1838 was 2,283,906, and 20 years afterwards it had not near doubled itself, being only 3,227,851.

The imports into the former class of colonies £8,801,415 in 1838, had been more than quadrupled 20 years afterwards; in the latter class, as a whole, they were not doubled.—The exports from the former class of colonies increased nearly sixfold in the twenty years, in the latter only 20 per cent., the progress of Ceylon and Mauritius being to a great extent counter-balanced by the falling off on the part of the West Indies. In the year 1800, to which the present volume especially relates, the imports of merchandise and treasure into British India amounted to £40,622,103, and the exports thence to £28,889,210; the North American colonies had imports of the value of £11,985,155, and sent out exports amounting to £10,993,722; the West Indies, imports, £5,339,528, exports, £5,696,485; Australia, imports, £27,780,449, exports, £21,982,286; Ceylon, imports, £3,551,239, exports, 2,550,586; Mauritius, imports, £2,769,209, exports, £2,259,640; the Cape, imports, £2,865,902, exports, £2,080,398.

Revenue and expenditure stood as follows in 1860:—India, revenue, £39,705,822, expenditure, £44,622,269; North American Colonies, revenue, £8,466,717, expenditure, 7,995,747; West Indies, revenue, £1,005,085, expenditure £1,085,085; Australia, revenue, 6,053,246, expenditure, £5,773,290; Ceylon, revenue, £767,101, expenditure, £705,440; Mauritius, revenue, £553,419, expenditure, £500,854; the Cape, revenue, £742,741, expenditure, £729,690. The revenue of India and the colonies (including New Zealand, from which the returns are imperfect) amounted in 1860 to £57,933,314, and the expenditure to £62,013,411. The public debt of India in 1860 was £98,107,460; of Canada, £12,144,264; of the West Indies, £1,578,026; of New South Wales, £3,830,280; of Victoria, £5,118,100; of South Australia, £870,100.—*London Times.*

WELCOME WINTER.—Some of the older and frosty-headed ones think we shall have an 'open winter'; they go by the signs and tokens which we more worldly, but less wise, people pass by as not worth the trouble of noticing. So far as alleviation of the wants of the poor ones are concerned, it would certainly be desirable to have a short winter and a mild one; but so far as the seasonableness of things goes, and the routine of snows and blows and freezings and thaws and good fires and long starlit nights enters into the account, we sincerely say—let the old times continue even as they have run on until this day.

There are joys in winter which summer does not have to bestow. First secure comfortable housing, warm and glowing fires, huge wood-piles and coal-heaps, and cellars full of the bounties which nature has been pouring into the lap of the husbandman, and then, with health in the body and spirit, snap your fingers at the approach of all the 'wolves' that may happen to pass along the highway. It is undeniable, that the heart makes honey only as it feels a sense of protection and provision for the body. If we shiver and go hungry, it is of no use to talk about keeping the spirits in tune; one could more easily make bricks in the olden time without straw.

The house claims one's attention for a good share of the time now, and will do so until the steams go up from the earth again in the spring. What silent pleasures dwell at the hearth, which only those who sit apart there by themselves came to know! How delightful are the rainy and snowy days, when one is snugly housed from the pitiless storms, and can look at them through the panes, feeling secure against their intrusion! As winter slowly wears on, with its long evenings, its fireside pleasures, its sleighing excursions, its cheerful social visits, and its untold sources of improvement, what solid satisfaction dwells in the mind that can look around and feel that nothing in all the world beside could be one-half so desirable as this! It is when we recall the long line of pleasant winters already past, that we heartily go forward to this one and greet it with a sincere welcome.

Foreign Items.

ANOTHER swift Clyde steamer, the Vulcan, has been sold to the Confederates.

PARLIAMENT is expected to meet for business on Thursday, the 5th of February.

THE Bengal Chamber of Commerce have transmitted the handsome total of £11,000 in aid of the distressed.

ON Friday, his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales sat for the first time as President of the Duchy of Cornwall.

A volume of poetry by Mrs. Ellis Fitz Simon, daughter of Daniel O'Connell, is promised to the public.

OUTBREAK OF CHOLERA IN INDIA.—The cholera has broken out in her Majesty's 93rd Regiment, Sutherland Highlanders. Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonald, Major Middleton, Ensign Drysdale, and Assistant-Surgeon Hope have died of the disease.

THE subscription for a monument to Cavour has reached half a million francs, and a pillar at Turin, after the model of Trajan's column, is in contemplation.

INDIAN advices mention that the progress of cholera among the troops at Peshawur has been arrested, that the mortality among the officers of the 42nd Highlanders has been great, and that the Commander-in-Chief has been prostrated by sun-stroke.

ADVICES from Lisbon state that the four iron plated British frigates Warrior, Black Prince, Resistance and Defence had, during the recent heavy weather, all proved themselves to be in possession of weatherly qualities beyond expectation.

PRINCE ALFRED, it is said, is to be transferred from the St. George to the Raccoon, which vessel is to be immediately commissioned for sea, to convey the Prince on a lengthened cruise, believed to be to the colonies of Australia. The Prince of Leiningen is expected to take command of the Raccoon.

THE Yelverton marriage case had been brought to a conclusion, in Edinburgh, the decision being in favor of Mrs. Yelverton. Lords Churchill and Deas were of opinion that the marriage was established according to the laws of Scotland. The Lord President delivered an opinion opposed to the other judges.

CURIOS ADDRESS.—A letter, bearing the following address was last week received at the Post Office, Portpatrick:—'From Ireland to Scotland care of Ebihal Wilson dry Lodger portpatrick to the Boys Sister that lodged with you that played the Fiddle from Ireland. To be left at the Corner House till called for.'

THE ex-King of Greece was no fool after all. He has had sufficient thought to save a nice amount of money, and to have removed it out of Greece into a very secure country. It is said that he exported yearly no less a sum than £200,000, which was intended for the purpose of improvement in his kingdom.—

THE SISTERS OF Mrs. M'LACHLAN.—Ann M'Intosh, one of the sisters of Mrs. M'Lachlan, has written the following letter to the *Glasgow Herald*:—'I take the trouble of writing these few lines to inform you that I want no subscriptions gathered for me, and I advise you for your own sake not to publish my name in your *Herald* again.'

THE BLAKELY GUN.—The *Herald* published a letter from Captain Blakely, stating that although three different foreign nations have now adopted his 500-pounder gun for the armament of their ships, he has not succeeded in his repeated endeavors since 1860 to get one tried by the English government, notwithstanding his offer to pay the expenses entirely if not successful.

VICTOR HUGO is in the habit of receiving a number of children belonging to the poorest classes of society, to whom he administers bodily comforts in the shape of a good dinner, and mental alimentation in the form of useful knowledge. Once a week these destitute children are found in the bosom of his family, himself, his wife and children assisting in teaching them the elements of reading and writing.—

LOSS OF LIFE IN COLLIERIES IN GREAT BRITAIN.—During the ten years ending December 31, 1860, it is officially recorded that 9,000 lives were lost in collieries in Great Britain, and 605,151,940 tons of coal raised; so that on the average one person was killed for every 66,573 tons, and there was an annual slaughter of 909 persons. Of accidents which are not fatal no general summary has yet been presented; but it is well known that there is a frightful amount of maiming from slight hurts to actual crippling for life.

PRESENTATION OF PRIZES TO MR. EDWARD ROSS.—On Thursday the prizes won during the term were presented, on the lawn of King's College, Cambridge. The Hon. Mrs. Neville presented Mr. Edward Ross with the Trinity Challenge Cup, value at 70 guineas; after which Mr. Baker presented him with His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales' Challenge Cup, valued at 100 guineas. As Lieutenant Ross stepped out of the ranks to receive the honorable awards the band struck up, 'See the Conquering Hero comes.'

DEATH OF A CONTEMPORARY OF BURNS.—The obituary of the *Wigtownshire Free Press* contains the announcement of the death of Mrs. Creighton, another of the contemporaries of the poet Burns, who are now fast disappearing. Mrs. Creighton, in her youthful days, resided in the parish of Mauchline, and of course had often seen the poet. She had a perfect recollection of the day upon which the poet was united to his 'bonnie Jean,' and remembered seeing 'the young folk,' coming to take breakfast in her father's house on a morning betwixt the marriage and 'kirking' day. She had a faint recollection of the kind of dress the 'young guidwife' wore on that occasion.

MURDER OF AN ENGLISH NAVAL OFFICER AND FIFTEEN SEAMEN.—A private letter received at Plymouth reports the murder of an officer and fifteen seamen on the coast of Arabia. They had been detached from her Majesty's steam gun vessel Penguin, for the purpose of watching slave vessels. Falling short of provisions, the crews of two of the boats landed, by invitation of the natives, and were murdered.—Nothing was known of the fate of the remainder in the other boat. Lieutenant Hardy obtained possession of twenty of those principally concerned in the murder, who were to be hung. None of the bodies of the Englishmen had been discovered.

AN ELEGANT EPISTLE.—An American paper publishes the following note:—Mister Edatur. Jem bange, we are sorry to stait, has deseided. He departed this Life last mundy. Jem was generally considered a good feller. He died at the age of 23 years old. He went 4th without any struggle; and sich is Life. Tu Day we are as pepper grass, mighty smart, tu Murrer we are cut down as a cowcumber of the ground. Jem kept a nice stoar, which his wife now waits on. His virechews was numerous to behold. Many is the thing we bought at his grocery, and we are happy to state to the admirin world that he never cheeted, especially in the wate of mackrel, which was nice and sweet, and his surviving wife is the same wa. We never knew him to put sand in his sugar, tho he had a big sand bar in front of his hous; nor water in his Lickuria, tho the Ohio river runs past his dore. Pece to his remains; He levas a wife, 8 children, a cow, 4 horses, a growcery stoar, and quadrupets to mourn his loss; but in the langwidge of the poit his loss is there gane.

ROYAL RELICS.—In Ashburnham church, Sussex, are preserved the shirt, stained with some drops of blood, in which Charles I. suffered; his watch, which he gave at the place of execution to Mr. John Ashburnham; his white silk knit drawers; and the sheet which was thrown over his body. These relics were bequeathed, in 1743, by Bertram Ashburnham Esq., to the clerk of the parish, and his successors, for ever.

ORIGIN OF SPINSTER.—Formerly it was a custom, that a young woman should never be married until she had spun herself a set of body, table, and bed linen. From this custom all unmarried women were termed spinsters, a name they still retain in all deeds and law proceedings.

INSTRUMENT OF TORTURE.—The *estrapade* was an instrument invented under the reign of Francis I., to torture the protestants, whom it raised and lowered into the flames, in order to prolong their sufferings. One of these infernal machines, situated at the end of the Rue de l'Estrapade, was used for the punishment of soldiers. Their hands being tied behind them, they were raised to a considerable height, and then suddenly lowered, but not to the ground, so that the jerk dislocated their arms. This horrible mode of punishment was not abolished in France till the reign of Louis XV. It is still practised at Rome!

HEALTH AND HARDY HABITS.—I had begun betimes and by degrees (he writes) to habituate myself to temperance and exercise, which hardened the constitution to such a pitch that neither wet nor cold had any effect upon me. On setting out upon my weekly pedestrian 'flights' upon the Tyne, I never looked out to see whether it was a good day or a bad one; the worst that ever fell from the skies never deterred me from undertaking my journey. On setting out I always waded through the first pool I met with, and had sometimes the river to wade at the far end. I never changed my clothes, however they might be soaked with wet or stiffened by the frost, on my returning home at night, till I went to bed. I had inured myself to this hardship by always sleeping with my windows open, by which a thorough air as well as the snow, blew through my room. In this way I lay down, rolled in a blanket, upon a mattress as hard as I could make it. Notwithstanding this mode of treating myself, I never had any ailment even in the shape of a cold, while I continued to live in this way.—*Memoir of Thomas Bewick.*

ANECDOTE.—During a combat of lions, at which Francis I. was present, a lady having dropped her glove, said to De Lorges—'If you would have me believe that you love me as much as you swear to me every day, go and pick up my glove.' De Lorges picked it up, in the midst of the ferocious animals, and upon returning, threw it in the lady's face; and, notwithstanding all her protestations and entreaties, would never see her more.

BOOKS.—So very valuable were books a few centuries ago, that in the year 1471, when Louis XI, of France wanted to borrow the works of the Arabian physician, Rhasis, from the Faculty of Medicine at Paris, he was compelled to deposit, by way of pledge, a large quantity of valuable plate, and was also obliged to procure a nobleman to join with him as security in a deed, by which he was bound to return it under a very considerable penalty. About the commencement of the fourteenth century there was only four classics in the Royal Library at Paris; there was one copy of Cicero, Ovid, Lucan and Boethius. So late as the reign of Henry VI. it is ordered, by one of the statutes of St. Mary's, Oxford, 'That no scholars shall occupy a book in that library above one hour at most.'

Notice to Correspondents.

P. S. W., Woodstok, received.
J. W., Toronto, received.
A. D., Quebec, such sketches we will give engravings of with pleasure.
R. J., London, received.
G. P. W., Bowmanville, to late for this number.

Commercial.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.
Traffic for week ending 9th Jan., 1863 \$ 63,924 17 1/2
Corresponding week of last year, 62,121 89 1/2
Increase... \$ 1,802 28

GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY.
Traffic for week ending 3rd Jan., 1863 \$95,146 75
Corresponding week last year... 92,293 77
Increase..... \$ 2,852 98

MONTREAL MARKET.
MONTREAL, Jan. 15, 1863.
FLOUR.—Firm, No. 1 Superfine, \$4 50.
WHEAT.—Steady, U. C. Spring, ex cars in demand at 93c @ 94c; U. C. White \$1 05 @ \$1 08, ex cars and store.
PEAS.—70c to 72c per 56 lbs. None offering.
CORN.—In demand. Mixed Western 54c @ 55c.
OATMEAL.—\$4 50 per brl. 200 lbs.
OATS.—42c to 45c per 40 lbs.
ASHES.—In good demand, Pots at \$6 35 @ 6 40; Pearls \$6 30.
PORK.—Mess, \$10 to \$10 50; Prime and Prime Mess, \$8. Nominal.
DRESSED HOGS.—Of 150 to 200 lbs. \$4 00; 200 lbs and over, \$4 00 @ 4 50. Good demand.
BUTTER.—Fair demand; store packed, 13c @ 14c; Dairy, 14c to 16c.

NEW YORK MARKETS.
New York, Jan. 15, 1863.
FLOUR—Receipts 11,635 barrels—Market unsettled and 5c to 10c better; sales 10,000 at \$6 30 to \$6 60 for super State and Western; \$6 75 to \$6 95 for Extra State; \$6 95 to \$7 10 for choice do; \$6 80 to \$7 15 for common to medium Extra Western; \$7 25 to \$7 35 for common to good shipping brands extra round hooped Ohio. Canada Flour 5c to 10c better; sales 600 bbls.
WHEAT—Receipts 333 bus—Market irregular, unsettled and 1c to 2c better; sales 40,000 bus \$1 30 to \$1 39 for Chic Spring; \$1 50 to \$1 46 for Mill Club; \$1 47 to \$1 49 for amber Iowa; \$1 52 to \$1 55 for winter red Western; \$1 56 to \$1 57 for amber Michigan.
RYE—nominal.
BARLEY—Nominal at \$1 40 to \$1 60.
CORN—Receipts 1,450 bus—Market quiet and about 1c better; sales 40,000 bus at 84c to 85c for shipping mixed Western.
OATS—Firm at 72c to 75c.
PORK—Firm. Beef quiet.
DRESSED HOGS—A shade lower at 5 1/2 to 6c.

LIVERPOOL MARKETS.
Breadstuffs quiet, but firm. There has been no regular market since Tuesday.
Richardson Spence & Co., quote flour firm, but inactive. Wheat firm with small sales.—Corn quiet. Provisions very dull. Various circulars report beef heavy. Pork has a downward tendency. Bacon down, with a decline of 1s. Lard easier.