'What madman art thou?' demanded the Earl of Berks, as he drew close to the speaker: 'canst thou prophecy of good or evil. Peace, or the gag shall stop thy brawling!'

'I am no madman, Sir Knight,' returned the man; 'my blood doth flow as cooly in my veins, as thy blood doth in thine.'

There was a whispering and shuddering amongst the mariners, who recognised in the uncouth being a noted soothsayer of that time; and they resigned their labour to gaze upon him. But at this moment the messenger arrived, and reported that the ships of the Danes were slowly advancing between the headlands, being nearest to that which was most distant, (since called the North Foreland, and that in less than a couple of hours, they would be abreast the haven.

'Hasten, then, my gallant friends!' exclaimed Earl Edwin, impressively, and with earnest gestures 'let us give our enemy battle.'

'Thine efforts are but a useless mockery of the Divine art,' uttered the soothsayer; 'thou wilt sacrifice thy men, and———!'

Here his further speech was stayed by the almost breathless haste of a venerable man, clad in the habiliments of a priest, who rushing forward, reared a massive silver crucifix in the air, and faced the people. For several minutes he could not get his utterance; but no voice was raised, scarcely a sound was heard but the deep breathing of the assembled throng, who bowed down their heads in reverence of the sacred symbol.

'Get thee behind me, Satan!' at length exclaimed he to the soothsayer. 'Depart from hence, lest I should curse thee.'

'I fear not thy bans, proud priest,' responded the individual addressed; nor will the sign thou bearest daunt my spirit. Thou wouldest counsel to destroy, whilst I would strive to save.'

'Dastard and traitor!' exclaimed the Earl of Berks, as he partly unsheathed his sword and then thrust it back with violence into the scabbard, as he said, 'And yet 'tis almost as dastardly to notice thee, thou miscreant! who has thus bearded the holy priest of our religion.'

'Nay, do not hesitate, most gallant warrior,' calmly uttered the uncouth-looking being; 'thy falcon is ill bred, and will fly at every prey. Hast thou not heard the famed tradition? Thus saith the oracle—"

Until the oak shall thickly grow,
A wail to compass Britain's shore,
Her sons must fly before the foe,
Her soil be reddened with their gore.

"Look for thyself, most valient soldier,'—and he threw his arms and body quite round—where, 'where, are those mural oaks that are to form a barrier to the enemy?'

The mariners and the men-at-arms heard the tradition, and it did not tend to lessen their distaste to meet the Danes. They looked around them with a distrust of their own strength bordering on disway: even to the veteran Earl of Berks felt the tincture of superstition darken his mind, and Edwin with regret and anger, beheld the pernicious effects that had been produced. The soothsayer saw his advantage, and was about to follow it up, but the priest again erected his crucifix, and smote him to the ground—a corpse.

Fierce were the looks of the soldiers, yet they dared not approach the sacred symbol, the cross arm of which were stained with blood of the fallen man. Swords were plucked from their scabards, and dagger-hilts were handled—the tumult was running high when the venerable Prior of the monastery advanced in his sacerdotal robes, and putting the crowd aside on either hand, grasped the crucifix, exclaiming, 'Men and brethren! wherefore is this dishonour to our holy church! The impious hath been laid low, and will ye doom your immortal souls to everlasting misery! Kneel, kneel, my children, and implore the pardon of the Most High, lest His wrath be kindle and his arm be outstretched to destroy! Delay not to implore forgiveness, and I will plead in your behalf.'

The deep sonorous voice of the Prior, as he raised the cross above the inanimate body of the soothsayer, had its full effect, and in a few minutes every knee was bent, every head was uncovered, and every eye was fixed upon the venerable man. With a look of pride, he cast an eagle glance around, and his voice was about to be lifted up in fervent prayer, when his sight fell and became rooted upon the countenance of the humble guide of the Earl of Berkes who had taken a solitary station—his head bare and thrown back, as in uncovered in all before him, he was earnestly in silent devotion.

'God of Mercy! I thank thee,' exclaimed the Prior, 'for thou hast responded favourably to the petition of Thy servant, and I shall die content.' He then advanced towards the guide, and holding the crucifix over his head, he uttered—'Manifold are Thy forbearances, who sitteth on Thy throne in glory! here manifest thy love to these frail children of the dust, and whilst thou stayest their presumption, oh! pardon their iniquities. Instil into their hearts a desire to serve Thee: nerve their arms that they may smite the coming foe, and for thy great name sake achieve the victory. Sovereign of Heaven and Earth! and thou who ledest captivity captive and overcame the grave! raise up for us an arm of might, a tower of strength!'—and then, in a voice that echoed amongst the cliffs, he shouted to the amazed multitude, as he directed their attention to the guide—'Soldiers and mariners, and ye whose peaceful occupations must now be laid aside to encounter coming danger, behold your King.'

The guide looked placidly around, and then bowed his head before the holy sign; but not so the assembled groups of warriors and sailors. At first surprise and respect had kept them silent whilst many of them doubted, till at length the guide himself addressed them.'

'Yes, my brave friends, you see your Monarch here before you—I am Alfred!

Then arose loud shouts of welcome—then were heard the enthusiastic cheers of loyal subjects; but Alfred waved his hand, and silence was again restored.

'Brief space we have for greetings now, my friends; and you, my noble lady and most worthy thanes, one and all, I thank ye. But let us loose our galleys and to the fight: away, away, my gallant friends. And as for yon poor remnant of mortality'—he pointed to the body of the soothsayer—'his riddle is already read.'

He waved his hand towards the galleys and went on—

Our oaks when launched upon the sea
Will guard our native coast,
And England's wooden walls shall be
Her best defence and boast.

So saying, he sprang on board the nearest galley, crying 'On, on, and follow your King!'

Both soldiers and sailors promptly caught the allusion to the ships as wooden walls: it seemed, with the presence of the Sovereign, to have aroused all the lion of their nature. The greatest enthusiasm prevailed; not an instant was lost; the embarkation was now as rapid as it had before been tardy; the women caught the feeling of the moment, and urged and encouraged the men. The vessels were getting into motion, when there arose a shout in that which held the King—'The standard—the standard the royal streamer!'—but there was none to be found; and still the tumult increased, though Alfred himself vainly strove to repress it. The Prior had been spreading forth his hands to impart his blessing on the expedition; he heard the cry—he felt the danger of delay, and impressed with the importance of inspiring the men with courage, he firmly grasped the crucifix, and fastening to its apex a small red flag, he boarded the royal galley, ascended the turret in the prow, and, raising the symbol in the air, exclaimed with solemn emphasis—"Behold your banner—the standard of eternal safety! Away, away; ply well your oars, nerve all your arms; look to the cross, red as it is with recent sacrifice, and victory is ours!"

Grand and glorious was the spectacle, as the well manned galleys swept down the haven; their crews answering to the cheers of those who remained on shore. The Lady Ella had kept her vow, and she stood by her husband's side on a conspicuous part of one of the galleys, her countenance stern but beautiful. Yes, there she stood, with the shield upon her arm, like some fair goddess ready to throw protection round our hero. Brief time elapsed before the armament was moving on the open sea, and was making for the point round which the unsuspecting Danes must come. And come they did; not in a compact body, but lulled into confidence by recent victory, their ships were straggling hither and thither. Their galleys bore down upon them with irresistible force: the conflict was sanguinary and desperate; but the largest ships of the sea-rovers were carried before the others could come up; the Danes would take no quarter, and almost to a man were killed. Ably did the archers play upon the enemy, and bravely did each mariner and soldier perform his bloody duty. Throughout the battle, the Prior retained his lofty station unharmed, tho' the missiles flew thickly about him. There he retained his conspicuous and sacred standard, nearly six feet in altitude, so as to be visible to every eye; it invigorated the Britons, whilst the bearer, by his harangues, instilled fresh courage in their hearts.—The King inspired his warriors by his own acts of valour; the brave old Earl of Berks, his battle-axe gleaming in the sun, carried death wherever he came; and the Lady Ella, rising superior to the weakness of her sex, not only fought by the side of her noble husband, but more than once, by her quick perception, warded off blows that might have proved fatal to him she loved.

Loud rose the shouts of the bold mariners, amidst the yells of the barbarians, and desperate were the attacks of the latter upon the galleys of the Royal Alfred for the purpose of tearing down the sacred standard; but every effort terminated in defeat: it still rose high and triumphant in the air as a rallying point for the children of conquest.

The aged, and the women, and the children from the lofty cliffs, beheld the contest, and frequently the sound of their ardent shouts were borne upon the waters to the ears of fathers, and sons, whose quick blows upon the enemy evinced how inspiring was the acclaim. At length, after a three hours fight, the Danes were conquered, and sixteen of their vessels remained in the hands of their conquerors as trophies of their conquest: and though there was wailing and lamentation amongst the widows and orphans, yet even these were silent when the Prior, standing upon the spot from which they had that morning embarked, reared his holy emblem, and offered up thanks to the Deity who had given them the victory.

The standard of Alfred—ruddy as it was, and with its pennon attached, was deposited on the high altar of the chapel at St. Radegund's Abbey about five miles from Dover, and from that time the red-cross became the badge of honourable Knighthood and the banner of the kingdom.

Alfred was the first English monarch who led a royal fleet against the enemy; and now I ask, can it be any longer a matter of doubt as to who was THE FIRST BRITISH ADMIRAL?

Communications.

[FOR THE CHRONICLE.]

MR. EDITOR.—The subject of postage upon Newspapers has been much spoken of lately by the Editors of several papers, particularly by the editor of the Novascotian and his friend of the Fredericton Sentinel, the latter having petitioned the House of Assembly on the subject, without pretending to much knowledge of the Post Office arrangement in these Colonies. I would enquire if there is any country where printed papers are allowed to pass entirely free of tax: the mails now passing through these Provinces are so lumbered up with Provincial and United States newspapers, that delivery of letters is frequently unavoidably delayed for one or two hours while these papers are to be assorted and examined, and this I dare say frequently at the expense of an extra clerk to the Post Office department; besides, has not the tax now charged, the effect of making Post masters responsible for newspapers. I have been informed that they are required to give notice to publishers of papers, upon the removal or death of the party to whom their publications are addressed, and also when papers are refused. Now, surely, Mr. Editor, printers are not more unreasonable than other people, and although the editors of the Novascotian and the Sentinel may fancy their writings are superior to those of all other editors, yet I much question if both Nova Scotia and New-Brunswick would not have been better off in every respect if neither of these publications had ever had an existence, and they should certainly not expect that any public department would lend itself for the free circulation of their productions.

By the Report of the Post Master General of the United States to Congress the present session, I see that he not only recommends a continuance of the present rate of postage, but also an increased rate where papers are above a certain size or weight.

I cannot conclude this article, Mr. Editor, without expressing my disapprobation, not to say disgust, at an editorial in the Sentinel, at the commencement of Lent, where the publisher of that paper finds fault with the suppression of the performances at the Amateur Theatre during that period. Now, surely any man possessing a particle of religious feeling, (or even common decency,) would pay some respect to the religious opinions of a large and respectable portion of the community among whom he resides. A. B.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRONICLE.

SIR,—I cannot possibly avoid making an observation or two relative to a Lecture on Total Abstinence, delivered last Sunday evening in the Catholic School House, by the mighty superior and all sapient conductor and controller of that surpassingly brilliant luminary or star which has recently arisen in the literary horizon and illumined by its ineffable lustre the greater portion of our hemisphere—the Saint John "Mirror." The lecturer, after a display of gestures, contortions, &c. began by saying that he was wholly unprepared for the task, and that if he had known he would have been called on to speak on the important subject of Total Abstinence, he would have come prepared for the arduous undertaking, (as he termed it.) He then without more ado had recourse to his usual phraseology or style to excite the laughter of his auditory by the introduction of vulgarisms, home-spun phrases, and hackneyed expressions, unmindful of the chaste and decorus manner by which so sacred a subject ought ever to be characterised.—But what rendered the exhibition peculiarly contemptible, was his self eulogy. He boasted of his morality, erudition, patriotism, philanthropy, and above all his inimitable qualifications as an Editor or public Journalist. He asserted that the paper he conducted had no rival in America, and spoke under the form of irony, in depreciatory terms of all the existing Journals in the Province of New Brunswick, and concluded an inelegant and rudely constructed address, by calling on the Irishmen resident in St. Andrews to take the "Mirror."—Weak indeed must be the optics, and shallow the comprehension of that Irishman who would suffer himself to be led away by such a political humbug. Affectation is the discriminative characteristic of Mr. Fitzgerald, and according to the most competent judges of oratory, public speakers render themselves not only contemptible but ridiculous when they have recourse thereto. The indispensible requisites to constitute a good speaker, are Logic and Rhetoric, and it is an axiom or self evident truth, that this gentleman is not in the possession of these qualifications. It is quite clear to any man of Literary perception that Mr. Fitzgerald is neither a Logician nor Rhetorician. If he were either, he would studiously avoid the pedantic flourishes and egotistical remarks which pervade his speeches, and which must necessarily render him a fit object of ridicule to every well bred man. If he be not altogether incorrigible, he may derive some advantage from the following admonition: I would strongly advise him to apply himself for some time to the study of Pope and Chesterfield, authors from whom he may easily learn that most essential principle in the department of an editor—politeness—the observance of which will enable him to abandon self praise, verbosity, and buffoonery—necessary qualifications, I admit, in a stage clown, but quite unbecoming in an orator or a gentleman.

HIBERNICUS.

St. Andrews, April 6, 1842.

Store to Let,

From the First Day of May next:—

THE subscribers offer to Let for one or more years, one of their Stores on the North Market wharf, now in the course of finishing. Rent moderate. CRANE & M'GRATH.

April 8, 1842.

☞ The Chronicle Office is in the Brick Building, at the corner of Prince William and Church streets near the Market Square.

THE CHRONICLE.

SAINT JOHN, APRIL 22, 1842.

THE English Mail, bringing Liverpool dates to the 5th instant, arrived at Halifax on Monday last in the Steamer Britannia, and furnishes the following disastrous and truly horrid information:

The news from India is to the end of January according to which it appears that after the death of Sir William McNaughton negociations were resumed by Major Pottinger and a convention agreed on for the evacuation by the British forces of Jallalabad, Ghuzni, Cabool, and Candahar, that in pursuance thereof, the troops to the number of 10,000 set out, and were in treacherous defiance of the treaty, ALL MASSACRED!!! Two or three natives alone escaped. General Sale has refused to surrender Jellalabad. General Elphinston is not dead, although wounded. He is a prisoner in the hands of Ukbar Khen. There is no news of the unfortunate ladies and other hostages now at the mercy of such treacherous savages.

The country of Affghanistan, the scene of this sanguinary tragedy, is situated in the interior of India, about 800 miles north of Bombay, in about 70 E. longitude, and 34 N. latitude, and composed of gigantic mountains, valleys, and horizontal plains, as if broken and hurled into the most chaotic confusion by convulsions of nature on the most magnificent scale: the approaches to which from almost every side, are over crags, ravines and precipices, impassable to all but those possessing a sure foot and a steady head; many of those passes, from their great elevation, are covered with snow even in the greatest heats of summer: the valleys and flat lands are inhabited by a hardy race of mountaneers, resembling in a very great degree the Scottish Highlanders in the feudal times.

"If a man could be transported from England to the Afghan country without passing through the dominions of Turkey, Persia, or Tartary, he would be amazed at the wide and unfrequented deserts, and the mountains covered with perennial snow. Even in the cultivated part of the country he would discover a wild assemblage of hills and wastes, unmarked by enclosures, embellished by trees, and destitute of navigable canals, public roads, and all the great and elaborate productions of human industry and refinement. He would find the towns few, and far distant from each other; and he would look in vain for inns or other conveniences which a traveller would meet with in the wildest parts of Great Britain. Yet he would sometimes be delighted with the fertility and populousness of particular plains and valleys, where he would see the productions of Europe mingled in profusion with those of the torrid zone, and the land laboured with an industry and a judgment nowhere surpassed. He would see the inhabitants following their flocks in tents, or assembled in villages, to which the terraced roofs and mud walls give an appearance entirely new. He would be struck at first with their high and even harsh features, their sun-burnt countenances, their long beards, their loose garments, and their shaggy mantles of skins. When he entered into the society, he would notice the absence of regular courts of justice, and of every thing like an organized police. He would be surprised at the fluctuation and instability of the civil institutions, He would find it difficult to comprehend how a nation could subsist in such disorder; and would pity those who were compelled to pass their days in such a scene, and whose minds were trained by their unhappy situation to fraud and violence, to rapine, deceit, and revenge. Yet he would scarce fail to admire their martial and lofty spirit, their hospitality, and their bold and simple manners, equally removed from the suppleness of a citizen and the awkward rusticity of a clown: and he would, probably, before long discover, among so many qualities that excited his disgust, the rudiments of many virtues."

The Liverpool Mail, in giving the news in detail, says—

"The official intelligence received from Bombay is, we are sorry to say, confirmatory of the distressing news which we published last week. The British and Indian forces which occupied Cabul, were compelled, by the pangs of famine, to retreat from their fortifications, and have perished in the mountain passes of Affghanistan. More than ten thousand men have been cut to pieces, and sixteen ladies, the wives of officers, have met with a fate which it is impossible to describe.

"Our countrymen have been cruelly murdered, even when employed in acts of negotiation: Sir Wm. McNaughton was shot by Akbbar Khan, the son of the rebel chief; four officers were slaughtered on the same occasion. These crimes were the result of the basest treachery, for Sir Wm. and his attendants had been invited to a friendly conference by the savage monster, who committed the deed with his own hand.

"Ten thousand men, surrounded by forty thousand enemies, hardy, resolute, and inured to the climate, could not maintain their position without provisions without even a proper supply of gunpowder. No succour could be sent to them. The snow was from four to five feet in depth, the roads were impracticable, the passes insurmountable, and lined with armed men. Famine stared them in the face, death frowned upon them from every quarter, they had no alternative but to lay themselves down and die, or to cut their way through their enemies with their swords. They attempted the latter, and failed."

How Sir William has permitted himself to be so completely entrapped in those mountain passes, surrounded by innumerable hordes of barbarians, and destitute both of provisions and ammunition, does appear to us truly astonishing. Whether the fault of this military misnomer is to be attributed to the rashness of the commander, or to the neglect of the Commissariat, remains to be told. But that a fault of no ordinary magnitude has been committed, admits of no second opinion.—The troops under General Sale, at Jellalabad, we conceive to be in a situation little removed from their unfortunate companions, and unless speedily relieved by a powerful and resolute army of succour, must inevitably share the same fate. There is no doubt but those who have suffered, sold their lives dearly and died like brave men. Nor will General Sale, knowing the bloodthirsty treachery of the savages with whom he has to deal, surrender so long as a man is left that can draw a trigger or push a bayonet. Heavy and accursed has been the crime of those treacherous miscreants, and in a corresponding ratio will be the retribution. Every British bosom must swell with responding pride to the prompt, vigorous, and necessary measure of Sir Robert Peel, whose heart, wrung with anguish at the unhappy fate of his unfortunate countrymen, said, ere the breath was cold of the ill-omened messenger who told the sad tale—"*Order 10,000 British bayonets instantly for India.*" As the bolt follows the lightning flash, so shall vengeance recoil upon the heads of those who dare deal treacherously, or tamper with the power of the British Lion.

COUNCIL PAY.—We were not correctly informed as to the division on the Corporation Pay Bill, and published in our last. Alderman Salter's name should have appeared among the members voting in the minority for £30, and Alderman Harding in the majority, for £50.

INDIAN DEPUTATION.—A deputation to England of the Micmac tribe of Indians from this Province, consisting of Joseph Melli Itkobeith, chief; Francois Labobe, and Peter Basket, captains, are stated to have arrived out in the Warspite, frigate, and are now on the return to their homes.

LAUNCHED, at the Ship Yard of Justus S. Wetmore, Esq., Kingston, on the 9th inst., a fine ship named the *Eliza Ann*, of about 732 tons burthen. She is owned by the builder, Mr. Wetmore.

ARRIVAL OF THE 52d REGIMENT.—The transport ship *Java*, (No. 20), Captain Parsons, arrived at this port on Monday, in 28 days from Barbados, having on board the 52d Regiment, destined to relieve the 36th Regiment, now in this garrison, which return to England in the Java. The 52d consists of 1 Lieutenant-colonel, 4 captains, 6 subalterns, 5 Staff, 26 sergeants, 10 drummers, 442 rank and file, 22 women and 56 children. The Officers are Lieutenant Colonel Blois; Captains Murray, Jarvis, Campbell, Mills; Lieutenants Carden, Fountaine, Wedderburne, Wilson, Jones, Hawkins; Paymaster Creagh; Adjutant Brownrigg; Quarter master Clune; Surgeon Wilson; Assistant Surgeon Robinson. The Regiment disembarked on Tuesday in two divisions, on board the Corporation steamer Victoria, and were landed at the Ferry landing, where three hearty cheers were given them by the assembled inhabitants, on their return to New Brunswick after 16 years absence.

We have understood there are but two officers now with the 52d who belonged to the regiment when it left here in 1826, and those are Lieutenant Colonel Blois, who was then a Lieutenant, and Quarter Master Clune. About thirty of the private soldiers of that time are now with the corps. The 52d were inspected yesterday by Lieutenant Colonel Maxwell—their appearance was highly creditable.

DOMESTIC MANUFACTURES.—The attention of the public is called to Mr. Lloyd's advertisement in this day's paper, from which it will be seen that friction matches, manufactured in this country may be had in any quantities. We have some of them before us, which are decidedly better than any imported.

In looking over the Appropriations of the Legislature, we observe that a grant of £200 has been made to the Quartermaster General of Militia for keeping in order the arms of the Militia, which duty has been performed by a Corporal of Artillery for the additional sum of £26, thereby leaving the £200 as a bonus in the hands of the man whom the Assembly delighteth to honour. When Major GALLAGHER held the office, he was paid sometimes £25, and sometimes £50; out of which he paid persons in St. Andrews, St. John, and Fredericton. This sum was thought too much for an old and tried British officer; he was consequently removed to make room for a member of the Assembly, who never smelt gunpowder, "save in the way of kindness," and now £200 is little enough. Who is that who would enquire why the Province is £100,000 in debt?

A TORY MEASURE FOR THE RELIEF OF THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.—Sir ROBERT PEEL has recently introduced into Parliament, a measure which in the depressed state of the middling and lower orders of the people must, while it covers him with glory, meet a response in the bosom of every honest man. We allude to his tax on property and incomes; this tax, falling wholly on the rich, and not at all affecting the poor, has met with the general approbation of the country. The increase of revenue from this scheme is estimated at £3,771,000 in the island of Britain alone; its operation not to extend to Ireland. This we conceive to be the only objectionable feature in the Bill, for although we should be averse to any more taxes being laid upon the poor of Ireland, yet we cannot see any good reason why the man of a large income should be exempt from tax, simply because he lives on that side of the water. We incline to the opinion that hundreds of families of moderate incomes will be driven to live in Ireland, for the express purpose of evading the tax. We trust the ungenerous cry of "*Justice to Ireland*," will now cease, and that Sir Robert will become the idol of the Irish instead of O'Connell.

THE following is the scale of Duties on Timber to be introduced by Sir Robert Peel, at the next meeting of the Imperial Parliament, which if adopted, will be attended with highly injurious effects on the timber trade of the Colonies. We learn from private letters received in this city that a Deputation of Merchants had left Liverpool for London, for the purpose of shewing the Government, the serious injury which the measure if carried would inflict on the North American Colonies:—

Timber.	*Duty.*
Canada Timber	1s.
Foreign	30s.
Deals (cubical contents)	35s.
Lathwood	20s.
For the year ending 5th April, 1844—	
Foreign timber	25s.
Deals	30s.
Lathwood	20s.

WEST INDIA STEAM SHIPS.

To the Editor of the Halifax Post.

SIR,—We were not a little surprised recently to find that nearly all the Halifax News-Paper Publishers had inserted in their columns that "The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company's Steamer Dee, had been totally lost at Turks Island," and in a late Picton paper we observe an article taken from a New Orleans paper, stating that the Dee's Passengers from England were left at Barbadoes and taken from thence by some other conveyance to Turks Island, and there detained *a month, in a state of starvation.* These statements, with others which may be found in some of the American News-Papers, asserting that difficulties had arisen between the authorities of Cuba and Porto Rico, and the Mail Officers of some others of the Company's Steamers, and that an armed force had taken possession of one of them at Havana, and also that the British Consul at that Port had been sent away, *are all base fabrications*, got up by American newspaper scribblers, for the purpose of injuring this line of Steamers in the estimation of the Public in the United States and elsewhere.

We have certain advices of the Dee's arrival at Kingston, Jamaica, on the 20th ult. two days from Turks Island, and no mention is made of her having been on shore. We are therefore the more surprised that Publishers of News-papers in this Province should copy into their columns such vague reports, as are constantly to be seen in the Republican Newspapers, without first ascertaining their veracity—as it can be beneficial to no individual, and might tend to injure the credit of this splendid line of Steamers in public estimation, in these North American Colonies.

We are, Your obt. Serv'ts.

D. & E. STARR & CO.
Agents for the R. M. S. Packets.

Halifax, 15th April, 1842.

CHILDREN LOST.—Two children, the oldest six years of age, belonging to a person named Meagher, residing within four miles of Dartmouth, on the Preston road, near Lake Loon, were lost in the woods last night, and had not been found this morning—their mother is confined, and their father laying sick with the measels. Several persons have gone in search, and we hope they will soon be restored to their parents; but last night must have been a severe one for those innocents.—*Halifax Times.*

[Every possible means has been prosecuted to rescue those unfortunate children, but, we regret to state, no trace of them is yet discovered.]—*Recorder.*

The Post states that these innocents have since been discovered, cold in death and locked in each other's arms, about seven miles from home.

ST. GEORGE'S SOCIETY.—At a Special Meeting of the St. George's Society, held on Monday evening last, at the Hotel, arrangements were made for celebrating St. George's Day by a Procession to St. Paul's Church, where a Sermon, appropriate to the occasion will be delivered by the Rev. Archdeacon Willis, Chaplain of the Society. The Society will also dine together in the evening.—*Ibid.*

1000 Labourers, 50 Stone Cutters, and 50 Masons, are wanted on the St. Lawrence Canal, Cornwall.—*Kingston Chronicle.*

UNITED STATES.

A bill appropriating $550,000 for the construction of an iron bomb-proof steam frigate, on the plan proposed by R. L. Stevens, has passed the United States Senate and House of Representatives.

STEVENS' IRON WAR STEAMER.—The steamer which is to be built on Mr. Stevens' plan is to be shot and shell proof; the engine and propelling apparatus are to be so placed as that the latter shall be submerged, and the whole engine out of the way of shot from the vessel of an enemy. Her guns to be large and to be adapted to both shot and shell, and her burthen not less than 1500 tons. Mr. Stevens' vessel, says the report which has been made in Congress on this subject, will possess many advantages: she will scarcely present a vulnerable point to the fire of the enemy, while those constructed on the old method have a large surface exposed. The hull being low will cause it very difficult to hit her; whereas the lofty sides of a seventy-four will make her a fair mark. Being able to approach within point blank shot, she can fire shells and grape shot into the large port holes of her antagonist, with terrific effect. The thickness of her bulwarks (only 4½ inches) will make a very small opening for the gun necessary, and this is to be effectually protected by a drop curtain of the same materials as the sides of the ship; so that, in truth, her men will be hardly exposed to danger. She will combine all the advantages of a ship and battery, being a kind of floating iron fort, and having no vital points exposed, such as spars, sails, &c. She will be free from accidents, then, which often times render a vessel unmanageable. Hollow shot or shells will burst in pieces against the walls of this steamer, which, if made of wood, they would penetrate, doing as much damage as round shot, and if they exploded much more.—*Philadelphia Messenger.*

STEAMBOAT BURNT.—The steamboat Oneida was burnt a few days since on the Ohio river, about 40 miles below Marietta. The baggage of the passengers, together with about $12,000 worth of machinery was destroyed. Boat and cargo a total loss.

WARLIKE.—Seventeen cannons for New Orleans were placed on board the steam boat Monongahela, at Pittsburg, on Sunday week.

The American Navy Department have put on board the steam frigate Missouri, one of Francis' Life Boats, capable of carrying 100 persons.

There are from twenty to twenty-five millions of pounds of British capital invested in American state bonds, banks, canal and railroad shares.

SERIOUS LOSS OF LIFE.—Washington papers of Thursday state that notice had been received by the Navy Department that the U. S. steam frigate Missouri in ascending the Potomac on Monday ran aground some sixty or eighty miles below Washington, opposite the harbour of Port Tobacco.

Every effort was immediately made to get her off by backing her engines and taking the guns and other weights aft. Lieutenant John F. Borden was sent out in charge of a boat's crew with an anchor, for the purpose of heaving the vessel off, when by some means the anchor got overboard, carrying with it the chain cable, which in running out, either killed or carried overboard every one of the sixteen men on board, including the Lieutenant, and all perished.

The Madisonian says that so far as the facts have come to the Department every precaution seems to have been taken, and there is no reason to attach blame on any one. The Mississippi had been despatched to render aid.

ARRIVAL OF ANOTHER WEST INDIA STEAMER.—H. M. royal mail steam ship Dee, Lt. Oman, arrived this morning from the West Indies. She is last from Nassau, N. P., having left that port on the 3rd instant. The Dee called off Savannah, and put the mails for that place on board a pilot boat: thence she proceeded to Charleston, whence, after remaining some hours off the bar, in a thick fog, and firing several guns, she proceeded to New York, bringing the mail for Charleston with her. The Dee was off the coast on Friday night, but was obliged to stand out at sea, owing to the heavy blow to the North East.

As far as we can learn, the Dee brings nothing new. There is a report in circulation, brought by this vessel, that the steam-bark Clarion, Williams, of this port, was lost on the South side of Cuba, but we cannot trace it to any authentic source. The Dee brings four passengers.

The Dee departs to-morrow morning for Halifax and returns to this port in about ten days.

It will be remembered that an account was published in some of the papers a few weeks ago, that the Dee had been ashore at Turk's Island, and would be a total loss. It was without foundation.—*N. Y. Com. Adv.*

Further Intelligence by the British Mail.

The news is painfully important. We hasten to lay the substance of it before our readers. 10,000 British troops have been slaughtered in India.—Sir William McNaughton, the British Envoy was barbarously assassinated on the 25th of December, and his head paraded through the streets of Cabol on the top of a pole.

In the beginning of January, 5,400 men were cut to peices. Others were shot down instantly by the rebels.—*Post.*

The news from China is to the 17th January, but adds little to what is already known. The Chinese were extremely busy in rebuilding their ruined fortifications of Canton, and Ningpo, and there was question of a second attack upon the latter place. Another ship of war of 60 guns had arrived.

MORE TROOPS FOR INDIA! THE RIFLES FOREVER. The first battalion of the 60th Rifles is under orders for India, the nature of the Rifle service being best adapted for the country in which its operations are to be carried on. The 60th Rifles is one of the most admirably disciplined and efficient regiments in the service, and has never failed to render a good account of its enemies, on whatever service it has been employed.

LONDON TRADE REPORT.

THURSDAY, March 31st.—Business transactions were upon a small scale only to-day, but in prices very little variation took place the; imports were light.

TEA.—The biddings were languid at public sale to day, and the prices taken were a shade lower.—Common Congou, 1s 10d. to 2s 10½d cash.

LONDON MONEY MARKETS.—At Four o'clock on the 4th inst. Consols closed at the London Exchange at 90¼ 1-8

The Great Western steamer having been completely refitted, sailed on her 1st voyage for New York this season, to day, April 2, at 25 minutes past one o'clock. She carries with her an average cargo, and 72 passengers, among whom are M. Derrain, with despatches from the French government; Mr. Isaac Townsend, of the United States Legislation in London, with despatches for the government of the United States; and Mr. Hillard, with despatches for Lord Ashburton.

Her Majesty, Prince Albert and the Court arrived at Buckingham Palace on the afternoon of the 4th at 5 o'clock. The only surviving sister of Lord Nelson died at Kensington on the 28th March.

The news from India created a powerful excitement at all the public places in the neighbourhood of the Exchange, London.

The Earl of Munster, we learn, committed suicide by shooting himself.

A dreadful accident occured on the southwestern Railway on Sunday the 3rd of April. One of the Tunnels fell in and buried a large number of workmen beneath the ruins.

By the Royal Mail line of West India Steamships, a trip from England to Australia is reduced to half the time formerly taken.

Parliament was to re-assemble on the evening of the 4th inst.

The Court of Directors of the E. I. Company, have appointed Sir Geo. Arthur, Bart K. C. H., governor of the Presidency of Bombay.

Fourteen ships of the E. I. Company were to convey troops to India, to sail on the 12th or 15th instant.

The 10th Regiment of foot is to embark immediately for India.

The Acadia arrived home on Friday, the 25th March, in 12½ days from Halifax.

On the 16th March, Strawberries were selling at Covent Garden Market 5s, an ounce.

Sir. Robert Peel had proposed an Income Tax, to meet the public expenditures. Her Majesty had expressed her willingness that her own salary should be made subject to taxation.

The 25th Regt. [from the Cape,] and the 29th, 78th, 84th, and 86th, as well as the 10th, are to proceed to India.

The Duke of Norfolk, Premier Duke of England, died on the 16th March, of Apoplexy.

The splendid and powerful Frigate Vindictive, with the flag of Rear Admiral Sir Thomas Cochrane, sailed for China on the 15th March.

The Minden, 74, has also sailed for China.

10,000 Troops is the number which it is said Government will send to India.

The West India steamer Thames arrived home on the 10th of March.

Lieut. Adams, of the 59th Regt., has been shot in a duel at Malta.

The following officers have been killed in India:—Capt. Wyndham, Lieut. Jenkins, Ensign King, Captain Woodburn, Sir A Burnes, Lt. Burnes, Capts. Swayne, Robinson, Maule, M'Intosh, Laing, Walker, Westmacott, Trevor, Golding; Colonels Oliver, Mackrell; Lts. Raban, Wheeler, Salisbury, Broadfoot, Codrington, C. Rattray; Sir Wm. Hay M'Naughton, Envoy; and Ensign Gordon.

The Wounded are—Major General Sir R. Sale, Major F. Pottinger; Capts. Wade, Mein, Younghusband, Gerard, Bott, M'Kenzie; Lts. Oake, Trere, Jennings, Holcombe, Rattray, Combs, Orr, Eyre, Evans Stuart, Waller, Warburton and Haughton.

Missing—Lt. Hamilton, Capts, C. Troup and H. Johnston.

Prisoners—Capts. Drummond, and Sir A. M'Kenzie; Lts. J. B. Connolly and Lawrence.

(From the Times.)

We do not hesitate to say, the proposals made by Sir Robert Peel last night, and the speech in which he developed them, would be sufficient, if they stood alone, to place him in the first rank of financial statesmen. They are a complete justification of the confidence which the country has reposed in him; and the nation will respond to the appeal made to it, not only with satisfaction but with enthusiasm.

The emergency in which sir Robert Peel found himself was great; the difficulties which surrounded him were most serious. He had to provide at once for an accumulated and progressive deficiency of revenue, and for an increasing expenditure; to sustain the honour of the British name and the integrity of the British empire abroad, and to relieve a distressed population and recruit a paralyzed commerce at home; to reduce the pressure of taxation upon the body of the community, and to augment largely the receipts of the Exchequer. These difficulties he has apparently overcome. In one measure he has comprehended all these objects; and it will be a hard tax for any one who reads his masterly detail, either to gainsay his ends, or to deny the efficiency of the means by which he proposes to accomplish them. His measure is calculated to provide permanently for the whole present and estimated deficiency of the revenue, to provide also for an extensive and systematic reduction of the duties which operate as an impediment to our foreign trade, and, after all, to leave a surplus in the public coffers. And this without laying the weight of a man's little finger upon the poorer classes of society.

[From the Morning Chronicle.]

It is impossible to refuse to the Right Honorable Baronet the praise of great clearness in the mode in which he submitted his very laborious statements to the House. It will be observed that Lord John Russell, while he avoided giving any opinion on the extensive plans of the Right Honourable Baronet, approved of the removal of prohibitory duties, but thought he would have chosen better had he made the reduction on sugar instead of timber.

HOUSE OF COMMONS—TIMBER DUTIES.

Mr. P. Stewart asked if it was the intention of the right hon. bart. at the head of the government to allow any drawback on the immense stock of foreign timber now on hand, and on which the present rate of duty had been paid?

Sir R. Peel had received communications to the same effect, as to the peculiarly large amount of timber which had paid duty, and was at present on hand. The hon. gentleman mentioned one cause of that accumulation. But probably there was another. The intention last year announced by the noble lord opposite (Lord J. Russell) to impose a duty of 24s. per load upon Canadian timber, led those persons to speculate in taking in a large stock, with the hope of escaping the duty. If the duty had been raised in the meantime, as they expected, the increase would not be levied on that timber. (Hear, and a laugh.) The hon. gentleman (Mr. Stewart) asked whether it was his (Sir R. Peel's) intention to allow a drawback on the duty paid? His answer was—Most certainly not. (Hear, hear.) There had been before this a system of drawback in the Customs which operated as a warning against extending it to any new arrangement of Customs' Duties. (Hear, hear.) He (Sir R. Peel) had pretty good reason to know what were the difficulties which attended commercial reforms. He had received communications from several timber merchants, to the effect that the trade was so much depressed that there was no demand for timber, and reductions of price had taken place to the amount of fourpence or fivepence per load. That even with that sacrifice it was impossible to sell Canadian timber. Now his answer to that was, that they should look for a remedy in the general improvement of trade which the reduction of duties would effect. He had no intention of allowing a drawback, but he would give a greater interval before the operation of the new duties than he had at first contemplated. As to Baltic timber, all the communications which he had received showed the importance of the intended reform. (Hear, hear.) But he was perfectly convinced that colonial timber could hold its ground in the market under the new duties. (Hear.)

INCREASE OF THE ARMY.

Besides the 20th, 23d, 29th, 71st, and 97th Regiments, and the 2d Battalion Rifle Brigade, mentioned last week as ordered to be augmented, we have now to report the 10th, 25th, 78th, 84th, 86th, and 91st.

The 10th and 78th (as reported last week,) and 29th, 84th and 86th Regiments, have also received orders to embark for India; and the 25th Regiment proceeds from the Cape of Good Hope.

The Abercrombie Robinson transport was expected to leave Deptford on the 23d instant for