

May 10, 1856

Miscellaneous.

THE COSTS OF THE WAR.—The costs of the war as far as appears in the public accounts, are not yet of the formidable character familiar to the older class of our readers. For the last year they are not to be compared with any one of the latter years of the old war, nor are they to be compared with the losses of the country by its manias for Railway speculation, for reckless trading, for loans to new States, for bubble companies, or even with the loss by a bad harvest. It is evident, indeed, that if a necessity lay on us, we could easily carry on the war with Russia on a much grander scale than at present. We have already called our attention to the chief figures in our remarks upon the quarterly returns at the close of the year, but a fuller return, just published, gives us more sight into the state of our affairs. It appears that last year the excess of expenditure over income was 21,141,183*l.* It is but two or three years since that there was an annual surplus of several millions—nay, in the very paper before us, oddly enough, there is a payment of 18,557*l.* to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, according to the Act compelling that application of surplus revenue. We all remember with what beaming delight our Chancellors of the Exchequer used to announce a surplus of a million or two; and how the members cheered, and how the knowledge of the fact used to bring a dozen deputations in a week to the treasury. A year of war, then, has made the difference ten times as great against us, instead of for us. That, too, only gives a very partial view of the case. It is a difference the wrong way, in the face of an increased taxation. We raised last year an income of 63,364,605*l.*, which is about 16,000,000*l.* more than we have raised at any recent date. One tax alone we were actually preparing to dispense with altogether, and last year we doubled it, and raised thereby 13,718,185*l.* It shows how the iron has entered into our soul, how well we stand to be fleeced, and what excellent fleeces we carry, that we have individually stood and delivered at the call of the collector a personal tax yielding, in the aggregate, two-thirds as much as the customs, less than 3000,000*l.* short of the Excise, and twice as much as the Stamps. The Customs for the year were 20,987,752*l.*; the Excise, 16,380,586*l.*; the Stamps, 6,805,604*l.*; and the produce of the Property-tax, to which we refer, was no less than 13,718,185*l.*—a larger sum, we believe, than was ever raised by a direct impost from one people since the beginning of the world. But now for the darker side of the picture, of which neither is very bright. The national "defences" last year cost us nearly fifty millions, and a good deal more, probably, if the whole truth could now be known. Of this the army cost us 14,545,059*l.*; the Navy, 19,014,608*l.*; the Ordnance, 9,632,290*l.*; and there was also a vote of credit for additional expenses connected with the war of 5000,000*l.*—Only seven years ago a distinguished statesman used to say that, if he returned to power, he would undertake to do the defences for ten millions; and that was the limit to which Mr. Cobden proposed to reduce it. That much is gone for ordinance alone—for guns, powder and shot! What might we not have done with this fifty millions had Nicholas and the genius of Catherine allowed us a choice in the matter! The interests of the debt itself is pale by the lurid light of this vast extravagance. It is only 26,899*l.* for all kinds of debt, permanent and terminable, funded and unfunded. The hideous waste has just this grain of consolation that if we can raise double the interest of the debt for purposes of war, we might, if we so pleased, raise as much for the extinction of the debt itself. As for the charges on the Consolidated Fund, that we hear of so much and which are the object of so much constitutional jealousy that only this week the Home Secretary was solemnly promising not to put on this fund the government subvention to the County and Borough Police, they become a mere bagatelle by the side of these monster items. They come to 1,724,705*l.*, comprising 396,570*l.* for the Civil List, on which there is always such a fight at the beginning of a reign; 340,931*l.* for those words of terror about which so many "Black Books" have been written—"Annuities and Pensions;" 162,697*l.* for the minor abominations called "Salaries and Allowances;" 149,241*l.* for diplomatic salaries and pensions, also often the subject of economical strictures; 493,982*l.* for the Courts of Justice; and 182,118*l.* for Miscellaneous Charges. Under the Supply Services there comes the item, for Miscellaneous Civil Services, 6,741,126*l.* Hence it results that for all the purposes of peace we spent last year 8,455,811*l.*—about one-sixth of what we spent of war. This is just as if a man spent 500*l.* a year in pushing on a miserable lawsuit, and, in order to do that, confined the meat, drink, clothing

housing, and education of a numerous family within the beggarly allowance of 100*l.* "But how about the deficiency?" we can fancy some of our more knowing readers exclaiming, "and the debt, past, present, and to come?" Well, one ought to know something about it, for here is "an account of the Balances of the Public Money," professing to state to a penny how the Debtor and Creditor account of the nation stood on January 1. But we shall not be party to any such delusion. If there is one thing which no Chancellor of the Exchequer can know in time of war, even a little war—a war against the Caffres, for example—it is the state of the public balance. Exactly one year and a quarter since we ventured to intimate that parliament, then on the point of meeting, would speedily be called on to sanction a loan; and we received an angry disclaimer of any such intention, there being every prospect, it was said, of the war being paid for out of income. Since that time, besides double income-tax and other war taxes, we have borrowed and spent every farthing of 16,000,000*l.*, and have increased our Unfunded Debt from about 16,000,000*l.* to more than 23,000,000*l.* Thus we have increased our debt, if we are not mistaken, about 23,000,000*l.* altogether since the beginning of the war. When such are the figures, the exact balance at any moment in the Exchequer seems to us a formality of very little consequence. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is sure to have powers to make a balance by issuing bills of one sort or another, and when he has run that source dry he asks parliament for leave to fund his debt and issue more bills. The real gist of the question is the excess of expenditure over income, for that must be met in one way or another, and is not likely to diminish so long as the war lasts. Last year it was 21,141,188*l.*, and, as only 16,000,000*l.* of that have been met by a loan, expenditure for the present year, peace or no peace, is likely to be quite as much as the last, we cannot help suspecting that we shall want another loan of sixteen, or even twenty millions, before the year is out.

A CHRONICLE OF COLD WEATHER.—Some have described the present winter as the coldest on record. But there have been some remarkable spells of bitter weather known before our day, as the following chronicle, which we find in the New York Times, will show:—

In the year 301, the cold was so intense in Europe, that the Black Sea was frozen entirely over.

In 401, the Pontus Sea, and the sea between Constantinople and Scutaria in Turkey, were entirely frozen over.

The Danube was frozen over in 462, so that a whole army crossed on the ice.

The Black Sea was again frozen over in 765 and the snow drifted to the depth of 50 feet.

Carriages crossed the Adriatic Sea or Gulf of Venice, in 859; and in 860 the cold was so intense that cattle froze to death in their stalls. The Mediterranean Sea was so thickly frozen over, that it was passable for carriages and horses, and merchandise was transported across it on the ice.

1133. This year, the river Po, in Italy, was frozen from Cremona to the sea; wine burst the casks containing it, and the trees split with a loud report.

1216. The river Po was frozen to the depth of sixteen feet.

1234. The Mediterranean was again frozen over, and a whole pine forest was killed by the cold.

1282. This year, the snow was so deep in Austria, that the houses were entirely buried beneath it, and many persons perished.

1292. The Rhine was frozen over, and the snow is represented as being of an "enormous depth."

1323. The Baltic was frozen over, so as to be passible for six weeks.

1344. All the rivers in Italy were frozen over.

1349, 1492, and 1408. The Baltic Sea was frozen over in each of these years.

1384. The Rhine and Gulf of Venice were frozen over.

1423, 1426, and 1458. In each of these years the travelling from Lubec to Prussia was performed on the ice.

1520. The sea between Constantinople and Iskodar was passible on the ice.

1670. The cold was intense throughout Europe.

1681. This year the cold was so severe as to split whole forests of oak trees.

1690. Scotland this year was visited with an awful snow storm, which lasted thirteen days and nights, during which time nine-tenths of the sheep were frozen to death, and many shepherds lost their lives.

1692. Wolves came into Vienna, and attacked men and women, owing to the intense cold and hunger.

1729 and 1630. In one of these years, another

snow storm visited Scotland, in which about twenty thousand sheep and many shepherds were lost—"by a single day's snow."

1776. This year the Danube was frozen over five feet thick below Vienna.

Scotland was the scene of another terrible snow storm in 1794, which is the most extraordinary one of which there is any record. In one single night snow fell to the depth of eight or ten feet, and in some places the most lofty trees were entirely covered. By this one night's storm seventeen shepherds lost their lives, and thousands of sheep, besides other animals, were destroyed. One farmer alone lost 1400 sheep. After the storm had somewhat disappeared, there were found collected together (by its violence) in one spot, the dead bodies of two men, one woman, forty-five dogs, three horses, nine black cattle, one hundred and eighty hares, and one thousand eight hundred and forty sheep.

The above contains the most remarkable accounts of severe weather in the old world; and some of which could hardly be believed were they not well authenticated by the histories of the times. This contrasts strangely with the weather of recent times there, and of the present, in the new world until the Winter we are now passing out of.

NECESSITY OF THE SABBATH.—Dr. Farr, one of the first physicians in England or in any other country, pledged, before a committee of the House of Commons, his professional character to the declaration that the most extensive researches he had been able to make into physical nature had brought him to the conviction that the Sabbath law is stamped no less imperishably in the Decalogue, than it is on the constitution of man and beast; and that though, of course, no mere physical investigation could determine the precise amount, or the particular times and seasons, much less the day of suspension, there was wrought into the fabric and frame work of organized life a necessity for periodical suspension even of healthful toil; and that the suspension actually ordained by the Sabbath law, or its equivalent, could never, in the long run, be violated without present retribution. I have heard a confirmation of this testimony, which is not a little curious. A postmaster was known to have long made it a standing rule, that no horse should leave his stable for work on the Sabbath. Some anti-Sunday transitorians, delighted with the report of this man's constant practice, were desirous of his evidence, as a conscientious observer of the Sabbath. Great, however, was their surprise, when they found out that the postmaster repudiated all religious feelings on the subject, and gave his simple reason, that he had found it essential to his cattle that they should have one day's rest in seven, and that he knew his own interest too well to let them be cheated out of it.

Strong as the above argument is in favour of the day of weekly rest, still stronger are found in the Bible, both in the Old and the New Testament.

TERRIBLE SHIPWRECK AMONG THE ICEBERGS.—We gave some particulars yesterday as received by telegraph, of loss of the ship John Rutledge, on the passage from Liverpool for New York. The ship Germainia, from Havre, arrived at New York, reports:

"On the 23th of Feb. a ship's boat was seen ahead of the Germainia. A boat was immediately sent from the latter to the rescue, when a sad spectacle presented itself. In the boat adrift were found one living man and four dead bodies, one of the latter being that of a female. The survivor, Thomas W. Nye, of New Bedford, sat amid the dead, frozen in hands and feet, and himself nearly dead from starvation. He and the dead by his side were all that remained above the waters, out of thirteen who nine days before had left the wreck of the ship John Rutledge, Capt. Kelly, of this port, belonging to Messrs. Howland and Bridge-way. The story of the John Rutledge, as given by Mr. Nye, is as follows:

The John Rutledge sailed from Liverpool on the 16th of January. On the 18th of February, in lat. 45 34, long. 46, 56 W., she fell in with the ice. On the 19th she entered a field of ice, but cleared it. Soon afterwards, however, on the same day, she encountered an iceberg which stove a hole in her bow, and damaged her to such an extent, that at six o'clock in the evening she was a complete wreck and evidently sinking. Nothing remained but for those on board to abandon the wreck as they could. Five boats were lowered, four of which took their loads and left. In the fifth boat, which was the one found by the Germainia, the mate of the John Rutledge, Mr. Atkinson, and several others were just about entering, when it broke adrift with the thirteen already in it, leaving the mate and those with him to go down with the wreck. Those in the boat now pulled it through the water and ice as they were able, but

soon their compass was broken, and amid the snowy and cloudy weather which followed, they knew not which way they went. Days passed on, and one by one the thirteen in the boat sank in death, from the combined effects of cold and starvation, and were thrown overboard, until on the 28th of February, Mr. Nye, with the four dead, among whom was Mrs. Atkinson, the wife of the mate, was picked up by the Germainia."

The Germainia cruised about in the hope of falling in with the other boats, but it is feared that all on board have perished, as the Germainia experienced very severe weather after picking up the boats. The Courier and Enquirer remarks:—

The reader will not fail to notice that the track where the Germainia encountered the ice on the 28th of February, and where the John Rutledge was lost upon it on the 19th of the same month, is about the same where Arago encountered it on the 18th of January, the Atlantic on the 19th of February, the Arago on the 22d, the Baltic on the 27th of the same month, the Persia on the 31st of January, the Africa on the second of March, and about the same as that were the Edinburg on the 27th of February, saw what has been supposed by some to be the wreck of the Pacific.—Boston Traveller.

EDITING A NEWSPAPER.—There are people who think it an easy matter to edit a newspaper—and those who think any man of education can succeed in the profession. But the truth is, there are comparatively few men who succeed in it, and for the reason they do not regard it as a profession, requiring study and preparation. It is also a laborious profession, when pursued with an industry sufficient to secure success. The Boston Daily Post furnishes a paragraph which gives a great deal of truth in a few lines:—

"A good editor, a competent newspaper conductor, is, like a general or a poet, born—not made.—On the London daily papers, all the great historians, novelists, poets, essayists, and writers of travels, have been tried and nearly all failed. We might say all; for, after a display of brilliancy, brief, but grand, they died out, literally. "I can said a late editor of the Times to More, 'find any number of men of genius to write for me, but very seldom one of common sense.'"

The thunderers in the Times, therefore, have so far as we know, been men of common sense. The nearly all successful editors have been of this description; Campbell, Carlyle, Bulwer, and D'Israeli failed; Barnes, Steerling and Phillips succeeded.—A good editor seldom writes for his paper; He reads judges, selects, dictates, alters and combines; and to do all this well, he has but little time for composition. To write for a paper is one thing—to edit a paper is another.—N. W. Christian Advocate.

LORD LYNDBURST AND THE CHURCH.—Lord Lyndhurst has given notice of a motion to enact that when any case of presumed heresy is brought before a bishop, it shall be in the discretion of the bishop to proceed with the action or not; and in order that there may be no doubt as to the real purpose of the proposed enactment, it is made to apply to "any case now pending." Arch-deacon Denison's case is, therefore, obviously and unmistakably aimed at. We have very few words to offer on the subject. If Lord Lyndhurst's motion is carried, there is an end of liberty in the English Church.—The bishops henceforth will be autocratical and supreme.—Standard.

The Northern Christian Advocate says that "Barnum, after having hoaxed every body else, turns out at last to be badly hoaxed himself. His enormous wealth is gone and he is a bankrupt.—The loss of his property is nothing to the loss of his character. By his shameful autobiography, he voluntarily placed himself among the lowest cheats, and published his contemptible villanies to the world. It was not to be excepted that a man of his infamous character, however great his ill-gotten wealth, could long be suffered to prosper.—Retribution almost invariably overtakes such men in this life.

A VERY USEFUL APPARATUS.—The oddest invention of recent date is a steam thawing machine, invented, made and used in Cincinnati. It was built by Mr. Latta, the builder of the steam fire engine, and is owned and used by the fire department of that city to thaw fire plugs, hydrants, cisterns, pumps or any such water arrangement that may be frozen. It is mounted on a sleigh, and looks like a stove, with a pipe rising from it, from which the smoke issues. At the bottom a furnace burns, and from the top a gutta percha hose issues, to the end of which is attached a piece of iron pipe. The steam is conveyed through this hose and pipe into the fire-plugs, etc., and produces the desired thaw. When the job is finished the sleigh is remounted and the machine is driven off to another place. The boiler consumes about three gallons of water in four hours, and the fireman says that it is the best thing for the purpose.