

The Politician.

The British Press.

From the Mark Lane Express.

STATE OF IRELAND.

A want of forethought and self-reliance continues to be displayed in Ireland in the most extraordinary degree. The liberality with which England has rendered assistance to the people of that country in the hour of pressing need, seems to call forth no earnest or energetic exertion to provide by their own means against the recurrence of similar evils. Were it not for the cunning displayed, we should be disposed to think that the small farmer and labourer were devoid of the powers of reflection—that they were mere animal machines possessing only the use of language so as to be enabled to express their wants, but devoid of reasoning faculties. We know, however, such is not the case; yet we have the following statement from the Government Inspector in King's County.

"I have been credibly informed, from various quarters, that the class of small farmers holders of from 25 to 30 acres of land, have secreted both money and seed amply sufficient for their holdings; but these men are doing absolutely nothing, under the impression that Government will eventually prepare their land and give them seed for it, rather than see it uncropped. This opinion pervades most classes, but particularly the one above-mentioned; and it is worthy of note that this class (generally speaking) has not contributed one shilling to the relief funds, but have dismissed the one or two farm servants they usually kept and in not a few instances have got their sons on the public works, to the exclusion of the wholly destitute workman."

The subjoined astounding statement is made by Capt. Fishburn, in writing to Mr. Trevelyan—

"The difficulties encountered are incalculable. I may mention a fact, part of which I mentioned when I last wrote, which will serve to show the unreasonableness or wickedness which is abroad. Mr. T. Mahon, owner of some property near Quin, in this county being told by his tenants that they had no seed, purchased 800 stone of seed wheat, with the intention of giving it to them, but, doubting their integrity of purpose, he had it steeped in a solution of the sulphate of iron, and then announced they might have it, but they, finding that they could not eat it, would not take a grain. He then asked them to let him have the land, and he would sow it and give them the balance, after deducting the expense: they refused this also. Mr. Mahon is a man of the most undoubted integrity; so they never could have doubted for a moment the honesty of his professions. I am convinced that they have the seed, and that they will eventually sow the land themselves, or that they have entered into a combination not to sow; this, I am told, has been done in this county, in the barony of Corcomroe."

Such is the conduct, such the apathy and indifference of that class to whom the people of Ireland have to look for raising the food for the next year, the so-called farmers of that unhappy, benighted country. If such be the state of mental degradation displayed by the farmers, what is to be expected of the labourers?"

Who, amongst those who have ruled the destinies of this mighty empire, will plead guilty to a dereliction of duty so glaring, as to have allowed a considerable portion of the population of the British Islands to remain in such a state of brutal ignorance as is exhibited in the statements before made?

The ways of Providence are inscrutable, it is not for us, therefore, to attempt to unfold them. The severe visitation which we have experienced by the destruction of one of the most extensively used articles of food has awakened us, it may be, to a sense of the wrongs which we have inflicted. A fast, or as it may be more appropriately defined, a day of humiliation and prayer for the whole nation has been appointed and observed. Let us hear what some of our most learned divines, eminent in their profession in every sense of word, say upon this subject. The Bishop of London, who preached at the chapel royal, observed in the course of his sermon—

"If this dread calamity was due in part to the people of Ireland, how much greater was the fault of those who left them in a state of ignorance and crime! For their sins the whole nation was liable. National reform must be as well indicated as accomplished by individual reformation. The public acts of a nation constituted a mass of good or evil—they stamped the character of the people."

The Bishop of St. Asaph, in preaching before the House of Peers, said:

"God had granted to us great blessings—blessings such as had never been enjoyed among any other nation. England, last year, seemed to have been in the possession of a prosperity which surpassed in its characteristics and amount that ever accorded to any people with whose records we were acquainted. Let the advantages we had enjoyed be placed in comparison with the use we had made of them. We had neglected in our spiritual destitution elsewhere. They saw in that enlightened body there assembled those who, nursed in luxuries, had been denied none of the opportunities to obtain a religious education, and they had heedlessly passed over those scenes of squalid wretchedness, barefaced vice, penury, poverty, and ignorance, were spread like a leprosy on all sides of them. Look to the palace of their beloved Sovereign, and then turn to the hovels of some of her subjects. Count over the sums expend-

ed, and expended rightly, in the construction of the halls for their Parliament, and then estimate the cost of building churches for the poor."

Dr. Dealtry, Archdeacon of Surrey, in his sermon before the house of Commons, said: "Among other advantages that might arise from this visitation, was it too much to hope that the condition of those who had been most affected by it would, as the result of the inquiry now instituted, be materially improved. This interposition of Divine Providence was, perhaps, necessary for that purpose; and though, perhaps, it might involve topics that scarcely fell within the province of a Christian minister, still it might be permitted to him to trace even in this dispensation the wisdom and loving-kindness of the Lord."

These eminent pastors of the church state in delicate language, but yet such as cannot be misunderstood, that the nation as a whole, has not done its duty in caring for the wants, whether mental or physical, of those whose lot is so cast as to need its assistance. Unhappily, the affliction seems to fall heaviest upon those who apparently least deserve it, and at all events are in the most unprepared condition to bear up against it. We do not make these remarks as an apology for the want of proper feeling and absence of necessary exertion on the part of the people of Ireland themselves; but we believe that the system of government as regards Ireland has been socially vicious, and we trust that another, and of a character altogether different, will be henceforth pursued. The evils to be complained of are, however, by no means confined to Ireland. A part of England, Wales and Scotland may be included in the same category. We know that districts wherein the poor are enduring privations and suffering almost as severe as those generally experienced in Ireland, may be found in the other divisions of the United Kingdom. We are glad to see that a doubt no longer remains that an efficient poor-law of Ireland will be passed by the Legislature this session. The defeat of Lord Montagu's motion in the House of Lords renders that point certain. We believe that the result will be beneficial to the country at large. If the rental of the land be in some degree decreased by such a measure, it must not be forgotten that it has been artificially and injuriously increased through the absence of such a provision for the poor. It has afforded to the landowner an illegitimately advanced income, which has led him to an expenditure beyond that which was prudent. Let us hope that the worst is past, and that, as observed by Dr. Dealtry, "among other advantages that may accrue from this visitation, the condition of those who have been most affected by it may, as the result of the inquiry now instituted, be materially improved."

Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI:

CRATHAM, TUESDAY, MAY 4, 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.

CHIGNECTO RAILWAY.—At the last session of the Legislature, a bill was passed, incorporating a Company with a capital of £50,000, and guaranteeing a certain amount of interest by the Province. A meeting was recently held at St. John to take the matter into consideration, when a Committee was appointed to obtain subscribers for stock. The following is the Prospectus issued by the Company of which we took notice last week:—

The Company to be established under the Act of Incorporation, passed in the late Session of the General Assembly of this Province. Capital, £50,000, in 20,000 Shares, of £25 each.—Deposit, £2 10s. per Share.

The Chignecto Railway is proposed to be made across the Isthmus of Chignecto (which connects the Provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia,) and is to commence within the points of Shediac Harbour, and Tignish Head, on the Gulf side of the Isthmus; and the Bend of Peticodiac, and Missisquoi River on the Bay of Fundy side.

By the route of the Bend and Shediac, the distance 12 miles; by that of Dorchester and Shediac, 24 miles; and by that of Au Lac and Tignish, 17 miles. These three routes have been already surveyed, with a view of cutting a Canal, and are pronounced by competent engineers to be perfectly practicable for the construction of a Railway. The plans, sections and gradients are deposited in the Crown Land Office at Fredericton, and access may be had thereto by the Company, where by a considerable outlay for preliminary survey will be saved in the event of the selection of either of these lines. Another route has been suggested—namely, from Au Lac to Shediac; but has not yet been surveyed.

The difficulties attendant on Tidel Harbours

at the Bend, Dorchester, or Au Lac, will be obviated by means of a wet dock: the estimated expense of which will be about £600. Should the line by the Bend and Shediac be adopted, (taking the average cost of Railways per mile, and including the expense of the Wet Dock,) it would be completed for about £31,500; but even supposing the longer routes should be chosen,—via: from Dorchester to Shediac, or from Au Lac to Tignish,—the proposed amount of Capital will be sufficient. The nature of the ground and the shortness of the distance is an ample guarantee that the work is feasible, within the means of the Province, and calculated to afford a safe investment of money; inasmuch as the returns will be realized much sooner than in any other similar undertaking in New Brunswick.

A glance at the map of that part of the country through which this Railway will pass, must convince every one of its importance. It overcomes a great natural obstacle, and gives one continuous seaboard to New Brunswick. The commercial relation between the ports of St. John and St. Andrews and those of Dalhousie, Miramichi, Richibucto, and the Ports in Prince Edward Island will be united; thereby securing the profit of a large coasting trade, which is now diverted into other channels—and as the Company, by the Act of Incorporation, will have the privilege of plying Steamers in connection with the railway, both on the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Bay of Fundy, a direct route to Canada will be opened, and the communication between St. John and Quebec accomplished in about 54 hours.

The extensive Fisheries on the North Shore will obtain a market, and supplies reach them at half the expense at present incurred. The produce of the Coal Mines at Pictou will also form an important item of freight, and by mechanical means (now in successful operation elsewhere) vessels of from 150 to 200 tons burthen, can be carried across; thereby saving the charges of unloading and re-shipment.

The probable returns of traffic (even in its present state) which the promoters of this railway have obtained, leave no doubt that a very handsome per centage upon the same required for its construction may be confidently relied upon; and the facilities of transport to be afforded by the Railway will increase if not doubly pay the profits to the shareholder.

As a further inducement to the investment of Capital in this undertaking, the Legislature have also passed an Act for facilitating the making of the Railway, by which a guarantee of five per cent, on the sum of £25,000 for ten years has been granted, together with all ungranted lands and Timber which may be required as well for the Railway as the several stations, &c.

BRITISH NORTH AMERICAN ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.—A meeting of the Shareholders of this Association was held at Quebec on the 12th April last. By the last mail we obtained a copy of the Report which was adopted, and publish it below for the information of our readers.

"The Directors of the British N. American Electric Telegraph Association, desiring to avail themselves of this their first occasion of meeting the Stockholders of the Association, to place before them a summary of their proceedings, up to the present time, beg to submit the following Report:—

"The first duty in which your Directors engaged themselves, was in promoting concurrent action in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, with this Association, in securing the early completion of the entire line of Telegraph. To this end the necessary correspondence was opened with the governments and commercial bodies of those provinces; seeking the countenance of the former, and stimulating the latter to the formation of companies within their respective limits, which should coalesce with the present Association, and thus combined form one Corporation, nominally divided, but in reality possessing an unity of interest and purpose.

"The expectations of the Directors in this respect have been fully realized; and they are of opinion that their early alliance with the parties who have since evinced a zealous activity in furthering the undertaking, may be traced the facility with which it has within so brief a period attained its present stage of maturity.

"A carefully prepared Report accompanied the correspondence referred to, suggestive of a route by which it was proposed the line should intersect the three provinces, and circulation was given to it through the public prints both here and in Nova Scotia. This route is known as the "Metis Route," in contradistinction to another, which diverging from the Riviere du Loup took its course through New Brunswick direct to Fredericton. It is unnecessary here to recapitulate the many reasons which induced your Directors to accord to it their preference; they are already well known and sufficiently disseminated:—their soundness has been adequately tested and proved by the legislatures of the sister provinces, in both of which the direction to be taken by the Telegraph recommended in the Report in question has been more than partially sanctioned and confirmed by law.

"The extension of the Line to Montreal having been resolved at a Public Meeting held in this city on the 19th January, and this Association requested to accomplish it, your Directors at once opened a negotiation with the

Montreal and Toronto Telegraph Company to that effect, which, they regret to say, terminated unsuccessfully. The result of a protracted correspondence with that company was simply the offer of 250 shares of their capital stock, for acceptance in Quebec—they intending their line to connect Toronto and this city—which was declined. The terms proffered by your Directors, of incurring half the cost of constructing a line to Montreal only, and of participating, on equal terms, in the profits to accrue from it, having failed to secure the co-operation of the Montreal company, the correspondence between the respective Boards was brought to a close.

"Your Directors, having ascertained that in the new contract entered into by the Imperial Government with the proprietors of the Royal Mail Line, no stipulation had been included by which Halifax shall be, as heretofore, the first and last point of destination, on these shores, of the Mail Steamers on their outward and homeward trips respectively,—addressed a Memorial to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, respectfully requesting his Lordship's attention to the importance of confirming to the colonists, and the inhabitants of the mother country, the privilege of transmitting and receiving their correspondence by British Lines of communication, instead of through a foreign territory, and expressing an earnest hope that Her Majesty's government would be pleased to direct that no innovation on the present rule should form part of the instructions to the contractors for the transport of the mails to this continent.

"The Montreal Board of Trade having in November last addressed the Government on the subject of establishing a Line of Telegraph from Toronto to Halifax, received from Earl Grey a despatch in reply, in which his Lordship intimated that Her Majesty's Government were not insensible to the advantages of establishing the Telegraphic communication proposed by the Montreal Board of Trade; at the same time observing, that before determining that any proposal for making a grant in aid of the expense should be submitted to Parliament, it was necessary that he (Earl Grey) should be furnished with a full Report, both upon the estimated cost of establishing the Telegraph, and also as to the proportion of that cost which the several Provincial Legislatures would be prepared to contribute, and as to the difficulties which may be anticipated in the execution of the plan, and the probability of effectually surmounting them. The present association having been called into existence in the mean time, the entire correspondence was referred to your Directors, by the body with whom it originated, with a request to furnish the information required; a reference which was cordially and promptly responded to. The Report in question is too lengthy for transcription here; it may however be proper to furnish an outline of its contents. It replied, that it was proposed to raise the requisite capital by private subscriptions in the three provinces through which it was intended the line should pass, and that the portion necessary to commence the work, and defray the cost of construction through this province, had been already subscribed: the Metis Route was adverted to, and arguments adduced in proofs of its desirability: the existence of difficulties not unusually encountered in similar undertakings was admitted, at the same time stating that these would cease to be an impediment to the free and uninterrupted use of the Line, if the country through which it would be carried, now but thinly populated in parts, were adequately settled; and the hope was expressed that government would afford facilities to settlers who might be induced to repair thither, by free grants of lands or otherwise: an encouragement extended to induce the settlement, &c., of other roads, it was much less required. In concluding, the Directors trusted that his lordship would be pleased to recommend an annual grant being made, of a liberal nature, for the use of the Telegraph for government purposes.

"Your Directors having from the commencement of their labours been of opinion that the presence of an agent or deputation from the Association, in the Lower Provinces, would expedite the progress of affairs there, requested Andrew Stewart, Esq., of this city, to undertake the mission, who at once kindly and unhesitatingly acquiesced in their wish. He accordingly proceeded to Fredericton, on the 17th ultimo, entrusted with plenary powers to act for the Association in such manner as he might conceive most conducive to the main object contemplated, viz. the immediate establishment of telegraphic communication between this city and Halifax. The object of his journey was successfully accomplished; and the Directors desire to mark in strong terms their appreciation of the good services rendered by him, and the tact and judgment he displayed in conciliating interests at first sight conflicting. His written report to the Board will be read to the meeting.

"Different tenders have been received from parties in the United States, for the performance of the work upon the entire line, the terms of which it would be obviously improper at present to disclose, no one of them having yet been accepted:—It may, however, be stated that the Board are in correspondence with parties in N. Y., and hope in a few days to have a contract closed for the whole line to the confines of N. Brunswick:—The requisite number of posts to construct the line to Riviere du Loup have been contracted for, and are deliverable on the 1st proximo.

"A draft of an Act of Incorporation, which will be brought before the Legislature the ensuing session, has been prepared by the legal advisor of the Association, under whose super-