

The Politician.

The British Press.

From the London Times.

THE RAILWAY CRISIS.

The railway at present is our master. The country is in the hands of some score commissioners created by the legislature, empowered and bound to execute within a limited period the reconstruction of our roads on a new method and gigantic scale. We are sold; we are parcelled out, we are bound hand and foot, and delivered to the lords of our new iron bondage. The machine has been set going, and we must go on. There is a sort of fatality about all great operations of the human mass, which makes it ridiculous to canvass their propriety or wisdom. Things have come to that pass that certain results are inevitable. Movements of this sort have alternately studied the country with castles and destroyed them; reared a hundred ministers and endowed a thousand monasteries, then levelled them to the dust; cast out a dynasty; reformed a faith, remodelled a constitution, separated a great colony, covered Europe with war, and the world with our glory. Of many great events the best account we can give is, that thus it was to be. It is to be so with the construction of railways. It goes on like a great work or convulsion of nature, like the heaving of a crust or deposit of a stratum. Even when the work was feeble and young, a mysterious fatality protected its struggles. It began like the crumbling of a precipice, or the first film of ice, which apparently a hand might arrest or interrupt; we are now compelled to stand by and speculate on what we cannot control. Legislators, Ministers, statesmen and engineers have discussed the subject, as if a wave of the hand or a word would govern its course and check its speed. It is now discovered that we must patiently wait the issue of a gigantic and perilous experiment, which may, or may not, plunge the country into unknown disasters.

It is not quite two years since the fever of speculation suffered its first check, and this is the first year of that enormous aggregate of operations to which we have committed ourselves. It is the first year of which it is generally estimated that we are spending one week with another a million a week for this single purpose. We have been going on for six or seven months at our highest rate. Already a deputation has proceeded from the very focus of enterprise to beseech a little respite for the public resources. The merchants and stock-brokers of Liverpool ought to know something about the matter, and perceive when the pulse of the nation is beginning to flag. A deputation from the stock exchange has conferred with the chairmen of the leading companies. The results, such as they are, appear in our yesterday's paper. It would be foolish to exaggerate them, and envious to deny them some show of success. One thing, however, is very certain—there is no hope of any common understanding or general measure. Private interest, or rather private estimate of convenience, will be the rule. It is ridiculous to expect from an imaginary convention of directors those measures of prudence which we vainly required from an actual legislature. They who think as we do, that British capital is suffering the fate of a Mazeppa, will anxiously glean what comfort they can from the several replies of the railway potentates.

From the London Times.

THE STATE OF THE REVENUE.

On the Customs there has been a decrease for the quarter, compared with the corresponding quarter last year, of no less than £374,191. Several circumstances, however, particularly the receipt of a considerable sum on the importation of corn, raised the former quarter above its natural average. It was an extraordinary quarter. The comparison is, therefore, unfair. Nor a sixpence has been received in the quarter just ended for the importation of grain. Clearing away those articles which disturb rather than enter into the comparison, all that can be said of the quarter just ended is, that it presents no improvement upon the corresponding quarter last year. This, however, only shows that, from accidental reasons, there has been no increase in the quantity of articles liable to duty actually entered for consumption. The importation, and the consumption of sugar, coffee, cocoa, and foreign spirits have undergone a very great increase this year, tea alone standing still. On the whole year just ended, compared with the year ended October 10, 1846, there has been an increase of £267,224. The Excise, as being less exposed to the play of mere speculative causes, and as bearing almost directly upon the consumption of certain articles of luxury or general utility, is usually considered the truest barometer of the national prosperity. Here there has been a decrease on the quarter, as compared with the same quarter last year, of no less than £641,930. Owing to the credit given at the Excise, the effect on the revenue is always at least a quarter after the cause. The decrease in this quarter's Excise, therefore, is owing to a diminished consumption in the earlier part of the year. In consequence of the high price of barley, the malt charged for excise during the first six months of this year was less by eight million bushels than during the same period last year. This alone would make a difference of about £750,000 in the Excise; £500,000 of which tells in the present returns, the remainder being left to the statement that will appear in January 5, 1848. There is also a decrease of nearly

two million gallons in the British spirits charged to the Excise for the same six months; rather more than half of which decrease tells in the present return, to the amount of 246,000. The decrease of Excise from malt and spirits would lead to a still larger decrease than we find on the quarter. But there has, on the other hand, been a considerable increase in the consumption of bricks, glass, and some other articles, which has reduced the decrease to a somewhat less formidable figure than it would otherwise have presented. The decrease on the whole year is only £159,915. In the Stamps, Property-tax, Crown Lands, and "Miscellaneous" heads, we have an aggregate decrease of about £250,000 on the last quarter. The first of the above probably indicates a decrease of speculation. The decrease on the whole year is £1,042,268.

There are some features in the commercial history of the year, no longer recorded in the accounts of the revenue, of a peculiarly unpropitious character. The immense decrease in the importation of the raw materials for manufacture, and consequent decrease now showing itself in our exports, threaten a serious diminution of the wealth, the credit, and the happiness of the country. Our capital, spent in the unavoidable purchase of foreign supplies, and in railways that will not for many years add to our resources, has been withdrawn to a most alarming extent from those reproductive investments on which all countries, and most particularly this, must depend for the maintenance of their ordinary well-being and power.

From the Morning Herald.

THE AFFAIRS OF PORTUGAL.

The tenor of the recent intelligence from Lisbon, tends to prove pretty plainly that the fruits which the advocates of intervention so confidently asserted would arise from foreign interference in the domestic affairs of that country, are, after all, likely to turn out identical with the fabled apples growing on the shores of the Red Sea—fair and pleasant to gaze on, while yet at a distance, but crumbling into ashes when placed within the grasp. The very parties in whose especial behalf we interfered, and who it might naturally have been expected, would show the greatest alacrity in executing the conditions on which we were prevailed to lend our aid, and who ought to be the readiest in carrying out the provisions of the arrangement we effected for their advantage, now on the contrary, appear the most backward in performing their part of the agreement. After beseeching us and imploring us in the most urgent terms to assist her in quelling an insurrection that threatened to drive her from her throne, after professing her readiness to assent to the terms which England should deem it equitable to propose as the price of assistance, Queen Maria, now that she may imagine her crown again firmly fixed upon her brows, is using her utmost efforts to delay, and finally to evade the fulfilment of those conditions. The insurrection of October was a wretchedly caused by the arbitrary and unconstitutional course pursued by the Cabralist Ministry, and was directed almost solely to the object of driving Costa Cabral and his creatures from the royal councils entirely and forever. The intervening powers were fully sensible of this fact, and assented, tacitly or expressly, to the truth of the proposition, that domestic tranquillity would never be restored to Portugal so long as there was a chance of Cabral, or any of his partisans, being restored to power. On this account it was clearly laid down in the protocol which contained the terms of the agreement between Portugal and these Powers, that as soon as peace was restored a new ministry should be formed by the Queen, which should, however, include no one of the members of the ministry of which Costa Cabral was the head. And yet, in defiance of this protocol or agreement to which Queen Donna Maria was a contracting party, it is notorious that lady is doing all in her power to effect the restoration of the obnoxious minister

himself to power! As she cannot, however, act so openly, in opposition to the protocol, as to call upon him openly and at once to form a ministry, every effort is being made by the Cabralist party, and with the assistance of the government, to obtain a majority in the new Cortes, to be convoked in January, and thus enable her to put forward a parliamentary majority as an excuse for her infraction of the compact to which she virtually owes everything. It is to be regretted that Cabral is so unfitted for governing a constitutional country, from his deficient morality, as regards the root of all evil, and his very lax ideas as to the necessity of governing according to the terms of the constitution, as it seems to be generally allowed that in statesmanlike ability he far exceeds any of the innumerable aspirants to place and power. There are, however, too many proofs of his loose, not to say corrupt, practices in the first respect, during his tenure of office, to allow us to question the justice of the charges made by his opponents; the rapid fortune he himself acquired during that period, the wealth now possessed by his relations and friends, the lavish expenditure of the public money on useless objects, the gross confusion of the public finances and the great increase of taxation, altogether form a mass of evidence, that clearly shows his unfitness for managing the affairs of a nation. The effect of all these complications will no doubt be a fresh ministerial crisis, as the present government has completely shown its incompetency to grapple with the difficulties of the situation.

London Shipping Gazette, Oct. 12.

STATE OF THE COUNTRY.

Notwithstanding the announcement of further failures, we are firmly of the opinion that the monetary pressure, as far as commercial engagements are concerned, is about to experience gradual amelioration. After the 19th of this month a settlement will have been come to in this country, of the transactions with the United States and the corn importers; and from the peculiar position of the East India and China houses, they may be said to be without the pale of legitimate banking assistance (as far as discounts are concerned,) until the arrival of the mail on the 21st of December, as it is impossible to foresee what will be the value of remittances, or to what extent they may be sent on the fallen houses. Up to the 20th of this month, however, we fear the pressure will be severe in some quarters. "Coming events cast their shadows before," and what is most to be apprehended is the approaching labour crisis, which must ensue as a consequence of the late heavy failures, and the suspension of all business in the manufacturing districts, excepting for the supply of home consumption; for in the present state of things, all connected with exports to foreign countries and the colonies must suspend further operations, and liquidate claims, until confidence is restored; hence, for commercial purposes, those houses that remain will not require any extraneous support.

Already collections in the churches are commanded to be made for the starving Irish and Scotch; but there is, unfortunately, a prospect before us of appeals also on behalf of the starving and unemployed artisans of Lancashire and Yorkshire. From whence, then, are we to look for succor? It is in vain to hope for aid from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or the present Parliament. The former refuses to act up to the emergency, and the majority of the latter are pledged to support the prejudicial measures of the Peel policy. "Look for your money where you lost it," is an old adage; we say, "Look for a return to prosperity by a return to sound principles."

Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI:

CHATHAM, TUESDAY, NOV. 16, 1847.

The Subscriber having been compelled to consume a large amount of time, and incur considerable expense, in his too often fruitless endeavours to collect his far spread Outstanding Debts, hereby notifies all persons to whom he is not indebted, and with whom he has not a running account, that orders for advertising in the Gleaner, and for Printing, in future, must be accompanied with the CASH, otherwise they will not meet with attention.

JAMES A. PIERCE.

FUND FOR THE RELIEF OF EMIGRANTS.

The following article on the manner in which the grant of £3,000 made by our Legislature last winter, for the relief of distressed emigrants landed on our shores, has been expended, is copied from the Fredericton Reporter. The system adopted by the Government in dispersing of this money, it would appear, has been a very injudicious and unbusiness-like one, and the parties who have had the management of matters in this quarter, have most sadly mismanaged them.

There is a large amount yet due to parties by the Commissioners, for supplies furnished and labour performed, and it would be but an act of justice on

the part of Government if they would have it immediately liquidated. It is no excuse to offer them, when they seek to obtain their just demands, that the business has been badly managed, and that the persons entrusted with the control of matters, had shown a great want of capacity in carrying out the details. This is a matter in which they have nothing to do. The Sessions nominated them, and that body is appointed by the Government—they are, therefore, responsible for their acts, and the public creditor should not be allowed to suffer loss in consequence of their incapacity.

Many of our readers are acquainted with the circumstance, that a sum amounting to three thousand pounds, was granted at the last sitting of the Legislature, to be placed under the control of Commissioners to be appointed by the Executive, and appropriated to the use of such sick and disabled immigrants as might require it during the year.

Owing to a number of unhappy circumstances, and particularly to the extreme liberality of Sir Robert Gore Booth, in sending us so many of his diseased and starving tenantry, the sum then generously appropriated by the Legislature has proved little more than dust in the balance in reference to its humane object; and it is probable that within the current year, a sum not less than £12,000, will have been expended.

Up to the present period, the accounts which have reached the Auditor's Office, amount to between six and seven thousand pounds; and as the dates at which these accounts were furnished are in some instances far back, we imagine that our estimate is rather under than over the prospective expenditure.

What strikes us as very strange, throughout the extensive transactions involving such a vast expenditure, is, that contrary to the very letter of the original grant, no Commissioner or Commissioners have to this day been appointed to superintend the outlay; the Warrants being generally issued in St. John to the Mayor of the city, or the Commissioners of the Alms House—and in other parts of the Province, to persons in their respective localities. This loose way of doing business is we think highly discreditable to the Executive, unless some cause may be urged for its adoption, which we cannot even dream of.

In Northumberland it is said that the management of the fund is anything but creditable to the parties concerned. A system of extravagant outlay has there been followed up by legal proceedings between the parties concerned. The legal gentleman has charged £30 for his advice; and well he might, for we imagine he got hold of a complicated case. One item in the Bill of particulars, if we remember right, is that of £23 for a row-boat and oars! Every thing else is made to match, and we regret to say that the whole affair in that quarter, bears the appearance of a job. We are of course aware that the extravagant charges here alluded to, will not be paid by the House of Assembly; but we are pretty sure that two or three days will be occupied in their discussion, and that a serious loss to the Province will be the unavoidable result.

One thing is indisputable, whatever means may finally be applied to the liquidation of the amount which must upon the whole be expended—whether it be paid entirely from the British Treasury, or in part from our Colonial Funds—the public should understand everything connected with the whole affair, from the singular omission of the Executive in not complying with the terms of the grant, to the most minute detail in the expenditure.

BREAD STUFFS.—A late New York paper states that the total quantity of flour received at Albany from opening of canal navigation to 31st October, this year was 3,173,666 barrels, being an increase of 927,723 barrels, over-corresponding period in the year 1846; wheat, 3,223,152 bushels, being 119,014 bushels more than to the same date last year; Indian Corn, 5,697,687 bushels, being an excess of 4,291,461 bushels over the amount to corresponding period of last year.

During the first four days of November this year, there were received at Albany, 759,694 barrels of flour, 819,386 bushels wheat, 349,038 bushels barley.

REMEDY FOR THE CROUP.—A Correspondent of the Philadelphia Saturday Courier, furnishes the following—

Seeing the frequent receipts in your valuable paper for that fatal disease, the Croup, for the sake of humanity I will send you another, which has stood the test for many years in our neighborhood. It is simply molasses and saleratus. For a child of five years we give half a teaspoon of saleratus, stirred in a table spoonful of molasses; half the quantity to an infant. You can increase or decrease the quantity according to the age of the child. One thing especially has prompted me to send this, it was the recollection of the sufferings of two of my grand children many years ago, who died with that horrible disease. In families subject to this complaint, this simple remedy will prove a blessing.