

From the Liverpool Courier, January 30.
QUEEN'S SPEECH.

HOUSE OF LORDS, January 22.

Her Majesty being seated on the throne Sir Augustus Clifford, the Usher of the Black Rod, by Her Majesty's commands, then summoned the members of the House of Commons. Shortly afterwards the Speaker, attended by a great number of members, appeared at the bar, when Her Majesty, in a clear and distinct voice, read the Speech.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

It gives me great satisfaction again to meet you in Parliament, and to have the opportunity of recurring to your assistance and advice.

I continue to receive from my allies, and from foreign powers, the strongest assurances of the desire to cultivate the most friendly relations with this country.

I rejoice that, in concert with the Emperor of Russia, and through the success of our joint mediation, I have been enabled to adjust the differences which had long prevailed between the Ottoman Porte and the King of Persia, and had seriously endangered the tranquillity of the East.

For several years a desolating and sanguinary warfare had afflicted the States of the Rio de la Plata. The commerce of all nations had been interrupted, and acts of barbarity have been committed, unknown to the practice of a civilized world. In conjunction with the King of the French, I am endeavouring to effect the pacification of those States.

The convention concluded with France in the course of last year, for the more effectual suppression of the Slave Trade, is about to be carried into immediate execution by the active co-operation of the two powers on the coast of Africa.

It is my desire that our present union, and the good understanding which so happily exists between us, may always be employed to promote the interests of humanity, and to secure the peace of the world.

I regret that the conflicting claims of Great Britain and the United States, in respect to the territory of the north western coast of America, although they have been made the subject of repeated negotiation, still remain unsettled.

You may rest assured that no effort, consistent with the national honor, shall be wanting on my part, to bring this question to an early and peaceful termination.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

The estimates of the year will be laid before you at an early period. Although I am deeply sensible of the importance of enforcing economy in all the branches of the expenditure, yet I have been compelled, by a due regard to the exigencies of the public service, and to the state of our naval and military establishments, to propose some increase in the estimates which provide for their efficiency.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

I have observed with deep regret the very frequent instances in which the crime of deliberate assassination has been of late committed in Ireland.

It will be your duty to consider whether any measures can be devised calculated to give increased protection to life, and to bring to justice the perpetrators of so dreadful a crime.

I have to lament that, in consequence of a failure of the potatoe crop in several parts of the United Kingdom, there will be a deficient supply of an article of food which forms the chief sustenance of great numbers of the people. The disease by which the plant has been effected, has prevailed to the utmost extent in Ireland.

I have adopted all such precautions as it was in my power to adopt, for the purpose of alleviating the sufferings which may be caused by this calamity; and I shall confidently rely in your co-operation in devising such other means for effecting the same benevolent purpose, as may require the sanction of the Legislature.

I have had great satisfaction in giving my assent to the measures which you have presented to me from time to time, calculated to extend commerce, and to stimulate domestic skill and industry, by the repeal of prohibitory, and the relaxation of protective duties.

The prosperous state of the revenue, the increased demand for labour, and the general improvement which has taken place in the internal condition of the country, are strong testimonies in favour of the course you have pursued.

I recommend you to take into your early consideration, whether the principle on which you have acted may not with advantage be yet more extensively applied, and whether it may not be in your power, after careful review, of the existing duties upon many articles, the pro-

duce or manufacture of other countries, to make such further reductions and remissions as may tend to insure the continuance of the great benefits to which I have adverted, and, by enlarging our commercial intercourse, to strengthen the bonds of amity with foreign powers.

Any measures which you may adopt for affecting these great objects will, I am convinced, be accompanied by such precautions as shall prevent permanent loss to the revenue, or injurious results to any of the great interests of the country.

I have full reliance on your just and dispassionate consideration of matters so deeply affecting the public welfare.

It is my earnest prayer that, with the blessing of Divine Providence on your councils, you may be enabled to promote friendly feelings between different classes of my subjects, provide additional security for the continuance of peace, and to maintain contentment and happiness at home, by increasing the comforts and bettering the condition of the great body of my people.

Sir R. PEEL'S SPEECH On the New Commercial Policy.

TOTAL REPEAL OF THE CORN LAWS IN THREE YEARS.

At an early hour this morning through the kindness of Messrs. Wilmer and Smith, we were put in possession of copies of the *Sun* of last night, containing a report of Sir Robert Peel's most important speech on the Corn laws and the new commercial policy of the government.

We have since been favoured with copies of the *Standard* and *Daily News*, both of which have been brought down to Liverpool by express trains, and contain very full reports. We loose no time in giving the speech, *in extenso*, to our readers, confident that a document of more intense interest has seldom, if ever, met the public eye.

Sir Robert spoke for four hours amid the breathless attention of a very crowded house.

At an early hour an unusual influx of strangers, including many distinguished lords, afforded a significant indication of the important business about to occupy the attention of the Commons. Prince Albert and the Duke of Cambridge occupied seats at the bar. The greatest anxiety prevailed, and the house presented a most unusual and interesting spectacle.

It will be seen that the Right Honourable Baronet proposes to deal in a very sweeping manner with all protective duties, calling upon manufacturers of all classes to conform to that rule which a certain portion of them are so anxious to impose upon the agriculturists. Foreign manufactured cottons, woollens, liguas, silks, paper, metals, hardware, boots and shoes, soap, candles, and a variety of other articles, are to be admitted at a very considerable reduction of duty. The duty on foreign spirits is also to be reduced from 22s. to 15s.; and that upon foreign free labour sugar to 3s. 6d. Then, with respect to agriculture, Sir Robert proposes a modification of the sliding scale to last for three years, at the following rates: When the average price shall be under 48s., the duty to be 10s.; above 49s., 9s.; 50s. and 51s., 7s.; and under 53s., 5s.; and whenever the price of wheat shall exceed 54s. there is to be an invariable duty of 4s. This is to last for three years, at the expiration of which time *foreign grain is to be admitted duty free.*

By way of compensation to the agricultural interest, the Right Hon. Baronet proposes the consolidation of the Highway Boards, and an alteration in the present law of settlement. He proposes that five years' continuous residence in any place shall confer exemption from removal, and that this privilege shall extend to the labourer's wife and family. Agricultural improvement is to be promoted by means of public advances to the tenants of entailed estates. With regard to the peculiar burdens on land, many of the taxes being local, cannot, he considers, be shifted without injury even to the interests it might be intended to benefit by such a measure. There are some burdens, however, which he thinks may be transferred from the land. He proposes that the expense of prosecutions now paid by local rates, shall in future be laid upon the Consolidated Fund. Half the cost of medical relief he proposes shall be paid by Government. The Government will hereafter defray the charges of education in workhouses, leaving the appointment of the masters and mistresses in the hands of the guardians.

The salaries of union auditors are to be a charge upon the public.

Such are the main features of this important measure. We must refer for further particulars to the detailed report of the speech which we give below. At present it would be premature to enter into a discussion of its merits. We can only say that it is a bold, and we wish it may prove a safe, experiment.

HOUSE OF LORDS, January 27.

The Earl of Minto presented petitions from various parts of Scotland in favor of a total and immediate repeal of the corn laws.

The Earl of Stradbroke presented thirty seven petitions from places in Suffolk in favor of the present system of protection.

The Duke of Richmond presented petitions from Ross against any alteration in the Corn Laws. He would take this opportunity of stating that a person named Feargus O'Connor had asserted that he had received a proposal from him, to induce him to desert his present principles, and advocate those entertained in favor of the corn laws. Now he begged to say that he had never directly or indirectly had any communication with that individual, that he had never attempted to buy any body, and never would, because he believed that if men would take money to abandon a cause, they were not to be trusted.

Earl Gray presented a petition from Forres in favor of the repeal of the corn laws.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, January 27.

THE PREMIER'S STATEMENT.

SIR ROBERT PEEL.—Whatever may be the opinion entertained of the course intended to be pursued by her Majesty's Government, or of the proposal, which on their behalf, I have to submit, no one will entertain a doubt that their objects are of the highest order, and that the purpose of the ministry is one perfectly coincident with their views of the advantage to be derived from a full consideration of the interests of the several portions of the community, and I think that none will disagree with me in the certainty that the public interests can be better served by candid dealing than by mere party endeavour. It may suffice to say that in this discussion I calculate on the impartial consideration of the House. I am well aware that in so important a discussion as that which may possibly take place, her Majesty's government, whatever may be the result, are determined to fulfil the duties of their several offices, and, whatever may be the character of the ministry, on this they are agreed—that the relief of the duties on commerce, whatever may be deemed necessary, and the relaxation of the duties on commerce which I had the honour in the course of last session to propose, should be continued this year and enlarged for the relief of the people. I am about to proceed on the assumption that protective duties ought to be abolished, and are in principle open to objection, and that the policy of maintaining them may be defended, but that there must be special considerations, either of public policy or of justice, to vindicate their maintenance. I am about to act upon this assumption. During the period of the last three years there has been an increased production of revenue, notwithstanding that there has been a remission of many heavy taxes—that there has been an increased demand for labour—that there has been an increase of commerce, and that there has been increased comfort and happiness in this country. I do not say that these blessings have necessarily been caused by any particular policy you have adopted, but this I say, the enjoyment of them has been confirmed by your measures—that these blessings have been sanctioned by the House of Commons—the policy of repealing prohibitory and reducing protective duties. I am not now then, by praising that policy, about to call upon the house to recede from any course that has been pursued—a course that has been sanctioned by the House of Commons, and a course which, as productive of public good, ought with regard to consistency to be persevered in. Sir, I am the same time, in advising the continued application of these principles, not about to discard the other recommendations contained in her Majesty's speech, namely, that the adoption of good principles should not be the means of endangering the public credit, or of causing any permanent loss in the revenue of the country. Neither, sir, have I lost sight of the other recommendation—namely, that in proposing sound principles, we should act with sober forbearance, and not prejudice any great institution. I hope this will not be rendered necessary, either on account of any measures I may have to propose, or you may have to adopt; above all, I hope that the confidently expressed opinion of her Majesty, that this great subject will receive the deliberate and dispassionate consideration of the House of Commons, may be realised. I have already said, in answer to a question put by an hon. gentleman, that I do not contemplate asking the House of Commons to pronounce to-night any opinion upon the entire, or a component part of the measures to be submitted for your consideration; but that, on the contrary, it is the wish of the government the questions shall be dealt with by you in a calm and dispassionate manner.

It may be possible, that as I am about to propose so many reductions, some honorable gentleman may denounce me as rash and imprudent, and declare that my measures ought on that account to be rejected by this house. If such should be the prevailing impression among those who are favorable to protection,

nothing can be more easy than that on the day when they are called upon to consider those great and momentous questions, I should be permitted to ask the house to put upon record a counter principle. My motion will be some such resolution as this; not that any protection on any particular branch of trade is advisable, but that there should be a comprehensive system of protection for all articles of domestic industry, believing, as I do, that it will be for the good of the country that our native industry should be protected. I think that that principle ought to be sanctioned. It may be, on the other hand, that the house and this country, considering the great difficulties of this question—considering the variety of opinions—considering the nature of the contest, which has long existed, and which I hope will long continue unless there be a satisfactory and early adjustment of this question. It may be that even those who may dissent from particular parts of the great scheme which I am about to propose to the consideration of this house, may be disposed to accept this proposal as an entire settlement of the question, and that the voice of the country may pronounce upon it as such. This were an unjust thing. An inequitable or unwise adjustment it may be considered would be preferable to the perpetual conflict in which we are involved; and if that be the position which the general opinion of the reasonable and intelligent of all classes shall take, in that case I shall have confidence of ultimate success. On the other hand, as I said before, if I touch so many interests by the application of that great principle, that protective duties are not in themselves abstractedly good, and ought to be relinquished; in that case another fate will await my proposal, and the sooner it is disposed of the better will it be for the public good. Sir, that principle to which I have referred, namely, the relaxation of the protective duties, I am not about to apply to any one particular branch of trade. I am not about to select that great interest connected with the agriculture of this country and call upon them to relinquish protection, and at the same time forbear to call upon other interests to relinquish their privileges. I shall make no isolated proposal. The principle for which I contend is a just and wise one—I shall ask all classes to give up their protective privileges, and to make the sacrifice, if it be a sacrifice, which that application shall cause. Sir, the house is aware that during the last three years, what is called 'the Customs' Duties' Act' was amended; at that time the customs' duties were submitted to the review and consideration of this house. In 1842 it was my duty, as the head of the government, to propose a great change in the then customs duties. The general principle of the plan under which I then acted was to remit the duties upon articles and raw material constituting the element of manufacturing industry.

The plan then submitted to the house was to subject the general manufacturing articles of labour in other countries to duties not exceeding £20 per cent. The house adopted the principle upon which he had acted in 1842. In that year he selected a number of the raw articles for the remission of the duty. In 1844 we reduced altogether the duty upon wool. In the year 1845 we reduced altogether the duty upon cotton. There is hardly a raw material remaining for import into this country upon which the duty has not been either entirely abolished, or considerably diminished. The manufacturers of the country, therefore, now have an advantage which they did not possess hitherto. They have free access to the raw material which constitutes the fabric of their articles of manufacture, and I consider that I am, therefore, entitled to call upon the manufacturers to relinquish that amount of protection which they now have. The manufacturer has now an advantage which he has not had before. There might have been great doubt as to whether you might have continued to derive the same amount of revenue from the importation of cotton wool which existed in 1844. But the house disregarded the amount of £600,000 or £700,000 of revenue derived from such a source. They wished to establish the stability of the manufacture of articles from sheep and cotton wool, and to place it upon a sure and certain foundation. They were willing, therefore, and consented, to forego this amount, so easily levied, and which caused so little complaint from the great body of the people. In order to remove this duty, not only upon sheep, but also upon cotton wool, this house submitted itself to the imposition of the income tax, in consideration of the removal of the duties upon these raw materials. I propose, Sir, in reviewing those articles upon which there at present exist duties, I propose to take first those articles of raw material which still remain subject to duty; and in dealing with these articles, I beg to call upon the manufacturers to relinquish that amount of duty which they now possess. Sir, I hardly know any articles of the nature of raw materials subject to duty except tallow and timber. Tallow is an article of very great importance to the community, and the people at large, it being used in the manufacture of soap, candles, and also for the purpose of dressing leather. I propose to make a reduction in that article from the amount of duty now levied. With respect to the duty on tallow from the United States, the duty on which was 3s. 2d., I will, purely for the purpose of encouraging that produce, which is now chiefly procured from Russia, propose a relaxation in that duty, with the hope that it would ultimately procure a reciprocal reduction on their part with respect to the produce of this country. I will, therefore, for that purpose, propose to reduce the duty on tallow, which now is 3s. 2d., to 1s. 9d. I am taking the article of raw material first, and shall