

tween the United States and England, has been received with general satisfaction by all the trading communities of Europe.

Ireland is again attracting no inconsiderable share of public attention. It will be seen that since our last, the judges of the Queen's Bench have overruled the errors assigned in the cases of Mr W. S. O'Brien and his fellow prisoners. The court was unanimous in its decision; and it remains to be seen whether the unhappy men will persevere in carrying their hopeless appeal to the House of Lords. It is confidently stated that application has been made for the requisite permission from the Lord Lieutenant in the case of Mr. O'Brien, but that Mr Meagher declines to proceed further, and is resolved to submit to his fate. Any hopes of overturning the verdict must prove delusive. Time, however, may be gained, and a change in public opinion and in the temper of the Government might ensue during the next few months; but we can hardly conceive any administration likely to be in power, which would show more leniency than the present.

But whilst political agitation is in abeyance in Ireland, a vast revolution is silently proceeding in the transfer of property from the embarrassed landlords into the hands of their mortgagees. Patrician families, of reputed wealth, are fast sinking into poverty, whilst their broad lands become the property of those to whom they have been pledged for years past. A long time must elapse before matters settle down into their natural channels, but if tranquillity is maintained the inevitable process now so rapidly in progress will be much accelerated. It is therefore deplorable that the incendiary fires to which we alluded in our last number as so prevalent in Ulster, continue to occur. Major Brownrigg, the deputy-general of constabulary, has been dispatched to the counties of Down and Antrim to investigate into the causes of these sudden and alarming attacks upon property, in districts hitherto so remarkable for tranquillity and security. A case of female heroism, recorded in our Irish news, in which two farmers daughters, near Belfast, are represented to have successfully beat off no fewer than nine incendiaries, killing one, and wounding others, has excited great interest.

It is satisfactory to turn from these guilty practices, and regard the prospects of Ireland from another point of view. The Earl of Clarendon, at a recent meeting of the Dublin Society, intimates the intention of the Government to establish Schools of Design in Ireland, with a view to promote the arts and manufactures. Last year the Lord Lieutenant's application for the requisite means, from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, received the answer "No effects." But this year, in spite of the cry for retrenchment, Sir Charles Wood has found the money for so praiseworthy an object, to which we heartily wish success.—His lordship said "that the Irish were, in his opinion, more apt to learn—they possessed much greater ingenuity and much more natural taste than the English," his lordship accordingly thought "they would not be behindhand in the race of competition, where application and ingenuity, correctness of eye, and facility of hand are indispensable to successfully unite beauty and utility, and to adapt them to objects for which there is a constant demand." This is pointing out to Ireland the real path to political and commercial greatness. If the principles and course of action, thus eloquently pointed out, should be followed with that zeal which distinguishes our fellow-countrymen on the other side of the channel, Irish destitution and political inferiority would soon vanish, and give place to a great country asserting its position amongst the other nations of the world as naturally as the elements assume their position in the universe. We rejoice to hear Lord Clarendon express his opinions that the worst is over, and that many signs of improvement in the condition of the country develop themselves. His lordship's speech is perhaps one of the most eloquent he has ever delivered, having, one of the noblest themes—the great and glorious results of labor—the free interchange of the productions of man, and whilst acknowledging his social obligations and rights, teaches him that all mankind must labor each in his allotted sphere, in order to guarantee the maintenance of peace and the progress of civilisation.

The first blow has been struck in the Indian campaign. By the overland mail we have dates from Bombay to the 20th December, with advices from Calcutta to the 10th, and Madras to the 12th, together with news from Moultan to the 5th, and from the commander-in-chief's camp at Ramungur to the 7th December. Lord Gough joined the army of the Chenab on the 21st November; but the heavy guns did not arrive till the 30th, having been detached to make a detour to compel the unconditional surrender of a rebel fortress on the road. On the 22nd his lordship determined upon a surprise before daybreak, apparently with a view to ascertain the strength of the enemy. The Sikh forces were posted mainly on the right bank of the river Chenab, with a considerable detachment on an islet in the middle of the stream, whilst from the islet to the left bank ran a shallow branch of the river, by which a large body of the Sikhs were enabled with facility to communicate with the left bank where they were posted. The position of the Sikhs on the left bank was protected by the formidable batteries on the right bank of the river, which took a bend at the spot, as well as by the guns which were placed upon the islets. In the reconnaissance our troops, in attempting to pass the shallow wa-

tercourse or "nullah" mentioned, got one of the guns embedded in the sand, and the deadly aim of the Sikh batteries was so severe that we were compelled to spike the gun and abandon it. A large body of Sikhs having now crossed over to the left bank, daring our troops to battle, Lord Gough resolved to dislodge them from their position. In effecting this dangerous service, the gallantry of our troops led them too far, and they were betrayed into an ambush of Sikhs concealed in the "nullah," and suffered most severely. In this inconsiderable skirmish, which lasted about twenty minutes, the Sikhs, with their unerring matchlocks, killed several of our best officers, amongst whom were Major-Gen. Cureton, Col Havelock, and Captain Fitzgerald, of the 14th dragoons, besides many who were severely wounded. The left bank was, however, cleared of the enemy, whose guns and matchlocks made us pay dearly for the advantage. On the 30th, the heavy guns having arrived, General Thackwell was detached with about 7000 men to a ford up the river, with orders to cross the Chenab and come down the right bank, whilst Lord Gough attacked the enemy with his main body in front. Through some unavoidable causes General Thackwell was compelled to go up as high as Yizerabad before he could cross the river, by which a day was lost, and the troops too wearied out to attack the enemy immediately.

On the 2nd and 3d General Thackwell having marched nineteen miles, commenced the heavy cannonade, which was the signal for Lord Gough to commence operations while the attention of the Sikhs was directed to our troops on their own side of the river. The Sikhs advanced, while Thackwell's troops halted. Thus encouraged, the Sikhs moved to the attack, attempting to turn the flanks of the British when they received such a destructive fire from us as completely to silence their guns and frustrate all their operations. The general battle, owing to the exhausted state of our troops, was deferred till the following day, but during the night of the 3d the whole of the Sikh force precipitately fled, or, at least, completely disappeared, carrying away their guns and exploding their magazines. The whole of General Thackwell's loss did not exceed forty men. Lord Gough pushed across the river in pursuit. Shere Singh has fled towards the next of the five rivers, the Jhelum, where doubtless, there will be another battle. The Sikhs seemed to have acted throughout with their accustomed bravery, and we cannot hope that they will be altogether subjugated except at a considerable loss of human life. These desultory skirmishes, since they can be scarcely dignified as battles, however distinguished by the loss of some of the bravest of our military heroes, cannot have much effect on the issue of the campaign. The general impression is that Shere Singh will rally his forces at some advantageous spot, or retire to the hills and harass us with a guerilla warfare. The column of troops from Bombay, despatched to eject Moolraj from Moultan, would arrive about Christmas, by which period it is not improbable that Moolraj will have evacuated the place and moved towards the hills. Narain Singh had already quitted his camp with a large body of men and two guns. Moolraj, who is said to be quite dispirited, will endeavor to follow unless we can contrive to cut off his retreat. It is satisfactory to hear that Attock still held out bravely, and captain Abbott maintained himself stoutly in the Hazareh district. Major Lawrence and his family had, however, been given up to Chutter Singh by the chief with whom he had taken refuge at Kohat, but was respectfully treated. The Major's letter, announcing his detention was dated Noshera, by which the position of Chutter Singh is ascertained. Some disturbances have also broken out in the Jullinder Doab, so that the British authorities have their work carved out for them for some time to come. A decisive battle with the Sikhs would tend more to tranquillise the country than any other event. Lord Dalhousie was to leave Umballah on the 9th December in progress to Ludiana.

The dates from Hong Kong are to the 30th November. Everything remained quiet at the various settlements in China.

France makes but a very slow progress towards a settled and satisfactory administrative system. The incompatible functions of an absolute Assembly and an independent President, clog the wheels of good government. The preliminary motion upon the question of the dissolution of the Assembly, so much desired by the nation, has been carried by a slender majority of 400 against 306, and has been referred to the bureaux to report upon. The reporters appointed by the various committees upon the question were almost all adverse to the dissolution, and it is said that they have decided upon moving the order of the day whenever the proposition is moved in the Assembly. It will be some days before the report is made, and the forms of the Assembly will prevent the question being carried through so as to allow the elections to take place before April. Notwithstanding the reluctance of the Red Republicans to surrender the power they have usurped, we think it scarcely possible that they can resist the voice of the nation, and the probability is that a new Assembly will be elected about April or May.

We had scarcely despatched our last number when the intelligence arrived that an expedition of eleven steamers was preparing at Toulon, with orders to sail without a moment's delay. From Brest and Cherbourg active preparations were equally reported. Rumour naturally ascribed these demonstrations as indicative of an armed intervention in favour of the Pope. The steam vessels were adapted

to carry from 7 to 10,000 men; but up to this moment no orders for sailing have been received, and either a change of counsels has taken place, or, more probably, the expedition has been altogether abandoned. There is, however, an uneasy feeling, and 400,000 muskets have been ordered from the manufactories at St. Etienne. The main cause of apprehension is, however, the condition of the French finances.

The Red Republicans perceiving the ground giving way under them, are making great efforts, and at Lyons are casting musket balls and providing gunpowder for a "stand up fight." Their pretence is resistance to the reactionary party in the Assembly—their object confusion and plunder. The clubs in Paris are again becoming active, and it is said that some severe measures are contemplated for the complete suppression. The conspirators of June are to be forthwith tried by the High Court of Justice, which is expected to assemble at Bourges.

In our last publication we were enabled to state that a general improvement had taken place in trade and commerce, and we are now called upon to record not only its continuance but extension during the past two weeks. The favorable alteration which has taken place in political affairs on the continent, exercises a beneficial effect in this country, and tends to allay any fears which may have been entertained as to the probability of a continental war, or further tumults throughout Europe.—Our recent advices from Germany and Holland informs us that manufacturers are getting busier whilst produce was in greater demand and prices advancing. In most of the French markets home and colonial Produce has been in good request,—business operations have increased, and others could not be executed on former terms. Letters from Lyons state that a vast number of orders for manufactured goods have been received at that city. It is also satisfactory to be able to report that Money was getting more plentiful in the business cities of the continent; and from the liberal spirit evinced by the various rulers throughout Europe to enact wise and popular laws, confidence was getting founded on a firmer basis among all classes of the commercial community. The Produce markets of the United Kingdom have been very steady. A large business has been going forward in all our leading markets, whilst higher prices have been paid for several articles of consumption. The Cotton trade has manifested activity, and large sales are going forward at better prices. The Grain trade, although dull, has lately exhibited greater firmness. The supplies are plentiful, and prices continue to rule at a low figure. Iron of all kinds is in better request, and higher prices are paid. Money continues very abundant; the rate of discount is yet 2½ to 2¾ per cent. for prime bills, with an easy market. Railway property is daily advancing in value, and the Public Securities have also undergone a considerable improvement since this day fortnight. Altogether present appearances are very encouraging, and a splendid trade during the ensuing spring and summer is expected.

The mighty convulsions which have shaken the continent during the past twelve months have subsided into a deceitful calm. The Frankfurt Assembly has fairly cast the apple of discord amongst the Princes of Germany. Austria while recovering her rebellious Hungarian Provinces, has a new field of controversy opened to her in the threatened rivalry of Prussia for the German throne; her tenure of the Provinces of Lombardy will again become probably the subject of a quarrel with the king of Sardinia. The question of the Danish Duchies is as unsettled as ever. Naples and Sicily are still as far removed from an amicable settlement of their disputes; whilst Russia which has so long remained silently prepared for action, seems deeply plunged in intrigues, with a view to an extension of her power towards the south, and to intimidate our own unpopular Foreign Secretary; so that it will require more than his usual address and sagacity to circumvent the Autocrat's plans, and continue to preserve, as he has hitherto contrived to do, the general peace of Europe.

Since our last Prince Windischgrtz has entered Buda-Pesth without firing a shot, and the subjection of Hungary must inevitably follow. Kossuth has retired before the conquering imperialists, and Windischgrtz has captured Count Bathiany, one of the chief insurgent leaders, and confiscation and extermination are the order of the day. The Diet at Kremsier has resumed its sittings, but a vote of want of confidence which it passed proves that very little harmonious action can be anticipated between that body and the military leaders who now sway the destinies of Austria. Martial law has been proclaimed in Gallacia, in which direction the notorious Bom has escaped.

In Prussia tranquility prevails, but the domestic disputes of the Prussians keep up a certain degree of excitement.

Respecting the proceedings of the Pope we can furnish but very little authentic information. The expedition contemplated by Franco to support his cause has, we believe been relinquished, and propositions by the court of Spain to hold conferences for the purpose of settling the affairs of Rome seem also to be abandoned. Everything is left to the decision of the Congress which is about to assemble at Brussels with that object. Sir Henry Ellis will represent England, but we already distrust a great reluctance on the part of Austria to be dictated to all upon the subject of Lom-

bardy, and she will doubtless be just as refractory about the affairs of Rome.

The French and Anglo mediation still keeps the Neapolitans and the Sicilians from open warfare. The king of Naples spends the whole of his time at Gaeta with the Pope, and the activity of the negotiations which are carried on with Vienna, portends a speedy intervention of some kind, in order to put down Sterbini and his party, who are the present rulers at Rome. The Pope has threatened his subjects with excommunication, which will be probably fulminated against them as soon as he finds the Catholic Princes of Europe are in a position to come effectually to his aid.

The Sultan of Turkey has taken a great stride in religious toleration, having issued a decree, according to Christians the privilege of attaining the highest dignities, even that of Pacha and Vizer. We hardly know how the English Parliament will be able to resist the admission of the Jews into the house of commons after this; or our Mahomedan fellow subjects of India either.

It would appear that the British Government have wisely resolved to meet the wishes of the people, as demonstrated through the Financial Reform and other associations, to reduce the expenditure of the several departments of the state considerably yet, without impairing their efficiency.

LIVERPOOL TIMBER TRADE.—The following is an extract from the Annual Report:—

It is with a feeling of relief we record the fact, that the memorable year of 1848 has passed, and with it we hope the many disturbing causes which so crippled and paralysed the general trade of the country, and kept us in a state of uncertainty throughout the whole year.

The Timber Trade this year, we are sorry to say, forms no exception to the general depression, having at length felt the full effect of the limitation of railway works, and the almost entire cessation of all building operations, which were the necessary consequences of the commercial embarrassments of 1847, and which as is usual with the Timber trade, were felt at a much later period than by other branches—that trade being the last to feel, as also the last to recover from such a state of things. The new year, however, opens with brighter prospects. With a revived and prosperous state of trade in the manufacturing districts, and the likelihood of money continuing abundant and easy, we hope to see a moderate and gradual return to our usual demand; and, while the sufficiency of stocks of most articles forbids any sanguine calculations as to prices, there is no cause for despondency, and we trust that, with moderate views, a healthy and improving business may be fairly calculated on in the coming year.

NOVA SCOTIA.—The Revd. Mr Macbean came out the Niagara, and intends proceeding to Charlottetown, having received a call from the congregation of St. James's Church in that place.—The Mayor has summoned a meeting of the inhabitants of Halifax, to be held to-day, "to take into consideration and obtain an expression of opinion, on the necessity there exists of measures being adopted to facilitate the contemplated Railroad, between Halifax and Quebec."

A meeting was held at Dartmouth on Thursday, to take this subject into consideration. A number of Resolutions were passed unanimously, pledging the breadth of way required through the township, and making provision for paying the several landowners by assessment, and also pledging the township to contribute its fair proportion of the sum required to be raised by the Province, by assessment.

NEW BRUNSWICK.—The Courier says—That the Telegraphic line will be finished to-night ready for operation through to New Orleans by Monday morning.

A petition is in course of signature in St. John, against the proposed alteration for the conveyance of the British Canadian mail through the American territory.

The Correspondent of the New Brunswick under date of Wednesday last, from Fredericton, says:—

"Yesterday, the despatch on the Trunk Railway was produced; but its reading created no great sensation in the House. Earl Grey expressed his hearty concurrence in the project; but wishes, previous to his being more explicit, to know what will be done in the Colonies. There was another despatch on the Post Office, stating the willingness of the Home Government to place it under Colonial control; and still another on the Provincial Boundary, stating that it was under consideration, and would be favorably adjusted."

The Courier reports:—

On Tuesday the Hon. Provincial Secretary, laid before the house a Despatch relating to the mode of our imposing discriminating duties, and stated, that as the Home Government had for many reasons abandoned the discriminating policy in Great Britain, such policy could not in future be permitted in the colonies. Earl Grey intimates that he has not advised her Majesty to disallow our last Revenue Bill, but plainly states that any similar Bill will in future be disallowed. A third despatch related to the Navigation Laws, and a fourth to the Electric Telegraph.