

and a gleam of tranquility burst over the long benighted city.—*Napier's Florentine History.*

The Politician.

The British Press.

From the Journal of Commerce.

THE DUTIES OF THE NEW PARLIAMENT.

We very much doubt that a new Parliament ever assembled under circumstances of more complicated difficulties than those which await the Legislature on Thursday next. It is no exaggeration to say that commercial embarrassment of the most serious kind, Colonial ruin and Irish Pauperism, famine and unruly anarchy, are all collected in one dark cloud, and threaten to overwhelm the nation. Nor are the foreign relations of the country running in that smooth and tranquil course which would give an assurance that, whatever may be our internal difficulties, there is nothing to be apprehended from without. Are ministers prepared at once to grapple with the evils by which the kingdom is beset; to inquire into their origin, and to apply the remedies untrammelled with the spirit of party, and unmindful of the theorists who would lead the country still deeper into the slough of ruin. If they are not so prepared, then we say gloomy indeed is the prospect which lies before the nation. In the West Indies, it is too evident that matters are rapidly approaching to an awful crisis. The news brought by the *Medway*, which reached Southampton on Sunday last, is of the most serious character: even the *Times* admit that Jamaica is described as being in a sad condition, and as being deserted by numbers of merchants, in the anticipation of increased decay of trade. The meeting of the house of assembly was looked forward to with much interest. There had probably never been so many meetings and so much unanimity as is described to exist in Jamaica and the British West Indies generally. Unanimity about what? About the injustice with which they have been treated by the British legislature, and the ruin to which they are devoted by Act of Parliament. The *Guiana Royal Gazette*, of the 21st ult., says:—"British Guiana at last has, like the surrounding colonies, taken the alarm. The Sugar Bill is to be denounced; Parliament is to be approached with remonstrances; and the Convention of Delegates at St. Thomas to be sanctioned and supported. This is as it should be. Surely Ministers ought to see something significant in this meeting of delegates from all the West Indian colonies in a Danish island. They are about to assemble to proclaim to Great Britain, and to the world, the injustice with which they have been treated, and the premeditated confiscation of their property. Our private correspondent, writing from Demerara, says—

"The prospects for the future are almost as bad as bad can be for the West Indian colonies. I fear, if immediate relief be not given, sugar cultivation in the British West Indies must cease, and I question as to whether even this year, with its large crops, will not prove ruinous to many proprietors. In fact, I have heard that instructions have been received by some attorneys only to cut off the old canes, and not to incur expense by working the young cultivation; and if sugars do not realise more than 10^l. or 12^l. per hogshead of 15 or 16 cwt., this must become general. As to hoping for better times, it appears to be hoping only to end in despair."

Have Ministers reflected upon the possible consequence of driving a whole community, such as our West Indian colonies embrace, to despair? The experiment was tried with our North American colonies in 1775, and most signal and disastrous was the result. How stands the West India question at this moment? The weather has been most propitious; the crops far above an average; labour by no means scarce; but the planters are unable to compete with slavery under the fostering encouragement given to it by the British nation. This is the case which they are prepared to submit to the civilised world, and how is it to be met? By pleading that the people can buy slave-grown sugar 1^d. per lb. cheaper, although the nation will have to go in debt for it. We refer pointedly to this subject from a firm conviction that if the West India colonies are to be preserved to the British Crown, no time should be lost, when Parliament meets, in revising our sugar legislation.

From the disastrous condition of Ireland; more disastrous, from the greater number of human beings who are involved in its fate. Ministers, indeed, may plead that, in the mode of administering relief to Ireland, they may have erred in judgment, but acted for the best. They can record no such plea as regards the West Indies: cheap sugar, no matter at whose hands, or at what sacrifice of consistency, is their only apology. That Ministers have erred in judgment with regard to Ireland is becoming painfully apparent; nevertheless, they were forewarned by those most competent to judge of the state of that country. They imagined that the duration of Irish distress was to be measured by the season of dearth; that a sufficient harvest would square accounts; or, at all events, that any deficiency in the balance would be set right by a Poor-law. In our journal of the 6th of February last we predicted that the Irish Poor-law would prove a failure. We observed—

Ireland a more efficient and better system for the relief of the poor. We tell him he will fail. We think his lordship must now be convinced that the Irish Poor-law has proved a total failure; if he supposed it could grapple with Irish distress. In another article of the same date we expressed our surprise that "the month of August should be fixed upon as the period when Irish wants are supposed to cease;" and we asked—"What is to feed the people of Ireland beyond the month of August? Should there be no potato crop in the autumn of the present year—and we certainly do not expect one in Ireland, at least—how are they to be provided for next year?" We think it probable that Lord John Russell may now be asked himself the same question—how the millions of Irish paupers are to be fed in 1848? Some incipient movements are making to supply them as they were supplied during the winter and spring of 1846-7. But where is the money to come from? Ministers ought to have known that, no matter how abundant the crops might be, unless there was employment for the Irish people, they must starve; and there was abundant evidence before the Government that the population of Ireland far exceeded the means of employment. The *Times* had its panacea;—the land must support the people, although it may take the entire rental of the country: in other words, Irish estates might be confiscated, so long as the Poor-law guardians had sufficient money for in-door relief, and out-of-door relief. Well, so far as the payment of rents is concerned, the progress of confiscation is going on successfully enough, but we do not find that the Poor-law treasury is anything the richer for it.

When Parliament meets Ministers will find that they have much more to deal with than the currency or commercial questions. Serious and important as those subjects are, the settlement of them will be easy compared to the other difficulties which await them, among which they will find Ireland and the sugar-growing colonies not the last perplexing.

Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI:

CHATHAM, TUESDAY, Jan. 18, 1848.

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.

GAZETTE.—We have received the first number of a very neatly printed Newspaper, published at Grand Pabos, in the district of Gaspe, by R. W. Kelly. We copy the following remarks from the Editor's address to the public.

If any person, a few years ago, had prophesied, that in this wild part of Gaspe, a Newspaper would have been published, he would have been ridiculed for the assertion, and he who should attempt it, (the paper), considered perfectly insane.

The government of the day, however, began the work of improvement, and under the direction of the Board of Works, an excellent road was made from Melis to the Gaspe Basin, and by the municipal Ordinances and acts power was given to the inhabitants, for certain local purposes, which they never before possessed.

Latterly, also the selection of this place, as the principal depot of a Joint Stock Company, the erection of Warehouses, Mills, &c., &c., tended very much to the improvement by the great demand for labor, and the consequent circulation of a large amount of cash; and whilst we regret that owing to the unfortunate state of mercantile affairs in the Mother country, they have been for a moment inconvenienced, and have necessarily contracted their expenditure; we are happy to say that by the zeal and energy of the gentleman in charge, this momentary inconvenience has been honorably surmounted, and if affairs are properly managed in London by the board of Directors, the whole district will reap lasting advantages and the stock holders of the Gaspe company adequate returns.

The same paper contains the following Election News.

The Writs for the Election of the two fit and proper persons, to represent this district having arrived, the people are busily engaged in talking about the approaching contest. In Gaspe county, we are informed there is no likelihood of an opposition, so Mr. Christie again walks over the course? Not so in Bonaventure.—Mr. Le Bonfillier, the late member retiring, J. R. Hamilton, Esq., Q. C., of Carlisle, and Wm. Cathbert, Esq., merchant of New Richmond, are named as Candidates; both are gentlemen of the highest respectability in their different pursuits, and as their respective friends are each sanguine of success, a smart struggle is expected.

EDITORIAL LABORS.—The *Novascoti-an* furnishes the following remarks on

the duties, responsibilities, and labors of a Newspaper Editor. Reader when you have perused it, think of your duty, and ask yourself—Have I paid the Printer?

NEWSPAPER-DOM.—Well truly this is a queer dom, too, we fancy to exclaim many a reader: 'it's not a king dom, nor any other dom, of which we have heard before, excepting the gas-man's dom.—And why head a paragraph with such a title?' We will answer you friendly reader. It is that we may direct attention, not only to the vast responsibility of Newspaper proprietors and writers, but also to that of newspaper readers.

The evenings of the present season are now long—these cannot be devoted to agricultural, or scarcely any other business pursuits. The mind however must be occupied—and if in intellectual attainments, will be found a lifelong satisfactory. The information to be gained by ways of general knowledge, is incalculably valuable, and many persons have acknowledged that not only the foundation but even the very structure of their knowledge, had depended upon newspaper reading—therefore, had they reason to be thankful to those who afforded them both pleasure and profit.

Thus is seen the vast responsibility of a newspaper conductor. There are too many individuals, whose only reading is the newspaper—this is their guide book to knowledge and principles—which are grafted upon the information which is found contained therein.—Possibly there may be an occasional error—hence arises a curse of the responsibility, the error being gulphed down with the truth. For the mistake however, when discovered, the editor is held answerable—perhaps justly. But the hardship does not rest here. The principles inculcated in a paper, to which the father of a family subscribes, are too frequently communicated to the children—thus gilding their minds to certain beliefs and opinions, which, when they become of mature age, they may not only dispute, but discard. Here again is seen the responsibility of the writer. According to commonly received opinions it is considered to be an editor's duty to search out and plead for the reform of every evil and political abuse,—to parade before the public the directions of public officers,—to recommend new measures to the public rulers, who shall advance the interests of the people—to forward the progress of every social society—to attend, not only to the benefits of communities, but of private individuals, to correct vice, and in every case to advance virtue. Surely this is a hard task but 'the title has not been told.' Let a public writer make one slip of the pen, or commit one accidental error or judgment, he forfeits the friendship and support of many of subscribers—whilst on the other hand, let him do right from the first number which he may issue in the year, even unto the last, he gets neither thanks, and in many cases nor pay.

What then, is the duty and responsibility of the newspaper reader? the question is answered in three short words—**PAY THE PRINTER.** He can then afford to do his duty—to look after the best interests of his countrymen, and to support by his mental talents, the institutions of the land in which he dwells.

UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN.—*Repeal of the Navigation Laws.*—The Washington correspondent of the *New York Herald*, in a letter dated the 21st ultimo, communicates the following important information, the accuracy of which is vouched for.

A correspondent has taken place between the British Secretary for Foreign Affairs and our Minister at that Court, relative to the repeal of the Navigation Laws of Great Britain. Mr. Bancroft applied to Viscount Palmerston, early in November, to learn whether Ministers would consent to establish with the United States a perfect system of reciprocity, in making all vessels of either country, sitting out from any port in the world, free to trade to any port of the other nation, whether Home or Colonial. Viscount Palmerston, after the lapse of some weeks, replied that, although Her Majesty's Ministers did not feel at liberty to advise Her Majesty at once to make such a change in the commercial system as was asked by Mr. Bancroft, without the sanction of Parliament—yet, as soon as that body would meet, a measure would be introduced which would embrace all the views put forth by Mr. Bancroft in his note. It is not doubted that Parliament will at once act favorably on the Bill. The importance to the United States of such a measure, cannot be exaggerated. The British Colonial system has been a most grievous restriction upon our commerce, and its annihilation, as promised by Viscount Palmerston, will open to our enterprising merchants the lucrative trade of the East and West Indies and of the other British settlements, from which they have been hitherto debarred. This will be the greatest stride yet taken by free trade, and it is not to be doubted that all Europe will follow the example of Great Britain.

The liberal commercial treaty made by Hanover with the United States has been, in no small measure, instrumental in disposing the British Government to this wise measure. The Rhine Provinces have recently imitated the example of Hanover towards the United States, and everywhere, silently, but steadily, our commercial relations are being put upon the most advantageous footing. The Repeal

by Great Britain of the laws restricting the trade of the United States with her Colonies will be far more beneficial to this country than any commercial treaty ever made by our Government.

SWITZERLAND.—The Federal Diet assembled at Friburg on the 19th November, decreed:—

1. The Jesuits, corporations, congregations, teachers, and professors affiliated to that order, are banished forever from the Friburg territory.

2. This measure applies to the Jesuits, the Liguorians, the Marianites or *Freres ignorants*, the Brethren of the Christian Doctrine, the Sisters of St. Joseph, the sisters of St. Vincent de Paul, and the Nuns of the Holy Heart.

3. Congregations and corporations of that description shall not in future be permitted to settle in the canton under any pretext whatever, to purchase property in it, or to direct public or private establishments for the education of youth.

4. The individuals belonging to those orders and congregations shall quit the canton within the space of three 24 hours from the publication of the present decree.

5. All the property, moveable or real, possessed by the above mentioned corporations, to become the property of the State, and its proceeds to be applied to public instruction. To that effect it is to be sequestered, and, after an inventory of it shall have been taken, it shall be placed under the civil administration. The cession or sales of any part of said property as far back as the 15th of October are declared null and void.

6. The directors of the departments of the police and finance are respectively charged with the execution of the present decree.

7. The present decree becomes obligatory immediately on its promulgation, and shall be published and posted up in the usual places.

An Assembly of the people of Lucerne was convened for the purpose of forming a provisional government, which should act in conformity with the posture of affairs.

The following resolutions were agreed to as the basis of the policy for the future Government:—

1. That the Jesuits be ordered to quit the canton of Lucerne within 48 hours.

2. That the members of the Grand Council who had adhered to the Sonderbund should be subject to public accusation, and be held responsible for every thing which had resulted from this course of policy.

3. A general amnesty for all who had been implicated in prosecutions by their acts of the 5th of December, 1844, and the 31st of March and 1st of April, 1845. (The dates of the two invasions of the *Corps Francais* against the Sonderbund.)

4. That the Provisional Government take steps for the recovery of the Government chests, and also of the corn which had been sent out of the canton by the late Government before their departure.

5. That all persons comprised within the terms of Art. 3, should be held inadmissible to election in the Grand Council of State.

UNITED STATES.—A very destructive tornado passed over a large part of the State of Alabama. The town of Newburn was almost wholly destroyed, and the surrounding country suffered severely.

The New-Brunswick has the following remarks on the doings of Congress:

The United States' Congress appears to be doing little more than discussing the merits of the war with Mexico, and the effect of the war on the destinies of the United States. The Bill to call out ten additional Regiments has been before the Senate for some days, and several of the opposition members have embraced the opportunity to denounce the war as unnecessary and unjust. On the 4th inst. Mr. Calhoun made a speech on the subject, in the course of which he said that they had expended \$40,000,000 and 7000 lives for nothing at all. He had conversed with men well informed, and he had no doubt that to continue the war as was proposed, they should have to vote \$40,000,000 more of Treasury Notes, for which, at this moment, not more than 90 cents a dollar could be realised. Mr. Calhoun said, to pursue the policy which the administration seemed bound to follow, would not only lead to the entire subjugation of Mexico, but it would cause an expenditure annually, equal to the value of the entire cotton crop of the country, sixty millions of dollars. This nation he contended, could not survive such an immense drain. If the President does not know or believe this, then either the intelligence or integrity of the administration must be impeached.

AMERICAN PRESS.—CANADIAN AFFAIRS.—Our friends over the border, it would appear from the following article clipped from the columns of the *Rochester Daily American*, are watching with intense anxiety every political movement in Canada.