

tariff] but the only great realities for Ireland will be prosecutions and a monster army. We said last week that it was not yet too late to heal the wounds of the sister kingdom; and that Lord John Russell's motion was a peace offering, which it would be humane on the part of the government to accept; Mr John O'Connell, one of the convicted "conspirators," and subsequently Mr Daniel O'Connell himself, have echoed in the House of Commons the sentiments that we expressed. The time for conciliation is not past—there is yet an opportunity for terminating this great question, and of regarding the afflictions of the Irish people, who are ever ready to acknowledge an act of kindness, and ever grateful to those who deal justly with them. Ministers have acted harshly and madly in the course they pursued with regard to this motion. They seem to have eaten of "the insane root that takes the reason prisoner." Else they would surely have played the generous part which Lord J. Russell enabled them to assume, without sacrifice of personal dignity or political principle; and extending the right hand of friendship to Ireland, have given conviction to our bleeding sister that the time of persecution is past, and the reign of justice henceforth will be established. But the Government of Sir Robert Peel has rejected this important part; and Ireland is still to be the prey of passion and of bigotry—the victim of intolerance and persecution.

Mr Macaulay, who entered largely into an historical view of the subject, did little more than convince his hearers of his extensive acquirements, talents and researches. We are strongly of opinion that nothing is to be gained by ransacking history for arguments upon this question of Ireland; indeed, one string of facts seldom fails to bring up another; but, fortunately, the Tory party did not take advantage of the opportunity thus afforded for introducing their pet facts, and fictions; for, if they had done so, the debate might have extended to the Greek Kalends. The vice of priggishness is characteristic, we fear, of the present age; at any rate it is so of the modern House of Commons. In the days of Burke and Sheridan a close and expressive style was considered the perfection of oratorical oratory; but with the Reform Bill came in a set of young gentlemen who consider that a rhetorician cannot be too diffuse, and who estimate the abilities of a member of Parliament according to the number of hours he occupies in displaying his views and opinions. If they would act up to this notion, by remaining to hear all the nonsense that is said in the house there would be something to admire in their sincerity, however navigated we might be by follies and eccentricities; but they demonstrate their want of faith in their own principle, by running away when any verbose companion gets upon his legs, permitting the honorable gentleman to speak to the reporters; whilst they more agreeably occupy themselves over their wine, or in a "snooze."

It is obvious that the Irish Church is the great obstacle in the way of "Justice to Ireland." The Tories have possession of large revenues, which they do not like to give up. It is impossible for the Irish Roman Catholics, to consider the Established church otherwise than as an intolerable burthen. What would the inhabitants of one side of a street think of a legislative enactment compelling them to pay for the dinners of the inhabitants of the other side? Would that be endured? Yet similar is the grievance of which the Irish Catholics complain. When Mrs Jones, at No. 1, is desirous of recreating herself, in the summer season, at Brighton or Broadstairs, she does not call upon Mr Brown, at No. 2, to pay a portion of her expense. Mr Brown would directly batten up his pockets, and think her mad, or a fool if she were to make such a proposition? What would he say if he were compelled to pay for his fair neighbor's recreation by Act of Parliament.

From Willmer and Smith's European Times.

THE IRISH DEBATE.

After a discussion of nine nights, the debate on the condition of Ireland terminated at four o'clock on the morning of Saturday week. The majority in favor of Ministers was 99, in a house of 549. The discussion, although protracted and occasionally wearisome, elicited upon the whole more than the average talent of similar parliamentary conflicts. There were some brilliant efforts on both sides—efforts that will live in history. On the ministerial side, the best speeches were those delivered by Sir James Graham, Lord Stanley, the Solicitor General, the Irish Attorney General, and Sir Robert Peel; on the opposition side, by Lord John Russell, Mr Macaulay, Sir Thos. Wilde, Mr Shiel, Mr O'Connell, and Mr Roebuck. The discussion may be said to have embraced three phases—the past history of Ireland; the events arising out of the late trial, and the mode of conducting it; and the future amelioration of that country. That great stumbling block to Conservative statesmen—the Irish Church—was fiercely assailed from the opposition benches, and defended in a semi-apologetic tone by Sir Robert Peel. The colonial secretary, it is true, in an earlier stage of the debate, took high ground on this, his favorite hobby; but the Premier's defence rested rather on expediency [strange as the word may sound in connexion with such a subject] than on principle. He spoke nearly five hours. The early part of the speech was devoted to a review of affairs in Ireland during the last twelve months, commencing with the repeal agitation, and ending with the trial and the verdict. He denied emphatically that the government had entrapped O'Connell and his colleagues, and he made some smart hits at the opposition leaders in the house, who, at the commencement of their ministerial career, a dozen years ago, treated Ireland to the Coercion Bill. From this he diverged to the remedial measures in

store for the pacification of the country—re-capitulated the object of the landlord and tenant commission—spoke of the franchise, which was to be extended, so as to put the two countries on an equitable footing—maintained that if he consented to the abolition of the Church Establishment in Ireland, the precedent would be held as equally applicable to England—instanced the increased grant to be proposed for the advancement of Education in Ireland, and the sacrifices of private friendships and personal ambition which he made when he passed the Relief Bill, as proofs that his feelings and sympathies were in favor of that country—and terminated with an eloquent peroration, which had reference to the time which the Queen, visiting Ireland, should find tranquility restored, the people happy, and the country prosperous. Sir Robert Peel's speech has been variously criticised, but all admit—friends and foes—that it was, under the circumstances, the best defence which could be made for the government as a body, and for the Premier, as a man. The following estimate of the speech from the Times of Thursday last is smart, and what is more—true.

"Sir Robert Peel is unrivalled at dropping facts in the right places. But it must be confessed that even he sometimes drops them wrong. His late speech on the state of Ireland was an instance of unmixed success in this department of political art. Every fact which could be brought to bear in the service of the government was arranged with singular skill—and, it is fair to add, with real force and truth—so as to do the very maximum of execution in every possible direction. His array of statement, like one of the many faced gods of Hindoos, looked before, behind, around, and about it—had an aspect for every body—consistent, yet multifarious—lucid, guarded, and to the purpose, yet throwing out without apparent effort topics of encouragement to the Irish Churchman—of conciliation to the Irish Repealer—hopes of advancement to clever Roman Catholic Barristers, if they will be quiet—subdued menace to English Ecclesiastics, if they won't—vindication of his inculcation of his opponents' policy—all built on facts, and all flowing forth as naturally and pertinently as if he couldn't help it."

Next to the Prime Minister's, the speech which excited most attention was O'Connell's. The peculiarity of his position made it looked for with considerable interest. It was subdued in tone, but manly in feeling; it contained nothing about the personnel of the late movement in Ireland; and although some of the facts adduced by him which bore upon events in Ireland anterior to the union, received a crushing reply from Sir Robert, the general effect of the speech, while it has not in the least compromised his independence, has produced in the public mind of England an improved feeling towards the man. This feeling was evident by the marked attention with which the speech was listened to by a crowded house, and by the increased popularity which has waited the agitator's appearance out of doors. On the score of literary excellence, the palm must, perhaps, be awarded to the speeches of Macaulay and Shiel. In all the attributes of sparkling wit, condensed, yet vigorous reasoning, antithesis of expression, fertility of illustration, and all that captivates the ear and charms the fancy, these brilliant addresses will be long remembered with pleasure and even delight. They are, if we may so express ourselves, the poetry of politics.

The question recurs—"How has the debate affected the ministry?" The answer is, favorably. The conciliatory tones of Sir Robert Peel's speech has acted like oil on the troubled waters of Irish agitation. The chief actors are all gagged—the verdict has succeeded in doing that, and had the minister's measures been of a large and comprehensive kind, an end might have been put to the agitation altogether. As regards the present, ministers may be said to have succeeded with their "chief difficulty" in a manner more successful than their warmest friends could have anticipated; but as regards the future, they are evidently not prepared to take advantage of the chapter which fate has thrown in their way. But the snake of agitation is "scotched," not killed. As was clearly developed during this monster debate, and as the public mind of Ireland has indicated for years past, there will be no permanent peace in the sister country so long as the Established Church remains there in its present unsightliness. It is the upas tree which blasts the affections of the people; and yet it is questionable whether, if the natives of England were polled from one extremity of the island to the other—so strong are early, and more especially religious prejudices—a majority would not appear in favor of maintaining the Irish church in its existing sinecure luxuriance. He was a shrewd observer who remarked, during the late debate, it was Mr Gisborne, we think, that if we consented to pare down the Irish church to its numerical proportions, we might safely withdraw a regiment on the death of every bishop, and a battalion on the death of every dean!

"Will O'Connell be imprisoned?" our transatlantic readers ask. Some of the Irish papers assert that he will not. The Duke of Wellington—the authority however is questionable which puts the statement into his Grace's mouth—is said to have declared that the moral effect of the verdict will suffice, without the intervention of the gaoler. In all probability, the cabinet has come to no decision on the subject. Much will depend upon the course which events may take in Ireland during the next six months. If judgment is held in *terrorem* over the head of O'Connell and his colleagues, it will operate as a more effectual sedative than if they were immured in Kilmainham O'Connell's *brutum fulmen* would be harmless from the Corn Exchange: would it be equally so from the Liberator's prison? The olive branch is held out in Sir Robert Peel's speech, and unless it be need-

lessly spurned—unless the "conspirators" are bent upon seeking martyrdom, the minister can have no desire, as far as his interest is concerned, to thrust it upon them.

After all, dislike as we may, denounce as we must, this repeal agitation and its multitudinous evils, the concessions, small as they are, insignificant as they appear to be for the suppression of a movement which had for its ultimate, if not for its avowed object, the dismemberment of the empire—the glaring and undeniable fact stares the Irish people in the face, that they owe them to having made the minister uneasy—that, in fact, they have been wrung from its fears and not conceded by his sense of justice. What a pity that in the middle of the nineteenth century—in this age of social progression, of moral, scientific, and intellectual advancement, Britain's Prime Minister, Shakespeare's Fat Knight, instead of "taking Time by the forelock," waits, with folded arms, until he is necessitated to give a "reason on compulsion!" Such a tribute to agitation makes a minister's path anything but a bed of roses.

From Charles Willmer's American News-Letter of March 5.

PARLIAMENTARY NEWS.

In our last publication we laid before our readers the Queen's speech at the opening of the session of parliament, and we then stated that the business, up to the hour of our going to press, had been of such a complexion as to possess not the slightest interest; and we have now to repeat that observation; for the discussion, so far, have not led to any practical result, although there has been some smart sparring between Ministers and the Opposition. On the 5th ult. the subject of the Oregon Territory was incidentally brought up by Lord John Russell, who said he understood it had been stated last year that there were negotiations on foot with the American Government on the subject of the Oregon Territory, and he wished to ask whether there had been a cessation of them. Sir Robert Peel, in reply, said that the British Government had originated a communication with the government of the United States, urging the great advantages of an amicable settlement of the dispute; but that since then, there had been a change in the representative of her Majesty at Washington, and the new minister had gone out with full power and instructions, which he hoped would be productive of the desired end.

In the House of Lords, on the same evening, Lord Brougham put a question to the Earl of Aberdeen, in reference to the slave trade, which drew forth the following reply:—

"The Earl of Aberdeen was glad that his noble and learned friend had made this inquiry. The great importance of the subject would justify in any quarter such an inquiry, but the part which had always been taken upon this question by the noble and learned lord made the inquiry from him perfectly natural. It was perfectly true that the French Government had desired that such a modification should be introduced into the treaty establishing the right of search as, without impairing the efficiency of its provisions, should render them more conformable to the feelings of the French public, and of the French Naval service. He could not say what the result of these negotiations would be, but his noble and learned friend and the house might be assured that nothing would be done to impair or impede our exertions in the cause of humanity, or in the slightest degree to interfere with the great object of those who sought to put an end to the slave trade. He must at the same time do the French Government the justice to say that they had no such desire. He knew that the French minister desired the abolition of the slave trade quite as much as himself; and, keeping this knowledge in view, any proposal coming from that quarter deserved an impartial and candid consideration. With regard to the right of search itself, he had sometimes heard the regulations referred to in this country in such a way as tended to countenance those unfounded and calumnious representations which were made on the other side of the water against us. It had been the object of some persons to make out that we cared little for the abolition of the slave trade, and that our real object was the right of search,—that we wished to degrade the French marine, and to gain information as to French commerce, which we might turn to our advantage. Incredible as it might appear, this was asserted and believed. If it was a degradation, it was a right we equally granted as we asked it; and as to gaining information, we must maintain a very useless class of persons as consuls if we did not know better than we can discover by aid of any treaty, the amount of the trade of every port in France. He had heard it said that this country maintained the right of search as a great good, and a great end. No doubt it was a great means for the abolition of the slave trade; but so far as the right itself went instead of being a great good, he looked upon it as a great evil, and it could only be justified by the object of great importance for which it was established. Nothing else, he was satisfied, could justify the right hand on the part of this country, much less to expect it of any other country. He was not prepared to say what further might be the result of the negotiation, but the few words he had already said might satisfy the house and the noble lord's inquiry."

On the following day [the 6th] the same subject was brought up in the House of Commons, when Sir Robert Peel, in answer to a question from Sir Charles Napier, said that the whole question of the instructions to be given to the commanders of cruisers respecting vessels under the French flag, in the performance of their duty in the detection of slave ships, had been referred to a commission composed of Doctor Lushington and a distinguished officer who had seen a good deal of service on the coast of Africa—he meant Captain Bayne. He hoped

that in the course of a few days, he should have an opportunity of laying them on the table. With regard to instructions occasioned by negotiations with the United States, he could only say that they were consistent with the instructions formerly given, but he did not think a due regard to the public service would allow him to give him a more explicit answer.

When pressed for more positive information, Sir Robert added, that the United States had not published the instructions it had issued to the commanders of its cruisers on the coast of Africa. He, however, could say generally, that, in the instructions that had been issued during the present year, they had maintained the principles for which this country had always contended, and that they were, in substance, the same as those which had been issued to the officers of her Majesty's navy in former years.

The transactions from the 8th to the 13th were unimportant. On the latter date Lord John Russell brought forward his promised motion in reference to Ireland. He moved for a committee of the whole house to take into consideration the state of Ireland. The discussion of this motion wholly occupied the attention of the House of Commons for nine nights, and the result was, that it was lost by a vote of 225 for, and 324 against, giving ministers a majority of 99 votes. To attempt to give an outline of so tedious and uninteresting a debate within the scope which our limits permit, would be utterly impossible;—suffice then to say, that all the "stale, flat, and unprofitable" arguments, pro and con, which are as familiar to all the world as the light of heaven, were brought forward dressed up, as usual, in the meretricious garb of eloquence. It may be remarked, that even ministerial members throughout the debate, admitted that something must be done to improve the condition of Ireland.

On Monday last, Mr Sharman Crawford moved a resolution for the postponement of the Navy estimates until such time as the grievances of the nation should receive attention. Of course it did not succeed.

On Tuesday, Mr Cobden postponed his motion for a select committee to inquire into the effects of the corn laws on farmers and farm labourers, for a fortnight. Mr Wyse gave notice that on Tuesday, the 12th of March, he would bring forward a motion for the universal education of the Catholics of Ireland, and especially of those persons intended for the priesthood. Mr Thomas Dancombe gave notice that on the first supply day he would move for a return of all the moneys paid to Frederick Bond Hughes, Charles Ross, and John Jackson, who had been employed by the government to take notes relative to the repeal agitation in Ireland. The mention of the names of these short hand writers, and the papers with which some of them were connected, excited much laughter. Mr Leader moved for numerous returns respecting the expenses incurred in repressing the rebellion in Canada, the Canada tenures act, and a variety of other matters connected with that colony, which were agreed to.

On Thursday, Sir V Blake moved for a select committee to inquire and report how far it may be practicable, expedient, and useful to promote a more speedy intercourse between Great Britain and America, by the establishment of steam carriages (in connexion with a ship canal also to be executed) across Ireland, and thence by steam communication across the Atlantic Ocean.

The Irish provincial papers continue their notices of the conveyances of large quantities of arms and ammunition to the different garrison towns, for the use of the troops.

The organization of pensioners in Ireland is rapidly progressing. More than 8000 are already enrolled.

Several regiments have received orders to be ready to embark at a moment's notice for Ireland. Arrangements have been made with the railways for the immediate conveyance of troops should it be found necessary.

The company of Sappers and Miners stationed at Dublin has been employed during the week in constructing *chateaux de frise* for the protection of the castle.

Drafts from the 33rd and 52nd Regiments are under order orders to join the service companies in Nova Scotia.

The Glasgow cotton spinner's strike is at an end, and the men have gone in at less wages than they received when they turned out.

Two public dinners were spoken of as likely to be given to Mr O'Connell, in London. One, over which Mr Duncombe, the member for Finsbury, will take place at Covent Garden. This is a political movement, in which the desire to annoy the government is apparently as great as the wish to honor the member for Cork.

The dinner to O'Connell is finally arranged to take place at Covent Garden Theatre, on Tuesday the 12th of March. Many leading members of parliament will be present, and several peers.

Died, on the 15th February, Lord Sidmouth, at the White Lodge, Richmond Park, in the 87th year of his age.

Woolwich, March 1.—A detachment of 14 intelligent non-commissioned officers and privates of the Royal Sappers and Minors, are under orders to embark in the next Royal Mail Steamer for Halifax, N.S., to join and assist a party already employed in determining the Boundary line between New Brunswick and the United States.

The Lords of the Admiralty have resolved on adding several new steam vessels of the first class exclusive of those now building, and ordered to be built, to the list of the steam navy. They also purpose building some new 50 gun frigates like the Vernon, Raleigh, and Leander; and some 80 gun ships upon the model of the Queen. The material for these vessels will be provided and seasoned during the present year.