

European News.

Willmer & Smith's European Times. February 9.

IRELAND.

From the Limerick and Clare Examiner.

Appalling Catastrophe at the Limerick Workhouse—Twenty-seven Females Killed.—It is our duty to record the particulars of a fatal and melancholy casualty which took place last night at Clare-street auxiliary workhouse, by which 27 human beings lost their lives, and 28 were seriously injured. Between eight and nine o'clock, shortly after the inmates, five hundred families had retired to rest, on the lofts of the store set apart for sleeping apartments, a false alarm of fire was given by one of the women, whether with an idle intention of causing annoyance, or by design is unknown; but so electric was the panic created, that almost instantaneously the females on the first loft leaped from their beds and in the darkness, rushed in a body to the staircase or ladder, leading from that portion of the building to the ground floor. The strenuous efforts of all to gain access to the ladder, upon which several crowded together, necessarily caused a crush and confusion, until ultimately, the paupers on the other lofts congregated in the narrow passage, when the ladder broke, and numbers were precipitated to the ground from a height of not more than ten feet. The scene that ensued is almost indescribable—the shrieks from below induced those above to press more eagerly towards the staircase, and as they came to the verge of the passage, down they fell in crowds over each other! For some time all remonstrance was unavailing to dissuade the paupers from rushing headlong to ruin, and before the surprising nerve and exertion of the matron, Mrs Sleeman, and assistant master, Mr O'Shaughnessy, had effect, twenty-seven females were killed, or rather suffocated from falling on the top of each other!! The occurrence having become known outside, numbers of citizens proceeded to the auxiliary establishment, to render assistance. The Roman Catholic clergy congregated also, as there could not have been less than 20 present. The city police with the mayor, were also in prompt attendance, and all united in relieving the sufferers, and extracting the dead bodies from beneath the half suffocated group that lay struggling on the ground. The scene was truly appalling, as the relatives and friends of those who were located in the workhouse crowded before the premises, and as each dead body, or dying sufferer, was brought out on a door for conveyance to Barrington's Hospital, the progress of the carriers was violently stayed to catch a glimpse for recognition. At ten o'clock the number of dead bodies received into Barrington's Hospital was 27, and a more heart-rending spectacle never presented itself—there lay, side by side, the livid remains of these unfortunate creatures who, a few hours before, were in the prime of life! The majority were young and well looking females—indeed some had the smile of innocence on their youthful countenances, and seemed as if in a dream of joyful extasy. Dr. Gore was the first medical officer in attendance at Barrington's Hospital, and, aided by Dr. Cavanagh, resident apothecary, made every proper arrangement for the reception and treatment of the wounded, and accommodation of the dead. Drs. Geary, Brodie, and Leane, were also at the hospital, and saw the patients who were brought in taken care of. The number received into the hospital seriously injured was 28, and of these there are not three expected to recover. No blame is attached to the officers of the institution, as the melancholy occurrence originated with the paupers themselves. The Catholic clergy were up all night administering the rights of religion to the patients. The Mayor, P. G. Barron, Esq.; John W. Mahony, Esq., and other gentlemen remained until 12 o'clock at the harrowing scene.

ENGLAND.

The Great Storm.—On Tuesday night and Wednesday morning, this town and neighborhood was visited by a storm only inferior in intensity and duration to the great storm of 1839. In exposed situations the houses rocked to and fro like cradles, for even well-sheltered dwellings which stood shoulder to shoulder with their companions, like a phalanx of soldiers, were shaken to their foundation. The terrible noise of the tempest, the crash of broken chimneys, and the noise of their fragments and of slates falling on the pavement, caused no small terror to many families, who, no doubt, had their ears enhanced by the recollection of the appalling effects of several previous hur-

ricanes with which this neighborhood has been visited. Many left their beds in dread of falling chimney stacks or broken walls, and others were driven theretrom by the effects of the violent gusts on their windows; panes of glass bursting before the pressure with appalling noise, and in some instances, whole window frames being smashed in, leaving the tempest to howl through the passages and apartments with a chilling influence and distressing effect on the inmates, which none can understand save those who have been subjected to such discomforting visitations. Signboards and shutters were broken from their fastening, lead stripped from the roofs of the houses, walls overturned, and bricks blown from the tops of chimneys. In one of the windows of Trinity Church nearly every pane was broken. Shortly after six o'clock a chimney was blown down over the Crooked Bilet, in Exchange street East. It fell upon the roof, which happily was strong enough to resist the weight of the bricks precipitated upon it. Many of the houses in the neighborhood of the North Shore have suffered considerable damage; and the marine villas in the locality of Bootle Bay have all of them been injured in some degree by the violence of the storm.—Most of the suburban villas, and numerous houses and seats in the country have suffered more or less damage, and the furious assaults of the tempest on detached and unsheltered houses in the country caused extreme anxiety and terror to the inmates of such residences.

The gale seems to have been general. The Morning Chronicle of Thursday says—"A tremendous gale of wind, amounting at times to a perfect hurricane, of more than 12 hours' duration, swept over the metropolis the greater portion of Tuesday night and Wednesday morning. Its equal in violence has not been experienced for years, and a vast destruction of property has taken place. In all parts of the metropolis we hear of the destructive effects of the storm."

In the town and neighborhood of Manchester the storm did considerable damage.

At Nottingham the storm was introduced by thunder and lightning. The wind blew in fitful but tremendous gusts from the west, with a degree of violence perhaps never before experienced during the present generation in the midland counties. Several persons were injured by the falling of chimneys.

At Dublin several large elm trees, which had stood for a century in the suburbs of the city, were torn up by the roots. Chimneys were blown down, and the streets were strewn with slates from off the houses.

At Cheltenham the pinnacles of the College were shattered, and the roof much injured. Some of the hotels suffered considerable damage. The centre pinnacle on the eastern side of the tower of Christ's was blown down, and, falling through the roof, broke in its way the tiles and timber works and the panelling of the ceiling.

Her Majesty's steam-ship Onyx was wrecked off Ostend.

Colonial News.

New Brunswick:

St John Morning News, Feb. 22. Steam once More.—St. John is once more about to be annexed to Boston by means of our usual line of steamers. It will be seen by advertisement, that the steamer Maid of Erin leaves St. John next Thursday to meet the splendid steamer Admiral, Captain Hutchins, at Eastport. It seems like getting into the world again when these steamers commence their trips.—Boston then is reached in 28 hours—whereas during the winter months, it costs us a week to get there. Once in Boston, everything is bright, cheering and prosperous. It is like getting into sunshine after a heavy storm. We see no closed stores in Boston, because there is nobody to hire them—no hotels in want of lessees—no wharves deserted for want of commerce—no workshops presenting a Sunday appearance—no distressed countenances in the streets, generally speaking—no Merchants with their Clerks more than half their time idle. No—nothing of the sort. On the contrary the very reverse of all this is the fact. Yet, in St. John we have people, owning property, who wish for the same prosperity, and yet have not common sense enough to know how to go the right way to work to bring it about. The stupid, on the contrary, do all they can to oppose those who are trying to do them good for the sake of their children.

St. John Observer, Feb. 26. Temperance Hall.—At a special Meeting of the Sons of Temperance, on last Wednesday evening, a resolution was adopted in favor of opening subscriptions for the erection of a Temperance Hall in this City, for the accommodation of the several Temperance Societies. It was also resolved to apply to the Legislature for aid towards erecting the contemplated building.

Newfoundland.

Halifax Nova Scotia, February 27. Latest from Newfoundland.—The news from Newfoundland is interesting. The Session of the Legislature was opened on the 25th with the usual formalities. The new Colonial Building was dedicated to its interesting uses at the opening of the present Session.

The papers teem with discussions on the local politics of the colony. Reform and Retrenchment are to be the order of the day—if we can believe these organs of public opinion. Education and agriculture appear to be engrossing no inconsiderable portion of attention in the Island.

The principles of Responsibility, are being advocated with zeal and ability.—The new Roman Catholic Cathedral has been opened for public worship, with great pomp and ceremony, by the Bishop. The Foundation Stone was laid by Bishop Fleming, 20th May, 1841, and was opened for the first time on the 6th January, 1850. Four hundred children of the Convent School, clothed in white, were in attendance. It is estimated that not less than nine thousand persons were present at the ceremony.

Temperance demonstrations have been frequent during the present season.

The establishment of a Bank is the subject of considerable discussion in Saint Johns.—The Wesleyan chapel at Harbor Grace was destroyed by fire on the 12th inst.

A great ball came off at Saint Johns on the 9th January.

Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI: CHATHAM, MONDAY, MARCH 4, 1850.

LEGISLATIVE PROCEEDINGS.—Under the proper head will be found some extracts, detailing the proceedings of the Legislature.

Last week we congratulated our readers that a bill was before the house, empowering the PEOPLE to appoint their own Parish Officers. We thought this was a move in the right direction, but on reading the debates, we perceive that this selection is to be submitted to the Sessions for their approval. If we read aright, this bill, instead of curtailing the power of the Sessions, enlarges it. As an excuse for this injudicious Legislation, members of the Government state that the People are not prepared, and not competent to manage their own local matters in a becoming manner; and as the time of the house is largely occupied in attending to matters of a purely local nature, they intend to place more power in the Sessions, by handing over to their management many matters with which they were not formerly entrusted. If such be the object of the bill, we tell the members of Assembly, that a more unpopular or a more unjust measure, was never brought before them. They well know that the Sessions, as at present constituted, has not the confidence of the people, and never can have, until a change is effected in the system of selecting them. We contend that while the people have no voice in their selection, it is contrary to the principle of the British Constitution to authorise them to levy assessments, to disburse the public monies, and to frame rules and regulations for the guidance of Parish Officers, which the people must abide by, under heavy penalties. It is really too bad to tell the people that they have not sense enough to manage their own local affairs,—but they must continue to be regulated by a body of men over whom they have no control, and in whose selection they have no voice.—Is this Reform? Is this what the people require of them? We answer—no; and we mistake the character of those men

who are free to act and free to speak (and who are yearly growing more numerous) if such a bill be passed, that a day of reckoning for the Representatives is not distant. Municipal Corporations, or a law of a similar nature, is what they require, and they will not rest satisfied until they obtain it.

Since the above was put in type, we have received the Fredericton Amaranth of Tuesday last, which contains the following remarks made by Mr. Street of this bill. The learned Gentleman will receive the thanks of his constituents for so correctly expressing their wishes on the important subject of Municipal Corporations.

The learned Gentleman said— He thought it better to discuss the principles of the bill before going into its section. It was very desirable to expand the powers of the county and parish officers, but he did not exactly agree with the powers conveyed by this bill; he was willing to cede to the local authorities power to Legislate upon local matters, but he would not go too far. The Bill went to vest those powers in the Magistrates in Session. In Canada such powers were vested in the Municipality Corporations and he did not think it should be vested in Magistrates in Session, as they were not elected by the people; but in his opinion, if the time was come when they should confer Legislative powers upon local authorities, they should do it by establishing Municipal Corporations at once. He considered this Bill a mere entering wedge in this respect. The hon. Attorney General, no doubt was in favor of Municipal Corporations, that was evident by the Speech he had just delivered; (hon. Attorney General—"I have always been in favor of it"), well, then, they had better establish them now than to concede powers to the magistrates in session,—it would be much more satisfactory to the people. The hon. Attorney General could not but anticipate that this measure would not work well, and that municipal corporations must follow. He (Mr. S.) did not like the fifth section of the Bill. The additional powers to be vested in the Magistrates in Session must add very much to their labor; now, they were not paid for their labor—they were not like the class of magistrates in England, who were generally men of fortune, and who could afford to attend without pay. The magistrates, under this Bill, would be vested with the power to impose taxes ad libitum, and their duties would be very arduous; for those reasons he thought the men thus privileged and thus employed should be elected by the people, they had better therefore establish Municipal Corporations at once.

We observe in the Journals extracted from Despatches recently received from Earl Grey, wherein his Lordship strenuously urges on the Government the necessity of introducing liberal institutions and of granting to the people a larger share in the management of their County and Parish matters. He remarks:—

"Of these reforms, I concur with you in thinking that the establishment of a system of Municipal organisation is the one most urgently wanted. It is to her ancient institutions of this kind that the political prosperity of England has been, with justice, in a great measure attributed—and the adoption of very similar institutions in her former North American Colonies, now the States of the North American Union, adjoining New Brunswick, has in a fully equal degree promoted their advancement, and I earnestly hope that the Province may not long be deprived of the like advantages."

Why do the members of Government wish to bestow on us such a miserable apology for Municipal Corporations as this bill? Why do they not follow the advice of Earl Grey, and give us the genuine thing at once and not dole it out by degrees? They have been ready enough at all times to submit to his dictation, and to that of other Colonial Secretaries, when they required them to curtail the liberties of the people, or advised measures satisfying the views of honorable members witness Responsible Government, which it was argued they were bound to adopt because the Colonial Secretary recommended it. Why does not the same argument hold good with respect to the establishment of Municipal Corporations? The answer is plain. The former answered the ends of several leading members of the Legislature; the latter will curtail a large portion of their patronage and influence, and strip them of much of the importance with which adventitious circumstances have clothed them. This is the plain reason, and such the people will believe it to be.