

EUROPE.

IRELAND.

The following is an extract from one of many letters which have appeared during the week descriptive of the dreadful distress prevailing:—

'I assure you I would not, by any language, exaggerate on the state of distress to which we are now reduced. Those on the sea coast are endeavouring to preserve existence on sea-weed and shell-fish found along the shores. A Clergyman, on whose authority I state the fact, told me, that, doubting the accuracy of the reports which were brought to him, he visited families at unexpected times, and thus became a witness of the melancholy meal, where a mother, surrounded by her children, picked out the fish from the shells with a pin, apportioning the scanty morsels to each in his turn, but too slowly to satisfy the cravings of their hunger. In other parts of the country, the poor are living on nettles and weeds, from which experience has taught them to extract some nourishment, and they pray for a few handfuls of oatmeal to boil up with these plants, to furnish a meal more substantial and nutritious. I can state that a miserable mother, with an infant in her arms, was found to prolong the existence of her family by sharing with each child the nourishment which her breast afforded.

At the Clare Special Commission, which was adjourned on Thursday last, the following convictions took place:—Two sentenced to death, 14 to death recorded, 50 transportation, 22 minor punishments—Total 88.

The Special Commission is proceeding in the county Clare to try the prisoners in Custody for outrages committed during the late disturbances, amounting to upwards of three hundred. A vast number have been convicted, and sentenced to transportation for 14 years. Several capital convictions are also expected, and the gallows of a particular construction have been prepared for their execution. The Hoogly East Indian is at Cork to carry the convicts to New South Wales.

There are not fewer than one hundred and fifty thousand men, women, and children, at this moment in a state of actual starvation in the county of Mayo. This, we beg leave to say, is no exaggerated statement. A census has been taken of the parishes and townlands by competent and trustworthy persons, who can depose on oath, if necessary, to the accuracy of the returns.

ENGLAND.

DEATH OF MRS. SIDDONS—Mrs. Siddons died at her house in Upper Baker street, Portman Square, at half past nine on Wednesday morning.

THE REFORM BILL—The following circular has been transmitted to the Overseer of all the parishes to be affected by the operation of the reform measure:—

Whitehall, 30th May, 1831.

'Gentlemen—I am directed by Viscount Melbourne to request that you will, with the least possible delay, transmit to me, for his Lordship's information, a return of the Number of Houses, or houses and Land held together, in the Parish of—rated to the poor rate at 10s, and upwards; stating whether the rate is made on the full back rent, or on what portion of it.' I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant.

S. M. PHILLIPS.

So general is the conviction that the ensuing Parliament will be of very short duration, that in various counties gentlemen have been already named as candidates for the contemplated divisions.

Mr. Richard Lander arrived in town on Thursday morning, from Portsmouth, having returned from his mission in the interior of Africa, after exploring the source of the Niger. Mr. L. attended the Colonial Office, and had an interview with Viscount Goderich.

The Deputies from the Belgian Congress are in London, and had an interview with the Prince of Saxe Coburg; but although the Prince's resolution is not made public, it seems to be pretty well understood that he will not accept the Crown of Belgium, until the Belgians have complied with the Protocol of the Allies. The prospect of that compliance is, as yet, too distant for much speculation on the course which the Prince will then pursue, or on the effects which the election of an English subject, with English prejudices, and English habits, may produce in Belgian society, or on the political and moral condition of the people.

The new Parliament meets on Tuesday next, the

14th of June, the day for which it was, originally summoned. When a sufficient number of Members have been sworn, the House of Commons will proceed to elect a Speaker, and as it had been intimated to Mr. Manners Sutton that no opposition will be offered by the Government to his re-appointment to that distinguished situation, no other candidate will venture to present himself.

Letters were received yesterday by Government from Glamorganshire, announcing the complete suppression of the disturbances at Merthyr Tydvil. The ring-leaders are all in custody. We need hardly repeat that these disturbances rose entirely out of disputes respecting wages. The Magistrates and leading men at Swansea have issued a Proclamation in English and Welsh, putting an end to the truck system, and declaring that henceforth the men's wages are to be paid in money every Friday afternoon. We have our own doubts how far, in a remote district like Merthyr Tydvil, this change may be in the end beneficial to the workmen, but this is their affair.

The following circular is in the hands of Members of Parliament known to be favourable to the Reform Bill. It is important, as showing that Ministers are determined to bring forward that great measure with all the energy in their power, and without the loss of a single day:—"As the preliminary arrangements necessary at the meeting of a new parliament will be completed, and the business of the session will commence on Tuesday the 21st of June, I most earnestly request your attendance on that day. It is unnecessary for me to call your attention to the importance of the Bill for the Reform of Parliament, which will be introduced at the earliest possible period, and on which a full attendance is most essential.

Signed

'ALTHORP.'

Downing street, May 31.

By an extraordinary conveyance all the Paris Journals of Saturday, and the Gazette de France and the Messager des Chambers have been received. There was an express on Saturday in Paris from St. Petersburg to the 28th May, it contained no political intelligence of late date from the armies. By private letters a great panic appears to prevail among the money jobbers of Paris arising chiefly out of the apprehensions upon the state of Belgic affairs. The French Government and Opposition are in fierce activity in preliminary electioneering movements. Indeed, the state of France itself, and the excitement of which it is so susceptible, are according to some accounts, calculated to produce general uneasiness, but this inquietude will probably yield before a firm and prudent administration of the Government.

The Ship General Hewitt, 1,000 tons burthen, left the London Docks yesterday afternoon at high water, with 300 passengers on board, bound for Canada, a majority of whom consists of Chelsea pensioners, (with their wives and families,) who have received four years pay from the British Government. There were also several persons going out at the expense of various country parishes, and sundry mechanics and tradesmen with their wives and children, paying their own passage money.

SECOND EDITION.—Courier Office, June 14.

HOUSE OF COMMONS—(This day.)—The Lord High Steward came down to the Long Gallery this morning at half past eleven o'clock, and proceeded to swear in members. After being engaged for two hours his Lordship appointed Commissioners to administer the oaths to such other members as should present themselves.

By the Lisbon Mail we have letters of the 4th inst. which bring accounts of further captures by the French squadron, amounting, it is said to twenty sail. They also state that Don Miguel continues determined to avoid all reconciliation, with the French, and was actually fitting out a squadron, consisting of nine sail, with all possible despatch, for the absurd purpose, as it was supposed, of making an attack on the French Squadron.

The Ex-Emperor Don Pedro arrived at Falmouth, on the 9th June, and after landing dispatches, and procuring supplies, sailed for Cherbourg, where he had also arrived, from whence he would immediately proceed to Paris.

SCOTLAND.

ELECTIONS OF SCOTCH PEERS—An election has taken place at Holyrood House of sixteen Representatives of the Scottish Peerage when the following were duly elected, viz.—Marquess of Queensbury, 53; Marquess of Tweeddale, 47; Earl of Morton, 45; Earl of Elgin, 43; Earl of Selkirk, 40; Earl of Home, 39; Earl of Leyen, and Melville, 35; Viscount Falkland, 34; Viscount Arbuthnot, 37; Viscount Strathallan, 44;

Lord Gray, 47; Lord Saltoun, 44; Lord Forbes, 41; Lord Colville 41; Lord Belhaven 44; and Lord Napier, 35. The following Peers had votes as follows:—Lord Kinnaird, 33; Earl of Airlie, 32; Earl Caithness, 26; Lord Rolla, 24; Lord Elphinstone, 18, Earl of Buchan, 17, Lord Reay, 15, Earl of Errol 14, and the Earl of Dunmore 11.

Greenock presents at present an unusual bustle.—Almost every steamer that arrives has her decks crowded with emigrants and their luggage. The emigration from the Highlands this year is unprecedented. From three parishes in Argyleshire there are about 2,000 souls preparing to embark for America, and from Italy, we hear there are about 1,000. It is generally supposed that there will not be a sufficiency of shipping to take out all this season. We will from time to time notice the gross amount of the emigrants that sails from Greenock; but many vessels are chartered to sail from all parts in the Highlands, of which it will be probably difficult for us to obtain correct reports.—*Glasgow Chronicle*.

FOREIGN.

POLAND—We intimated last week that we were in doubt whether we should place the continued successes of the Poles, and their advance towards the main army of Diebitsch, under the head of good or ill. We are, however, now possessed of the fatal certainty, that too much success in partisan warfare had begotten impolitic confidence, and that however the Russians may have been weakened by famine, disease, or the sword, their ranks are hourly filled by fresh levies which leave them always a numerical superiority; and it appears in real strength much above their heroic antagonists. Abandoning that system of warfare against detached parties in which the Poles have been so eminently fortunate, their commander, after the taken of Ostrolenka, which we noticed in our last, hazarded an engagement, with the united forces of Diebitsch on the 26th, and sustained we fear, a bloody and disastrous defeat. The object of the Poles in advancing so close to the main army of the Russians was, we are told, to secure the passage of a corps of four thousand men, with arms and ammunition into Luthiania, for the purpose of assisting the insurgents in the rear of the Russians and rendering their operations more effectual. That object being obtained, and it being certain, that General Chlapowski, who commanded the force intended to assist the Lithuanians, was safe from all immediate pursuit, the Commander in Chief recrossed the river Narew, and prepared to fall back upon his former strong position. He was attacked however, by Diebitsch in person, before the bridge over the Narew could be wholly destroyed; and after one of the most sanguinary engagements on record, night put an end to the contest, without either party changing its position; the Poles, still opposing the passage of the main army of the Russians across the bridge, and the Russians retaining possession of the bridge itself. The town of Ostrolenka, held by a portion of the Polish army, was, however, stormed by the Russians, and 20,000 men being killed on either side, the Polish General felt his force so much weakened and the enemy so powerful, that he commenced a precipitate retreat the next morning, and has been compelled to fix his head quarters once more within the lines of Praga. In addition to the discouraging effect of this retreat on the minds of the people, it would seem that a portion of the army under Gen. Geldgud is cut off from the main body, and in danger from the movements of Diebitsch. So intense was the hatred displayed by the combatants in this battle, that no quarter was given nor prisoners taken, the bayonet being the weapon used principally throughout the day. The Poles acknowledge the loss of 4,000 killed, including the Generals Klucki and Kaniowski. The loss of the Russians must, therefore, have been very great. The hopes of the Poles for the protraction of the contest rest now on the exertions of their brethren of Luthiania, and on the wasted state of the country, which may prevent the advance of the Russians to Warsaw. Of this insurrection we know but little more than they have been formidable enough to cripple the movements of Diebitsch, and that they are not yet put down. Great precautions have been used by the Russian authorities to keep the world in ignorance of their nature and extent. A few days will, however, enable us now to ascertain both. If the