

General Articles.

VERY INTERESTING DOCUMENT.

The following very curious and characteristic letter from the reigning king of Madagascar, has just been published by the order of the House of Commons:—

Extract of a despatch from his Excellency Lieutenant General Sir G. L. Cole, Governor of the Mauritius, dated Mauritius, Nov. 25, 1826, to the Earl Bathurst, K. G.

"It is with very great regret that I transmit to your Lordship the copy of a letter which I have just received from King Radama, informing me of the death of Mr. Hastie, British Agent at Madagascar, on the 18th ult."

TO LIEUT. GENERAL SIR G. L. COLE, GOVERNOR OF MAURITIUS, &c.
Tananarivon, Oct. 25, 1826.

SIR,—I have the honour to do the painful and lamentable duty of informing your Excellency, that James Hastie, Esq. the enlightened and faithful agent of your government at my court for several years, is no more. He expired on the 18th instant, about one o'clock, P. M., after having been very ill for a long time.

By his wise counsels, and his promptitude always to assist the needy and distressed, he has not only attached myself to him more and more every year, but also my people, who lament his loss as a friend and a father; who could conduct himself in such a manner as to attract the affections of persons of every rank among my subjects.

In order to shew my regard for him, and my sorrow at his loss, I directed that every thing in my power should be done to his honour as soon as he died, and to give him as honourable a funeral as can be done in my country; therefore I ordered to fire guns every quarter of an hour, from two o'clock, until even on the day he died, and the same again on the day of his funeral until he was buried.

He was buried on the morning of the 20th instant, in a vault built of stones and mortar, made expressly for him on the 19th; for after learning the manner of tomb his sorrowful partner and his friends here desired to have for him, I immediately issued orders to my ministers to have all the necessary stones collected, and the vault made without delay; and that the grenadiers should escort him to his tomb, and fire over it three rounds, according to the British custom, as I have been told.

Notwithstanding the death of James Hastie, Esq., your agent at my court, yet I. Radama, who have stopped the slave trade in accordance with the treaty which I have entered into with his Britannic Majesty, am still alive; and I am determined, by every means in my power, to abide unchangeably by my stipulations in the treaty, if your Excellency will continue to give me annually what is stipulated in the treaty before mentioned.

I send your Excellency an account of what I have received of the equivalent this year.—I have the honour, &c.

(Signed) RADAMA.

(A true copy) (Signed) F. E. O. VIRET,
Private Secretary.

Important to Masters of Merchantmen.

ADMIRALTY OFFICE, 9th July, 1827.

His Royal Highness the Lord High Admiral having had occasion to call for the opinion of the Counsel to the Admiralty upon certain points relating to the right of seamen entering on board His Majesty's Ships and Vessels from Merchant Ships, to the immediate payment of the wages which may be due to them for their services in such merchant ships, I annex for your information and guidance, a Copy of the Case laid before the Counsel, and of his opinion thereon.

By command of His Royal Highness,
J. W. CROKER.

CASE.—1st. Whether a seaman entering into His Majesty's Navy from a Merchant Vessel is entitled from the Master to an immediate settlement and payment of all his Wages for all his service in such vessel, up to the period of such entry?—2dly. Whether tender by the master of a Bill in payment of such wages be a valid and legal tender?

OPINION.—1st. In order to entitle a Seaman to his wages, the general principle is, that the vessel must have earned her freight, and that he must have remained with her throughout the time of his contract.—The statute of 2d Geo. II. Chap. 36,

has relieved him from the obligation of remaining with the vessel, if it be for the purpose of entering the King's Navy that he quits her; but the necessity for the merchant vessel to earn her freight in order to raise the seaman's right of wages, is left as it was before the statute. He is therefore not entitled, on entering the King's service, to immediate payment from the master of the ship he is leaving; for, perhaps, she may never earn her freight, which is the source and condition of those wages. The statute, in protecting him from that forfeiture of Wages, which, in other cases, is incurred by the act of leaving the Merchant ship, intended to put a person volunteering into the Navy in the same condition, proportionate to the length of his service, with a seaman continuing in a merchant ship throughout; but the statute did not intend that, as to the result of the voyage and the right arising out of it, the seaman volunteering should be put into any better condition than the seaman continuing his service. On the same ground which the statute has taken as to seamen volunteering, seamen impressed were entitled before the statute, to wages, *pro tanto*.—2dly. The Tender of a Bill is not a legal tender; but the seaman, for the reason stated in the last answer, cannot enforce payment till the freight be actually earned, it may be well worth his while in many cases, to take any good bill which the master may be willing to give him.

Dreadful accident at Kirkaldy.—A most dreadful accident occurred at Kirkaldy, on Sunday last (15th June,) the disastrous consequences of which equal if not exceed those produced by the fall of the Brunswick Theatre some months back. From the particulars which have reached us through a correspondent, it appears that the celebrated Mr. Irving (who has been for some weeks back in the active exercise of his ministry through different parts of Scotland) was announced to preach at Kirkaldy, on the days of Saturday and Sunday, which naturally attracted numerous congregations. On the evening of the latter the Chapel was crowded at an early hour to hear (we believe) his farewell sermon. Service had not commenced when the fears of the congregation were excited by a sudden cracking of the beams which supported one of the galleries. The alarm of danger was instantly succeeded by its reality. The gallery gave way, and precipitated with the whole of its occupants into the body of the church. The results were terrific, and the sacrifice of life awfully great. The rush to the doors was tremendous, and in the struggle for life and death, twenty-nine persons are stated to have died from pressure and suffocation. Three were crushed to death by the falling beams, and numbers have received severe contusions. The consternation in the town and neighbourhood when our correspondent's letter came off, was great beyond example. Anxious solicitude was in every face, and inquiry in every mouth, while the grief of the relatives and friends of the sufferers, (among whom was a mother, whose three daughters perished on the occasion) added considerably to the melancholy and heart-rending features of the scene.—*Gore's Liverpool Advertiser, June 19.*

DESTRUCTION OF THE CLYDESDALE STEAMER.

On the morning of Friday se'night the Clydesdale was destroyed by fire on her voyage from Glasgow to Belfast; the loss of human life attending the catastrophe might have been enormous, as the vessel contained upwards of seventy passengers besides the crew; but, fortunately, indeed almost miraculously, not one life was lost. On Thursday, at nine o'clock, P. M. the Clydesdale sailed from Glasgow with seventy passengers, three of them, two ladies and a gentleman, being in the cabin. About seven o'clock one of the ladies remarked that she heard a crackling noise somewhere about the cabin; unfortunately no notice was taken of the observation, and they had retired to rest, when, about ten, the gentleman being disturbed by the noise of a confused tumult overhead, rushed upon deck where he learned that the vessel was on fire. At this time she was about twelve miles to the north of Corsewell Light House. The fire was ascertained to have commenced between the main cabin and the engine room. The attempts to check the devouring element were unavailing; and the feeling of those who were thus exposed to one of the most terrible dangers which can assail humanity, a fire at sea, may be more easily imagined than described.—Captain Turner never for a moment lost his presence of mind, and the conduct of his

crew was most exemplary.—Finding that the only chance of safety was in running the burning mass ashore, he gave orders to the pilot, Maxwell, to that effect, and the latter immediately putting the vessel about, stood manfully to his post, and steered for the Corsewell Light. A common sailing vessel would have been irretrievably lost; but here the paddles were kept at work, the internal heat of the vessel adding to the velocity of their motion, and those who trembled at the destruction impending over them, had the satisfaction to perceive that she dashed on at speed only inferior to their wishes. Kennedy, the keeper of the Corsewell Light, was attending to his duties between 12 and 1, when he heard a strange and indescribable sound from the westward. In a short time he discovered a hazy light in the distance, and the shouts of terror and despair became stronger: soon afterwards he perceived the Clydesdale one mass of fire, her bows and masts covered with human beings, and Maxwell, the pilot, standing undauntedly at the helm, surrounded by flame and smoke. Most fortunately the vessel was accidentally steered into the only indentation in the bold headland of the Corsewell Point; and being held by one of her paddle boxes coming in contact with the rock, the whole of the passengers got on shore, truly thankful for their miraculous deliverance.

A communication was recently addressed to the Society of Arts, &c., London, on the subject of stopping the rot in ships, founded upon the following alleged facts.—In the year of 1786 the author of the communication to the Society was residing on the Gut of Canso, Cape Breton, where he built a brig of 200 tons called the Nero, for a Mr. Williams. The vessel was built of all kinds of green timber, and was filled in between the timbers with a composition of salt and charcoal brought to the consistency of soft paste by cod oil. In 1816 he happened to be in this city, made an examination of the Nero, which was also here at the time, and found her to be as sound to all appearance as when first built.

The Society of Arts &c. is extremely anxious to have the above important facts corroborated by the testimony of Mr. Williams, if alive, or of any other person who may have any knowledge of the circumstances. The Gazette having been made the organ of communicating the wishes of the Society, the Editors will be very thankful for information on the subject, in order that it may be forwarded to London.

The Rev. Rowland Hill, who is now nearly ninety years of age, and his faculties but little impaired, spoke thus in his Sermon on Sunday, 11th May, respecting the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts: "Bless God that I have lived to see the repeal of this abominable act, which required you to take oath that you had received the sacrament before you could hold any worldly office." He then alluded to the unanimous consent of the Bishops, and raising his voice, said "Bless the old gentlemen; I wish they may thus preach themselves to death—it is one of the most glorious deaths they can die whilst engaged in the work of their Lord and Master.—*Liverpool Chronicle.*

Remarkable Prophecy.—The ablest competitors on the Prophecies of Daniel and St. John, were Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Newton, Doctor Zouch, Father Holmes, &c. Though they differ occasionally in the Prophetic symbols, yet all agree at last in one conclusion—that the Eastern or Mahometan apostacy should last for 1260 years, and then its downfall commences. When Daniel wrote, the Jews reckoned only 360 days in the year, and the alteration in the Calendar, making the year 365 days, did not take place till 5 or 600 years afterwards: consequently, Daniel must have meant 1260 years of 360 days each. If this reasoning is correct, this year (1828) is the prophecy complete; for the Turkish date for this year, is 1243. Now, the Turks reckon their years as we do—365 days. If, then, we reduce 1243 years of 365 days each, into years of 360 days each, we shall find that the Mahometan religion has this year lasted 1260 years, with 95 days over.

Extraordinary Supplement to the Journal de St. Petersburg of
May 24.

ST. PETERSBURG, MAY 24.—His Majesty the Emperor received, on the 18th, at Tiraspol, a report from Count Wittgenstein, dated May 16, which contains the following details:—