

BIRMINGHAM POLITICAL UNION.

The Council of the Birmingham Political Union have published the following address:—

Second Address of the Council of the Birmingham Political Union, to all their fellow countrymen in the United Kingdom.

"Friends, countrymen and brothers!—Our gracious King firm and inflexible in defence of his people, has again come forward in the moment of their extreme need. Regardless of the clamours of an infuriated faction, howling around the steps of his throne, he has again, in person, nobly put forth his royal prerogative in our defence, and has sent the House of Lords back into the midst of the people, to receive a lesson of the duties which they owe to their country, and of the extreme dangers which must arise, if they should rashly persist in placing themselves in opposition to the irresistible will of the nation!

"Friends and Fellow Countrymen!—Our road is clear.—Our mind is made up. We will stand by Lord Grey. That illustrious statesman has declared that the Bill of Reform shall become a law, in all its essential principles and provisions. The whole history of his life forbids us to distrust his word. The strength of an united nation, which he wields, forbids us to distrust his power. Therefore we will stand by Lord Grey. And if by possibility he should be driven from power, we will carry him back upon the shoulders of the people.

"Friends and fellow Countrymen—The King, the Ministers, the House of Commons, and the people, are all united. All these have given proof that they are true to the cause of liberty, and that they are determined to carry the Bill of Reform into a law. This holy league is invincible. Nothing can shake its power, if no discord or disunion arises in itself. It is for you, therefore, to shun discord as the only rock on which your hopes can be wrecked. Discord among yourselves would give to your enemies the only possible change of obtaining a triumph over you. Let no disunion arise among you; and nothing can prevent the downfall of that atrocious oligarchy which has so long trampled upon the liberty and the happiness of the country.

"Friends and fellow Countrymen—At the same time that we show confidence in the King and in his Ministers, and a fixed determination to preserve the law, let us show no weakness, no timidity, no lukewarmness in the cause of liberty. Let all be united as one man, in the enthusiastic and determined support of this great, this holy cause. Let political unions be formed instantly in every town, in every district, and in every village, where they do not already exist. Let the nation stand forth in its strength, and in peaceful and commanding majesty express its will; and that will is certain to become the law of the land.

Friends and fellow countrymen!—Be patient. Be peaceful. Be firm. Be united. Be determined. Place your confidence in the King and his Ministers. Until these shall deceive you, there can be no fear for the Liberties of England.

Friends, countrymen, and brothers—Listen to us. The sword must not be drawn in England. The terrible knell of the tocsin must not sound. The tears of the widow and the orphan must not mark our course. These are the last dread alternatives of an oppressed nation. The influence of the oligarchy, aided by a corrupt and degenerate bench of bishops, has obtained a momentary triumph in the House of Lords. By the power of the King and of the law, we will humble the oligarchy in the dust. Our gallant neighbors, the French, effected a glorious revolution by lifting the barricades, cemented with the best blood of the nation. We will have no barricades. Without blood—without anarchy—without violation of the law, we will accomplish the most glorious reformation in the history of the world.

God bless the King.

"THOMAS ATTWOOD, Chairman.

"By order of the Council.

"BENJAMIN HADLEY, Secretary."

From Bell's Weekly Messenger.

DISTRESSES AND DIFFICULTIES IN GENERAL TRADE, AND THE CAUSES EXPLAINED.

It is impossible to look round us, and not perceive that great distress exists in every branch of Trade, Commerce, and Manufactures. From the year 1821 to 1824, Agriculture laboured under the heaviest pressure. It has partially revived, though it experienced a slight relapse last year; but trade and commerce, since the fatal blow which they experienced in 1826, have never recovered; fresh embarrassments have arisen, and new ones are every day thickening over them.

We have been accustomed, of late to see names in the Gazette, which every man deemed as firmly fixed in

their counting-houses as our native oaks in their forests. But the tempest, has torn them up, and many of them now lay prostrate on the highways, whose names have been long emblazoned in the first walks of commerce and opulence. It has been with great regret that we have seen such names as those of Manning, Palmer, and others, formerly East India and Bank Directors, added to the list of bankrupts.

If we seek the causes of these extensive misfortunes, we find many of them sufficiently apparent. The Bank circulation has diminished two millions within little more than a year. If we take the period of the late Revolution in France, we find that its circulation has been contracted within that time from £19,200,000 to £17,200,000. The funds within the same period have declined from 92 to 82. All the great staples of the country have been diminished in the same proportion. Wool and woollen yarn, notwithstanding their rise in the beginning of the year, much owing we believe to the speculations of American dealers, have fallen back to their usual stagnation. Cotton was scarcely ever lower; and this cannot be ascribed to the excess of importation. Iron, both in Wales and Staffordshire, is at a most ruinous price. Lead is so low in our own market, and so depressed abroad by the competition of the Spanish mines,—where it is picked up upon the surface of the soil, and requires little more than smelting—as to afford no remunerating price. Colonial produce, not excepting that which is grasped by the monopoly of the East India Company, is reduced to an unparalleled extent.

The state of things which he have above sketched depends upon documents which we cannot alter, viz. the Price Currents, and therefore we cannot be suspected of exaggeration. But these disasters, confined in the beginning to the wholesale dealer, have at length passed into the retail trade.

It was observed by Sir R. Peel, in his speech on the Reform Bill, that, notwithstanding the longest season ever known in London, the pressure on all shopkeepers had been most severe, and retail trade had been cut to the quick; and at a late interview between Lord Grey and a deputation from Birmingham, Lord G. admitted that manufactured goods had fallen fifty per cent, since the alteration of the currency.

But there is further evidence of the appalling distress of the times in the number of writs issued during the last two years and a half. By the report of the Law Commissioners, it appears, that seventy thousand affidavits have been filled for holding debtors to bail within that period. In all manufacturing districts, at this moment, legal process is sued out to a frightful extent, and more particularly in the potteries, and hardware districts.

Having made this short and melancholy statement, and with no purpose of infusing gloom, where it is our duty to prompt to energy and exertion, we purpose shortly to point out the two main causes of the present stagnation and distress, in addition to what we have above detailed. They appear to be these:—First, the political state of Europe. Secondly, the fluctuating system of finance pursued by Ministers.

The uncertain condition of public affairs has unhinged all the markets of the continent, and the visitation of the dreadful pestilence of the cholera, has augmented the evils arising from public agitation. The great markets of Germany have been less thronged during the spring, the summer, and autumn, than was ever known. The large dealers who used to arrive from Bohemia and Hungary, are kept at home from the apprehensions of the plague; whilst the civil war in Poland has not only interrupted the dealings of the Provinces on the banks of the Vistula and the Niemen, but has shut out from the markets of Europe the numerous Russian merchants who came from the extreme banks of the Wolga and the Don. The rich provinces of Galicia and Dalmatia have been deterred, by the same causes, from the German marts; and though our trade with Italy and the Archipelago has not suffered to the same extent, it has still been deranged in a great degree by the like disturbing effects.

It is not to be doubted, therefore, that the agitated state of Europe, in addition to the evils of that dreadful pestilence which "walketh by day, and whose arrow flieth by night," have produced the most disastrous consequences to our general trade and commerce.

Our large trade with America has indeed failed us, but the Southern States are in a condition so unsettled and unsafe, that their commerce has been more than usually unproductive. Since the late change of Government of the Brazils, the commerce with that part of the globe, has been almost stagnant, and the merchant thinks himself fortunate if he can get his goods back, without expecting any sale or remittance.

If such have been the effects upon trade and commerce from the political agitations of Europe, candor requires us to add, that the fluctuating system of

finance pursued by Ministers has been the second disturbing cause.

We do not blame Lord Althorp for impediments which he could not master, owing to the state of the House of Commons when he first brought forward his budget. But his Canada Timber Bill has been productive of great embarrassment in that large branch of our trade. Our own opinions upon this Bill have been before expressed; but the plan of equalizing, or nearly equalizing, the duties upon Baltic and Canada Timbers, should either have been openly abandoned during the present session, or otherwise firmly maintained. Lord Althorp has pursued neither of these courses. He has temporised with the Timber Trade, and has thereby struck a blow at the most active branch of industry, which is connected with the large subject matter both of our navigation and imports, and domestic labor, and building.

It has been nearly the same as regards the wine trade. It is now nearly ten months since alteration in these duties were first proposed; and wisely proposed. The bill is not yet passed, and the stagnation of trade, which commenced from the first notification of the new finance measure, has still continued. If we look into the Gazette we shall find that nearly one hundred wine merchants have become bankrupts since Lord Althorp's Bill was first broached in the House of Commons.

Another large class of commercial men has also suffered from the uncertainty of our financial system—the West India merchants. A promise, as sacred as almost any public pledge could be, had been given to them, to relieve their produce from some portion of taxation; that is, at least from the old war duties. They were completely unnoticed in the last budget, and the consequence has been,—the most severe and appalling failures amongst the merchants concerned in the West India Trade.

It is our duty also to add, that from the delay of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in not bringing forward the usual annual exposition of finance, the money market has been greatly deranged.

Formerly, a reduced price of stocks, such as that which has lately taken place, from 92 to 82, was scarcely deemed an evil. It invigorated and revived trade, by the infusion of new capital, and the public securities were only momentarily depressed, in order that the fund-holder might pour his treasures into the channels of enterprise—reviving again, as these securities were sure to do, from the accumulations and increased investments of successful trade.

But this has not been the case in the late fall of stocks. Capital has not been withdrawn for the purpose of active employment, but for the purposes of hoarding, in order to watch the turn of public affairs and the financial proceedings of the Government.

The first thing, therefore, that Ministers owe to the public, is a full exposition of the national income and expenditure, and of our actual financial state.

LITERATURE, &c.

FROM THE LONDON NEW MONTHLY FOR OCTOBER.

ANTI-INNOVATION.

PLAGUE take the world! why cannot it stand still, or go on as it used to do when I was a boy? What do the people mean by the progress of events and the march of intellect? What good ever came by changes? How is it possible that any man can be wiser than his father? where can a man get his wisdom from, but from his father? and his father cannot give him more than he has got to give. Ah dear! ah dear! I remember the time when the parish beadle was a man of some consequence, when a lord was a thing to be stared at and a sight to be talked about—and the King!—Why no man in his senses ever thought of the King but with the profoundest respect. Every day after dinner as soon as my father had said grace, he poured out a bumper of port and drank "Church and King." It did one's heart good to see and hear him; it was as good as a sermon. The wine itself seemed conscious of the glory of its destination to be swallowed not unblest, and it looked bright in the glass and seemed to dance with eagerness to meet his lips. But now o' days if I venture to toast Church and King, I am forced to do it in a hurried, irreligious sort of way, with a kind of a sneer, as much as to say, it's all in my eye; or my boy Tom will laugh at me and drink the majesty of the people. The majesty of the people indeed! I should like to see it. There used to be some reverence shown to lords in former times, but how are they treated now! Snubbed at by the newspapers, elbowed in the streets, quizzed in epigrams, peppered with pamphlets, shown up in novels, robbed of their boroughs, and threatened with annihilation. People call that the march of intellect—I call it the march of insolence. When I was a boy, all the books we had in the house were the Bible and Prayer Book and Court Calendar; the first two contained our religion and the last our politics: as for literature, what did we want with it? It is only the means of turning the world upside down, and putting notions into people's heads, that would never get there without.

All the evil that is in the world came by innovation; and there is no part of the world free from innovation, neither the heavens above, nor the earth beneath, nor the waters that are under the earth. What business have men up in the air with balloons?