

R. Rolph, Missionary at Osnabruck. S. S. Strong, Minister of By...

To the Reverend the Clergy of the Johnstown, Bathurst and Eastern Districts of Upper Canada.

Reverend Brethren, I scarcely know how to answer your kind address...

Difficulties do indeed surround us, but we have the same promises which sustained those who, in far sorer trials, were enabled to say...

I am, Reverend Brethren, Your affectionate brother, G. J. MONTREAL.

Civil Intelligence.

FURTHER EXTRACTS FROM OUR LATE ENGLISH FILES.

POLICY OF THE CONSERVATIVE LEADERS.

From the Standard, Feb. 27. A correspondent, whose letter we quoted yesterday, held out the melancholy prospect that the people of England must never hope to see a government like that of Mr. Pitt under the Reform Bill.

See the evil of any compromise of Conservative principles in another light. We are a party held together only by principles. We are opposed to a heterogeneous mass without any principle in common, and, indeed, without principle at all, except the determination to destroy all that we would defend.

IRELAND. Dublin, Feb. 13.

GRAVE PROTESTANT MEETING. This day a numerous and highly respectable meeting of Protestants was held in the room of the Mansion House, for the purpose of petitioning the Legislature...

Mr. ex-Sheriff Jones moved a resolution to the effect that the Protestant people of Ireland were bound to hand down to their children those rights and privileges which were bequeathed to them by their ancestors.

Mr. G. A. Hamilton, formerly representative for this city, next addressed the meeting in a calm, temperate, but convincing speech, in which he pointed out the consequences of the proposed measure for the reform of the Irish corporations, which, he said, would have the effect, not only of transferring the corporations into the hands of the Roman Catholic party, but would give an increased impetus to revolutionary and anti-Protestant agitation in this country.

Dispute with China.—A ministerial paper says—"We believe there is not the least foundation for the report noticed on Friday in the Chronicle, that it is the intention of the government to send out to China a diplomatist, for the purpose of arranging the basis of our commercial relations with that country, after the Chinese authorities shall have been brought to their senses by our naval and military operations.

COLONIAL.

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

Copy of a Despatch from Lord J. Russell to the Right Honourable C. P. Thomson.

Downing Street, 14th October, 1839. Sir,—It appears from Sir George Arthur's despatches that you may encounter much difficulty in subduing the excitement which prevails on the question of what is called "Responsible Government."

It does not appear, indeed, that any very definite meaning is generally agreed upon by those who call themselves the advocates of this principle; but its very vagueness is a source of delusion, and if at all encouraged, would prove the cause of permanent and dangerous.

The constitution of England, after long struggles and alternate success, has settled into a form of government in which the prerogative of the Crown is undisputed, but is never exercised without advice. Hence the exercise only is questioned, and however the use of the authority may be condemned, the authority itself remains untouched.

But if we seek to apply such a practice to a colony, we shall at once find ourselves in a false position. The power which a minister is responsible in England, is not his own power, but the power of the Crown, of which he is for the time the organ.

It may happen, therefore, that the Governor receives at one and the same time instructions from the Queen and advice from his Executive Council, totally at variance with each other.

There are some cases in which the force of these objections is so manifest, that those who at first make no distinction between the constitution of the United Kingdom and that of the Colonies, admit their strength. I allude to the question of foreign war and international relations, whether of trade or diplomacy. It is now said that internal government is alone intended.

But there are some cases of internal government in which the honour of the crown or the faith of Parliament, or the safety of the state, are so seriously involved, that it would not be possible for her Majesty to delegate her authority to a minister in a colony.

I will put for illustration some of the cases which have occurred in that very province where the petition for a Responsible Executive first arose—I mean Lower Canada. During the time when a large majority of Lower Canada followed M. Papineau as their leader, it was obviously the aim of that gentleman to discourage all who did their duty to the Crown within the Province, and to deter all those who should resort to Canada with British habits and feelings from within.

Let us suppose the Assembly as then constituted to have been sitting when Sir John Colborne suspended two of the judges. Would any Councillor possessing the confidence of the Assembly have made himself responsible for such an act? And yet the very safety of the province depended on its adoption.

Now can any one take upon himself to say that such cases will not again occur. The principle once sanctioned, no one can say how soon its application might be dangerous, or even dishonourable, while all will agree that to recall the power thus conceded would be impossible.

While I thus see insuperable objections to the adoption of the principle as it has been stated, I see little or none to the practical views of Colonial Government recommended by Lord Durham, as I understand them. The Queen's Government have no desire to thwart the representative Assemblies of British North America in their measures of reform and improvement. They have no wish to make those provinces the resource of patronage at home. They are earnestly intent on giving to the talent and character of leading persons in the Colonies, advantages similar to those which talent and character employed in the public service obtain in the United Kingdom. Her Majesty has no desire to maintain any system of policy among her North American subjects which opinion condemns. In receiving the Queen's commands, therefore, to protest against any declaration at variance with the honour of the crown and the unity of the empire, I am at the same time instructed to announce her Majesty's gracious intention to look to the affectionate attachment of her people in North America as the security of permanent union.

It is necessary for this purpose that no official misconduct should be screened by her Majesty's representative in the Provinces; and that no private interests should be allowed to compete with the general good.

Your Excellency is fully in possession of the principles which have guided her Majesty's advisers on this subject; and you must be aware that there is no surer way of earning the approbation of the Queen, than by maintaining the harmony of the Executive with the Legislative authorities.

While I have thus cautioned you against any declaration from which dangerous consequences might hereafter flow, and instructed you as to the general line of your conduct, it may be said that I have not drawn any specific line beyond which the power of the Governor on the one hand, and the privileges of the Assembly on the other, ought not to extend. Every political constitution in which different bodies share the supreme power, is only enabled to exist by the forbearance of those among whom this power is distributed. In this respect the example of England may well be imitated. In

Sovereign using the prerogative of the Crown to the utmost extent, and the House of Commons exerting its power of the purse, to carry all its resolutions into immediate effect, would produce confusion in the country in less than a twelvemonth. So in a colony: the Governor thwarting every legitimate proposition of the Assembly, and the Assembly continually recurring to its power of refusing supplies, can but disturb all political relations, embarrass trade, and retard the prosperity of the people.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

UNITED STATES.

BOUNDARY QUESTION.

The following correspondence appears in the latest New York papers, and seems to evince that the controversy upon this subject is likely soon to come to a close, either pacific or otherwise.

Mr. Fox to Mr. Forsyth.

WASHINGTON, March 13, 1840.

The undersigned, her Britannic Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, has been instructed by his Government to make the following communication to the Secretary of State of the United States, in reference to the boundary negotiation, and the affairs of the disputed territory.

Her Majesty's Government have had under their consideration the official note addressed to the undersigned by the Secretary of State of the United States, on the 24th of last December, in reply to a note from the undersigned of the 2d of November preceding, in which the undersigned protested, in the name of his Government, against the extensive system of aggression pursued by the people of the State of Maine within the disputed territory, to the prejudice of the rights of Great Britain, and in manifest violation of the provisional agreements entered into between the authorities of the two countries at the beginning of the last year.

Her Majesty's Government have had their attention directed to the public message transmitted by the Governor of Maine to the Legislature of the State, on the 3d of January of the present year.

Upon a consideration of the statements contained in these two official documents, her Majesty's Government regret to find that the principal acts of encroachment which were denounced and complained of on the part of Great Britain, so far from being either disproved, or discontinued, or satisfactorily explained by the authorities of the State of Maine, are, on the contrary, persisted in and publicly avowed.

Her Majesty's Government have consequently instructed the undersigned to more formally to protest against those acts of encroachment and aggression.

Her Majesty's Government claim and expect from the good faith of the Government of the United States, that the people of Maine shall replace themselves in the situation in which they stood before the agreements of last year were signed; that they shall therefore retire from the valley of the St. John, and confine themselves to the valley of the Aroostook; that they shall occupy that valley in a temporary manner only, for the purpose, as agreed upon, of preventing depredations; and that they shall not construct fortifications, nor make roads or permanent settlements.

Until this be done by the people of the State of Maine, and so long as that people shall persist in the present system of aggression, her Majesty's Government will feel it their duty to make such military arrangements as may be required for the protection of her Majesty's rights. And her Majesty's Government deem it right to declare that if the result of the unjustifiable proceedings of the State of Maine should be collision between her Majesty's troops and the people of that State, the responsibility of all the consequences that may ensue therefrom, be they what they may, will rest with the people and Government of the United States.

The undersigned has been instructed to add to this communication, that her Majesty's Government are only waiting for the detailed report of the British Commissioner recently employed to survey the disputed territory, which report, it was believed, would be completed and delivered to her Majesty's Government by the end of the present month, in order to transmit to the Government of the United States a reply to their last proposal upon the subject of the boundary negotiation.

The undersigned avails himself of this occasion to renew to the Secretary of State of the United States the assurance of his distinguished consideration.

Hon. JOHN FORSYTH, &c.

Mr. Forsyth to Mr. Fox.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, Washington, March 25, 1840.

The undersigned, Secretary of State of the United States, acknowledges to have received Mr. Fox's communication of the 13th instant, in reference to the boundary negotiation and the affairs of the disputed territory. The information given in the closing part of it, that a reply to the last proposition of the United States upon the subject of the boundary may be expected in a short time, is highly gratifying to the President, who has, however, given directions to the undersigned in making his acknowledgment, to accompany it with the expression of his profound regret that Mr. Fox's note is in no other respect satisfactory.

After the arrangements which, in the beginning of last year, were entered into on the part of the two governments with regard to the occupation of the disputed territory, the President had indulged the hope that the causes of irritation which had grown out of this branch of the subject could have been removed. Relying on the disposition of Maine to cooperate with the Federal Government in all that could lead to a pacific adjustment of the principal question, the President felt confident that his determination to maintain order and peace on the border would be fully carried out. He looked upon all apprehensions of designs by the people of Maine to take possession of the territory, as without adequate foundation; deeming it improbable that on the eve of an amicable adjustment of the question, an opinion of the American people would, without cause, and without object, jeopard the success of the negotiation and endanger the peace of the country. A troublesome, irritating, and comparatively unimportant, because subordinate, subject, being thus disposed of, the President hoped that the parties would be left free at once to discuss and finally adjust the principal question. In this he has been disappointed. While the proceedings of her Majesty's government at home have been attended with unlooked for delays, its attention has been diverted from the great subject by a variety of intermeddling complaints, imposing a portion of the people of the United States designs to violate the engagements of their Government—designs which have never been entertained, and designs which Mr. Fox knows would receive no countenance from this government.

It is to be regretted that at this late hour so much misapprehension still exists on the side of the British Government, as to the object and obvious meaning of the existing arrangements respecting the disputed territory. The ill success which appears to have attended the efforts made by the undersigned to convey, thro' Mr. Fox, to her Majesty's Government, more correct impressions respecting them, calls for a recurrence to the subject; and a brief review of the correspondence which has grown out of it, may tend to remove the erroneous views which prevail as to the manner in which the terms of the arrangements referred to have been observed.

As Mr. Fox had no authority to make any agreement respecting the exercise of jurisdiction over the disputed territory, that between him and the undersigned, of the 27th of February, 1839, had for its object some provisional arrangement for the restoration and preservation of peace in the territory. To accomplish this object, it provided that her Majesty's officers should not seek to expel, by military force, the armed party which had been sent by Maine into the district bordering on the Restook river; and that, on the other hand, the Government of Maine would voluntarily, and without any needless delay, withdraw beyond the bounds of the disputed territory any armed force there within them. Besides this, the arrangement, and other objects—the dispersion of notorious trespassers, and the protection of public property from depredation. In case future necessities should arise for this, the operation was to be conducted by concert, jointly or separately, according to agreement between the Governments of Maine and New Brunswick.

In this last mentioned respect, the agreement looked to some further arrangement between Maine and New Brunswick. Through the agency of General Scott, one was agreed to, on the 23d and 25th of March following, by which Sir John Harvey bound himself not to seek, without renewed instruction to that effect from his Government, to take military possession of the Territory, or to repress it by military force the armed civil posse, or the troops of Maine. On the part of Maine, it was agreed by her Government, that no attempt should be made without renewed instructions from the Legislature, to disturb by arms the settlements of New Brunswick in the possession of the Madawaska and the Upper Provinces. As to possession and jurisdiction, they were to remain unchanged, each party holding, in fact, possession of part of the disputed Territory, but each denying the right of the other to do so. With that understanding, Maine was, without unnecessary delay, to withdraw her military force, leaving only, under a land agent, a small civil posse, armed or unarmed, to protect the timber recently cut, and to prevent further depredations within the disputed territory, was assigned to the State of Maine after her military force should have been withdrawn from it; and it was to be accomplished by a civil posse, armed or unarmed, which was to continue in the territory, and to operate in every part of it where its agency might be required to protect the timber already cut, and prevent further depredations, without any limitation whatever, or any restrictions, except such as might be construed into an attempt to disturb by arms the Province of New Brunswick in her possession of the Madawaska settlement, or interrupt the usual communication between the Provinces. It is thus in the exercise of a legitimate right, and in the conscientious discharge of an obligation imposed upon her by a solemn compact, that the State of Maine has done those acts which have given rise to the complaints for which no adequate cause is perceived. The undersigned feels confident that when those acts shall have been considered by her Majesty's Government at home, as explained in his note to Mr. Fox, of the 24th of December last, and in connection with the foregoing remarks, they will no longer be viewed as calculated to excite the apprehensions of her Majesty's Government, that the faith of existing arrangements is to be broken on the part of the United States.

ing only, under a land agent, a small civil posse, armed or unarmed, to protect the timber recently cut, and to prevent further depredations.

In the complaints of infractions of the agreements of the State of Maine, addressed to the undersigned, Mr. Fox has assumed two positions, which are not authorized by the terms of those agreements: 1st, admitting the right of Maine to maintain a civil posse in the disputed territory for the purposes stated in the agreement, he does so without the restriction that the station of the posse was to be confined within certain limits; and 2d, by making the advance of the Maine posse into the valley of the Upper St. John the ground of his complaint of encroachment upon the Madawaska settlement, he assumes to extend the limits of that settlement beyond those it occupied at the date of the agreement.

The United States cannot acquiesce in either of these positions. In the first place, nothing is found in the agreement subscribed to by Governor Fairfield and Sir John Harvey, defining any limits in the disputed territory within which the operations of the civil posse of Maine were to be circumscribed. The task of preserving the timber recently cut, and of preventing further depredations within the disputed territory, was assigned to the State of Maine after her military force should have been withdrawn from it; and it was to be accomplished by a civil posse, armed or unarmed, which was to continue in the territory, and to operate in every part of it where its agency might be required to protect the timber already cut, and prevent further depredations, without any limitation whatever, or any restrictions, except such as might be construed into an attempt to disturb by arms the Province of New Brunswick in her possession of the Madawaska settlement, or interrupt the usual communication between the Provinces. It is thus in the exercise of a legitimate right, and in the conscientious discharge of an obligation imposed upon her by a solemn compact, that the State of Maine has done those acts which have given rise to the complaints for which no adequate cause is perceived.

With regard to the second position assumed by Mr. Fox, that the advance of the Maine posse along the Restook to the mouth of Fish river, and into the valley of the upper St. John, is at variance with the terms and spirit of the agreements—the undersigned must observe that if at variance with any of their provisions it could only be with those which secure her Majesty's Province of New Brunswick against any attempt to disturb the possession of the Madawaska settlement, and to interrupt the usual communications between New Brunswick and the Upper Provinces. The agreement could only have referred to the limits of the time it was subscribed. The undersigned, in his note of the 24th December last, stated the reasons why the mouth of Fish River and the portion of the valley of the St. John through which it passes, could in no proper sense be considered as embraced in the Madawaska settlements. Were the United States to admit the pretension set up on the part of Great Britain, to give to the Madawaska settlements a degree of constructive extension that might, at this time, suit the purposes of her Majesty's colonial authorities, those settlements might soon be made, with like justice, to embrace any portions of the disputed territory; and the rights given to the province of New Brunswick to occupy them temporarily and for a special purpose might, by inference quite as plausible, give the jurisdiction exercised by her Majesty's authorities an extent which would render the present state of the question, so long as it could be maintained, equivalent to a decision on the merits of the whole controversy in favour of Great Britain.

If the small settlement at Madawaska on the north side of the St. John, means the whole valley of that river—if a boom across the Fish river, and the station of a small posse on the south side of the St. John, at the mouth of Fish river, is a disturbance of that settlement, which is twenty-five miles below, within the meaning of the agreement, it is difficult to conceive that there are any limitations to the pretensions of her Majesty's government under it, or how the State of Maine could exercise the preventive power with regard to trespassers—which was, on her part, the great object of the temporary arrangement. The movements of British troops lately witnessed in the disputed territory, and the erecting of military works for their protection and accommodation, of which a full and complete information recently received at the department of state, has been communicated to Mr. Fox, impart a still graver aspect to the matter immediately under consideration. The fact of those military operations established beyond a doubt, left unexplained, or unsatisfactorily accounted for, by Mr. Fox's note of the 7th inst., continues an abiding cause of complaint on the part of the United States against her Majesty's colonial agents, as inconsistent with arrangements whose main object was to divest a question, already sufficiently perplexed and complicated, from such embarrassments as those which fail the proceedings of the British authorities cannot fail to surround it.

If, as Mr. Fox must admit, the objects of the late agreements were the removal of all military force and the preservation of the property from further spoliation, leaving the possession and jurisdiction as they stood before the state of Maine found itself compelled to act against the trespassers, the President cannot but consider that the conduct of the American local authorities strongly and most favorably contrasts with that of the colonial authorities of her Majesty's government.—While the one, promptly withdrawing its military force, has confined itself to the use of its small posse, armed as agreed upon, and has done no act not necessary to the accomplishment of the conventional objects, every measure taken or intended on the other party is essentially military in its character, and can be justified only by a well founded apprehension that hostility must ensue.

With such feelings and convictions, the President could not see, without painful surprise, the attempt of Mr. Fox, under instructions from his government, to give to the existing state of things a character not warranted by the friendly disposition of the United States, or the conduct of the authorities and people of Maine—much more is he surprised to find it alleged as a ground for strengthening a military force and preparing for a hostile collision with the unarmed inhabitants of a friendly state, pursuing within their own borders their peaceful occupations, or exerting themselves in compliance with their agreements to protect the property in dispute from unauthorized spoliation.

The President wishes that he could dispel the fear that these dark forebodings can be realized. Unless her Majesty's Government shall forthwith arrest all military interference in the question—unless it shall apply to the subject more determined efforts than have hitherto been made to bring the dispute to a certain and pacific adjustment, the misfortunes predicted by Mr. Fox in the name of his Government, may most unfortunately happen. But no apprehension of the consequences alluded to by Mr. Fox can be permitted to divert the Government and people of the United States, from the performance of their duty to the State of Maine. The duty is as simple as it is imperative. The construction which is given by her to the treaty of 1783 has been, again and again, and in the most solemn manner, asserted also by the Federal Government and must be maintained, unless Maine freely consents to a new boundary, or unless that construction of the treaty is found to be erroneous by the decision of a disinterested and independent tribunal, selected by the parties for its final adjustment. The President on assuming the duties of his station, avowed his determination, all other means of negotiation failing, to submit a proposition to the Government of Great Britain to refer the decision of the question once more to a third party.

In all the subsequent steps which have been taken upon the subject by his direction, he has been actuated by the same spirit. Neither his disposition in the matter, nor his opinion as to the propriety of that course, has undergone any change. Should the fulfilment of his wishes be defeated, either by an unwillingness on the part of her Majesty's Government to meet the offer of the United States in the spirit in which it is made, or from adverse circumstances of any description, the President will, in any event, derive great satisfaction from the consciousness that no effort on his part has been spared to bring the question to an amicable conclusion, and that there has been nothing in the conduct either of the Government or of the people of the United States, or of the state of Maine, to justify the employment of her Majesty's forces as indicated by Mr. Fox's letter. The President cannot, under such circumstances apprehend that the responsibility for any consequences which may unhappily ensue, will, by the just judgment of an impartial world, be imputed to the United States.

The undersigned avails himself, &c. &c. JOHN FORSYTH.

To the Hon. H. S. Fox, &c.

Mr. Fox to Mr. Forsyth.

WASHINGTON, March 26, 1840.

The undersigned, her Britannic Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, has had the honor to receive the official note of yesterday's date, addressed to him by Mr. Forsyth, Secretary of State of the United States, in reply to a note dated the 13th instant, wherein the undersigned, in conformity with instructions received from his government, had announced formally protested against the acts of encroachment and aggression which are still persisted in by armed bands in the employment of the State of Maine within certain portions of the disputed territory.

It will be the duty of the undersigned immediately to transmit Mr. Forsyth's note to her Majesty's Government in England, and until the statements and propositions which it con-

tains shall have received the due consideration of her Majesty's Government, the undersigned will not deem it right to add any further thereto, excepting to refer to, and to repeat, as he now formally and distinctly does, the several declarations which it has from time to time been his duty to make to the Government of the United States with reference to the existing posture of affairs in the disputed territory, and to record his opinion, that an inflexible adherence to the resolutions that have been announced by her Majesty's Government, for the defence of her Majesty's rights pending the negotiations of the boundary question, offers to her Majesty's Government the only means of protecting those rights from being in a continually aggravated manner encroached upon and violated.

The undersigned avails himself of this occasion to renew to the Secretary of State of the United States the assurance of his distinguished consideration.

H. S. FOX.

The Honorable John Forsyth, &c. &c. &c.

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THE Court of Directors hereby give notice, that a half yearly dividend of fifteen shillings sterling per Share, will become payable, on the shares registered in the Colonies, on and after the 14th day of April, during the usual hours of business, at the several Branch Banks, as announced by circular to the respective parties.

The dividend is declared in sterling money, and will be paid at the rate of exchange current on the 14th day of April, to be then fixed by the Local Boards. The books will close, preparatory to the dividend, on the thirtieth day of March, between which time and the fourteenth day of April, no transfers of shares can take place.

By order of the Court. G. DE B. ATTWOOD, Secretary.

London, 7th December, 1839. 4w39

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THE Subscribers have recently received, direct from the first manufacturers in England, a very extensive assortment of China, Earthenware and Glass. SHUTER & PATERSON.

Toronto, Dec. 12, 1839. 15-13w

COMMERCIAL BANK, M. D.

NOTICE is hereby given, that all Promissory Notes and Acceptances discounted and falling due at this Bank and its Offices, after the first day of April next, if not retired on the last day of grace allowed by law, will on the following day, be placed in the hands of the Bank Solicitors for recovery.

By order of the Board. F. A. HARPER, Cashier.

Kingston, 26th Dec, 1839. 14-28.

MARRIED.

At the Falls of Niagara, on the 18th ult., Thomas Hector, Esq. of Toronto, to Frances, fourth and youngest daughter of Colonel Delatre.

At the Weston Church, Etobicoke, on the 4th ult., the Rev. Charles Dade, M. A. Fellow of Caius' College, Cambridge, to Helen, second daughter of the Rev. Thomas Phillips, D. D. Rector of Etobicoke, and Chaplain to the Hon. the Legislative Council.

On the 23rd ult., by the Rev. H. Patton, Mr. William Pettepiece, to Maria, eldest daughter of Mr. Archibald Magee, both of the Township of Oxford.

By the same, on the 24th ult., Mr. Henry B. Hurd, to Sarah, eldest daughter of the late Doctor Thomas B. Cowen, both of the village of Kempsville.

DIED. At St. John, L. C., on the 4th ult., after a long and painful illness which she bore with the utmost Christian resignation to the divine will, Maria Charlotte, wife of the Rev. William Arnold and daughter of the late Henry O'Hara, Esq., Collector of Her Majesty's Customs, Glasgow Basin.

At Montreal, on the 25th inst. of scarlet fever, Henry Mackenzie, son of the Rev. Dr. Bethune, aged 7 years.

On the 25th ult., of consumption, Jane, wife of W. John R. Babcock, of Ameliasburg, aged 25 years.

On the 27th instant, Mr. Cornelius Webster, of the township of Hamilton, aged 40 years.

LETTERS received to Friday, April 3d.— Lord Bishop of Toronto; G. Griffin Esq. add. subs. and rem.; Rev. J. Rothwell, rem.; Rev. T. S. Kennedy; Rev. H. Patton; Rev. R. D. Cartwright; Rev. J. Grier, add. subs.; A. Davidson Esq.; D. Perry Esq.; W. C. Crofton Esq. [next week.]

"A Sincere Churchman" next week. We thank J. B. for his communication. ERRATA.—In the first line of the leading Editorial of last week, for "papers" read "printing." In the Rev. Flanaghan's communication, last column, sixth paragraph, for "during my own absence" read "in which," and "at which time."