

house, if ever such buildings should be required. Subscriptions are now being obtained, and there seems to be a general willingness on the part of the community to help us; so that, in a few months, we shall no doubt rejoice in having a comfortable Baptist chapel in Auckland.

DISCUSSION OF THE SABBATH QUESTION IN EXETER HALL.—The great room of Exeter Hall was crowded on Wednesday night to hear a discussion between the Rev. Robert Maguire, incumbent of St. James's Clerkenwell, and Mr. J. Baxter Langley, one of the vice-presidents of "the National Sunday League." Mr. Langley advanced a proposition—"That the opening of public museums, galleries, and gardens, after the hours of divine service on Sunday mornings, would be in accordance with the principles of the Christian religion." Mr. Maguire controverted this proposition. Each disputant spoke twice for half-an-hour; and the demeanour of the vast audience is much lauded by the newspapers. On the platform were many officers of various well-known religious institutions. The discussion was resumed on Thursday evening, when the social aspects of the question were reviewed. The hall, as on the first occasion, was crowded. No resolution was submitted, and no certain test of the opinion of the audience was presented.

THE REV. A. MURSELL AT THE FREE TRADE HALL, MANCHESTER.—On Sunday afternoon, the Rev. A. Mursell delivered his eighth lecture to working men; and, notwithstanding the bad state of the weather, the large hall was again crowded. The subject of the lecturer was "Cross Roads."

"Sir George Rich has published an address to the nation from the Committee of the National Club, on the Government of India. It concludes with the following admirable suggestions:

"The points, then, to urge on the Legislature are these:—

"1. That the Bible shall be an admitted, and not an excluded, book in all schools established or supported by the Government.

"2. That the general administration in India be henceforth conducted on Christian principles.

"3. That support be given only to the pure Christian faith, and no sanction whatever to any form of idolatry. Tolerate, though we must, what is false—countenance, support, establish only what is true.

"But if we are to confer these blessings on our Indian fellow-subjects, we must well remember that it is worse than idle to be asking for India what we do not value for ourselves—to be requiring that a Christian character should be given to the Indian Government, at the same moment that we may fail in defending the Christianity of our own. Wretched inconsistency! fatal error! to pretend zeal for Christian Government abroad, and to promote, or stand tamely by, tolerating its abandonment at home."

European & Foreign News.

FRANCE.

On Tuesday last week a religious service was performed at the Invalides, to commemorate the translation of the ashes of Napoleon I. on this anniversary. As usual it was attended by a great many old soldiers of the Empire in their well-worn uniforms, who, after the service, marched, in procession, with drums beating, to the Place Vendôme, where they deposited immortelles at the foot of the column.

Permission has been given for the whole of the exiled generals to return to France without condition of any kind. This is said to be owing to the interference of Marshal Pelissier, who represented to the Emperor that it would be injudicious to make an exception in favour of any individual, but that all should alike participate in the favour.

ITALY.

In Vienna official circles it is related that, in obedience to the orders received from St. Petersburg, the Russian minister at Naples has again advised the Neapolitan Government to make its peace with the Western powers. The well-meant counsel was, however, completely thrown away, for M. Caraffa remarked, that as Naples had given no offence to the great maritime powers, there was no reason why she should humble herself before them.

GAS IN CALCUTTA.—The following is an extract from a private letter received in Southampton from Mr. James Durkin, the engineer-in-chief of the Oriental Gas Company at Calcutta:—"Calcutta, Oct. 22, 1857. Well, I can say that I had the honour of enlightening the darkness of Calcutta for the first time with gas; that, at all events, will be something to remember. The astonishment of the natives was indeed very great; even among the better informed the enquiry was, 'Sir, will you be so kind as to tell us how the lamp burns without a wick?' Among the lower orders there was an impression that it could be made to blow them all up; that the Governor-General had a key at the Government House, by turning which he could at his pleasure blow up the whole city. At such a critical time you may depend we did not take the trouble to disabuse their minds of the idea; indeed we rather strengthened it; nor could we get a native on any consideration even to touch a lamp-post for fear it should explode. They are now, however, getting more familiar with it, though the lamp-lighters are still followed by a crowd, especially when we light up a new street or district."

BURNING OF THE "SARAH SANDS" SCREW

TRANSPORT STEAMER.—The Sarah Sands transport steamer on her passage to India from Portsmouth with the head quarters and about 400 men of the 54th Regiment on board. This may be considered one of the most marvellous catastrophes on record. The ship was burning furiously in a heavy gale of wind in 16 hours, the whole of her after part being burnt out to a shell.

She was an iron ship, upwards of 2000 tons burden. The voyage appears to have been favorable until the 11th November, when the ship was about 40 miles from the Mauritius. About 3 o'clock in the afternoon of that day the troops berthed on the after orlop deck noticed a smell of burning, which apparently proceeded from beneath them in the hold. It rapidly increasing, the alarm was given to Captain Castle, who at once ordered the after-hold to be examined, and, to the astonishment and horror of all, the cargo stowed there proved to be on fire. It is stated that the bulk of the cargo there consisted of government stores.

Bale after bale was hauled up in the hope of getting at the seat of the fire; but in a short time the smoke became so dense as to defy any of the crew getting further into the hold. There was no confusion, however; every order was obeyed by the men with coolness and courage. The course of the ship was stopped. Colonel Moffat was seen in earnest consultation with Captain Castle, deciding upon measures for suppressing the flames, while the crew were actively employed in taking all sail in and bringing the ship before the wind. Others ran out lengths of hose from the fire-engines, which were passed down to the hands below. It soon became apparent that all these exertions failed in checking the progress of the fire. Colonel Moffat, at the suggestion of the commander, directed his men to at once cast overboard all their ammunition, and in a short time they succeeded in clearing out the starboard magazine. The remainder of the powder in the port magazine, however, excited great apprehensions. Already had the after part of the ship become almost unapproachable from the dense smoke and heat which filled every portion of it. The Colonel appealed to his men for volunteers to attempt to rescue the contents of the magazine now so threatened. Several brave fellows instantly came forward and heroically succeeded in reaching the magazine and clearing it with the exception, it is supposed, of one or two barrels. It was truly hazardous work, several nearly lost their lives, they became overpowered with the smoke and heat, and fell, and when hauled up by ropes on deck they were senseless. The flames soon afterwards burnt up through the deck, and running along the various cabins speedily set the whole on fire. There was a heavy gale blowing at the time, and Captain Castle, perceiving the critical position of the ship, at once took measures for the safe lowering of the boats. They were launched without the least accident, the troops were mustered on deck, there was no rush to the boats, and the men obeyed the word of command with as much order as on parade. Provisionally the bulkhead of the after part of the ship withstood the action of the flames. Here all the efforts were concentrated to keep it cool.

Towards 2 o'clock on the following morning the men had the satisfaction of seeing the fire diminishing. The flames were gradually beaten back, and by day-light were entirely extinguished. It was not till then the fearful havoc made by the fire was clearly ascertained. The after part of the ship was burnt out—merely its shell remaining, and now another fate threatened her. The gale still prevailed, and the ship lay rolling and pitching in a heavy sea, constantly shipping water at the port quarter, which had been blown out by the explosion. She had 15 feet of water in the hold, and active steps were necessary to prevent her foundering. Captain Castle, fearing the stern would fall out, got two hawsers under the bottom and made them taut. The next difficulty was to stop the water which was pouring in through the quarters. Spare sails and blankets were placed over the opening and the leak was partially stopped. It was not till 2 o'clock in the afternoon that the boats containing the women and children could be got alongside. They were got on board, and the other boats which had been ordered off during the raging of the fire, returned with the exception of the gig, which had been swamped during the night; the officer in charge of her, however, Mr. Wood, and the hands were picked up by another boat. By the evening of the 13th the crew succeeded in securing the stern and getting steerage way on the ship. Captain Castle then set all sail, and bore up in the hope of making Mauritius, and to the joy of all on board made that port in eight days, where her arrival and marvellous escape excited considerable sensation.

TELEGRAPH OBSTRUCTED BY SPIDERS.—Telegraphic communication was suddenly stopped on the lines near Elmira, New York, lately, and on search being instituted, it was discovered that, at a point where the auxiliary lines run only six inches apart, the spiders had woven their webs from one wire to the other, and the constant dripping of the water from the dews and fogs through the different threads of the webs to the lines below formed a complete circuit for the electricity, rendering the efforts of the operator to communicate powerless. The tiny threads of the spiders being removed, and the lines spread further apart, telegraphic communication was immediately resumed.—American paper.

AN EDUCATIONAL FRANCHISE.—A memorial in favour of an educational franchise, signed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Brougham, Lord Campbell, Lord Shaftesbury, and a vast number of persons of political and literary distinction and of various shades of opinion, has been forwarded to Lord Palmerston.

A HERO'S SISTER.—Lieutenant Salkeld, the young soldier who gloriously blew open the gate of Delhi, is no more. Mr. Punch has but one word to say. It has reached him that the heroic Salkeld's sister is admirably doing her duty as governess in a London family. Surely, Lord Palmerston,—surely, House of Commons, should the lady remain at that honourable duty, England having read the Delhi despatch, it will be from choice, not from need.—Punch.

A young man, who states his age to be twenty-four, and who is known to be the son of a clergyman and baronet, was, on Tuesday, sent to gaol for three months, with hard labour, by the City of London magistrates for stealing a bag, worth two shillings, from a shop door. The prisoner had been twice before imprisoned for theft.

A gentleman named Allen has invented an electro-magnetic engine, which is said to furnish a motive power more economical than steam, in countries where, as in France and Spain, coal is dear, if not in England, where this fuel is comparatively cheap.

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