

Rumours of an impending dissolution of the Cabinet continue, and a Liberal morning contemporary positively announced on Thursday that the Russell Government was at an end. This was at least premature, for the Cabinet met the same day, and to-day the Privy Council met her Majesty at Windsor. We were favoured last night with a communication from a very influential quarter, which states that, although the position of the cabinet is critical, little doubt exists that it will meet Parliament, whatever may be its subsequent fate, and that there is not the least reason to suppose that the Peelites will join the present administration. Any combination of the two parties which may hereafter arise, will mainly depend, our correspondent believes, upon the tactics of the Protectionists: Nothing has occurred since the spring of last year to strengthen their position. The same poverty of administrative talent which that crisis disclosed to the nation still exists, while the personal feelings of Lord Derby are understood to be now even more inimical to the acceptance of office than they were in the early part of 1851.

These are the views of a gentleman who mixes largely in the first political circles of the metropolis, and whose social position entitles his opinion to considerable weight. The loss of Lord Palmerston has undoubtedly been a heavy blow to the Cabinet, on the eve of the meeting of Parliament; and the spirit in which he parted from his colleagues appears to be universally regarded as the reverse of friendly. Some new political combinations are not unlikely to arise out of this rupture, for Lord Palmerston was almost the only member of the Whig Cabinet with whom the followers of the late Sir Robert Peel could not consistently act. His policy was so entirely antagonistic to that of the Earl of Aberdeen, that the political differences became almost personal ones in the frequency of attack and defence. Every member of the Peel Cabinet was thus placed in a more hostile position towards the noble Viscount than to any or all of the present ministers, and the fact of Lord Palmerston being severed from the Whigs affords a very tangible reason for the Peelites joining them.

In southern Africa the war with the Kaffirs appears to become more disastrous.—Every arrival deepens the gloom. The intelligence this week is of the most disastrous character. We find our men exposed to a murderous fire by the enemy lurking in fastnesses, officers are shot down, and the harassing nature of the conflict is dispiriting to the British troops, some of whom are described as being literally in rags. It is really painful to read the details of the sanguinary collision in which we are now engaged with the savages at the Cape of Good Hope. No wonder, then, that persons look about for reasons to account for this anomalous state of things. The bravery of the Kaffirs is unquestionable, and they have had sufficient experience in former hostilities to profit by our tactics. To put down the war in Kaffraria, we must clearly alter our system. It is disgraceful to us as a civilised people that a horde of barbarians can thus keep us at bay, defy our authority, slay our soldiers, and entail endless expense on the parent state in a protracted effort to suppress this inglorious rebellion.

Regarding war as an exchange of bloody ideas, it is every way desirable to bring the issue within the smallest possible limits.—Humanity itself prompts such a course. We owe it to civilised as well as to a savage life. Now, it will be found, we believe, that while we surpass most nations in mechanical skill, while we have achieved results in mechanism, which are the world's wonder, we are notoriously behind other countries in the perfectibility of those deadly instruments which decide alike the fate of tribes and of nations. The inventive faculties of our countrymen have been devoted to the arts of peace, and they have not cared to concern themselves about those murderous weapons which most effectually destroy life or shatter limbs. But however creditable this may be in the abstract to ourselves as a people, is it fair towards those whom we send forth to fight our battles and preserve our empire? No good reason, we apprehend, can be assigned why the musket or the bayonet with which the British soldier fights should not have a range as great and a capacity for charging as ready and destructive as similar weapons elsewhere. Our inferiority in this respect is admitted, and the fact is the reverse of complimentary to the military authorities of this country, who evidently think that to pipe-clay the soldier, and to encase him in a costume as stiff as buckram, without bestowing a thought about the quality of the weapons which they put into his hands, is the most suitable way to ensure his success in the field. The more irregular the warfare, as in the case of the Kaffirs, the greater the necessity for giving the soldier the benefit of every aid which skill and science can impart to his firearms. The Horse Guards seem at length to have become impressed with this essential truth, for they have determined upon sending a regiment of Rifles to the Cape of Good Hope—a good omen, and the precursor, we will believe, of a better system.

The records of a despotism seldom furnish interesting materials to the historian. It is not so, however, with the career of Louis Napoleon, who day by day issues decrees of such an extraordinary and arbitrary character, that we are not likely to be at a loss, for some time, for subjects of an exciting character.—The Municipal Council of Paris has been dissolved and reconstituted, so as to get rid

of certain obnoxious members, amongst whom are the celebrated names of M. Bixio, M. P. Delaroche, the artist, M. Horace Say, and other representatives. The chamber of Commerce, at Havre, has been summarily dissolved, for having entered upon its journals some protest against the usurpation.—The coinage has been remodelled; the effigy of Louis Napoleon being on one side, but the title of President of the Republic has been omitted. The imperial eagle is restored to all the French banners and Legions of Honour, and the device of "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" abolished; the old names of streets, bearing the word "Royal," are restored. The trees of liberty, in Paris and in the departments, are all cut down or uprooted, and the timber has been given to the poor.—But, perhaps, the most tyrannical decree is that of General Castellane, at Lyons, who, by a stroke of the pen, has broken up all the fraternal associations in his great military division. These bodies are neither more nor less than benefit societies, which the frugal workmen of France have instituted, and, by a collection of considerable funds, have wisely provided against the contingencies, of sickness, destitution, death, and want of employment. In no sense are they political clubs; but General Castellane views them with suspicion; so he has fulminated a decree ordering their dissolution, and that the whole of their affairs shall be wound up in the presence of a Commissary of Police. In such a state of things, it is a matter of astonishment that a body of men comprising some of the most eminent bankers in Europe, should treat with the French Government for the concession of the Paris and Lyons railway. But the bargain is completed, and 115 millions of francs have been agreed to be paid for the concession for 99 years, the Government guaranteeing four per cent. interest for fifty years. The privileges of the press and of the theatres are extinct, and the owners of *cafés* in Paris are subject to the most rigorous surveillance. The great law officers of France, all of them men of the highest eminence in the country, have been the only parties who have had the boldness to resist and protest against the usurpation. At present they seem induced to quash the sentence of the court-martials, as wholly illegal, but, as this is quite out of the question, Louis Napoleon is seriously considering of some plan to remodel the courts of law, so as to bring the refractory judges under his immediate control. During several days it was anticipated that the new Constitution would be promulgated, but it is now said that its publication is deferred until the 16th inst. If, however, the usurper can make up his mind to assume openly the title of Emperor, we do not perceive that any opposition can arise in any quarter, so abject is the state of France. It is asserted, however, and we hope it is true, that the honest men of rank and consequence of France hold back, and refuse to join this Consultative Commission, which is the mere conduit pipe or gutter through which the imperial decrees are to flow. At any rate, from some cause or other, the Constitution has not yet appeared. Some of our contemporaries have been speculating upon the probable working of this revival of the Constitution of the First Consul. We cannot but consider the whole thing a ridiculous farce, got up to amuse the world, whilst the managers of the theatre are behind the scenes meditating far more serious projects. No little pressure has been brought to bear upon the King of Belgium, who has been compelled to accede to the French ruler's demands for the extradition of some of the political refugees in Belgium. Instructions have also been sent to the emissaries at the courts of the four powers, parties to the treaty of Vienna, to sound their views, whether they consider the delimitations of that treaty as irrevocable. The treaty of 1814 is spoken of as a final arrangement with which the French ruler would be satisfied. In one word, the substantial results of the battle of Waterloo are to be thrown away, and the securities taken by the treaty of 1815 waived in favour of an usurper. If any of the parties to the treaty of Vienna sanction its infraction, with a view to satisfy the ambition or vanity of Louis Napoleon or the French people, they may rest perfectly assured that their concessions will only lead to fresh demands, and the frontier of the Rhine will be set up as a cry which nothing but the allied forces of the other European powers can resist. Considerable promotions in the army, and an extraordinary rise in the French funds, is announced in our last news. It is said the Receivers General throughout France are to be abolished, and their duties transferred to the Bank of France. The shares of this establishment have risen considerably.

By an imperial decree, issued at Vienna the last day of the year, the constitution of 4th March is formally abrogated as "being unsuitable and impracticable." The principal features of the new fundamental laws will be found in another column. The old political demonstrations are to be employed in the different provinces.

To Ship Owners.

The Subscriber, an experienced Ship Master, and at present a resident of the County of Restigouche, is willing to take charge of a new Ship, from a port in the Lower Provinces to any port in Great Britain or Ireland, the ensuing spring. Satisfactory reference can be given. Address, Dalhousie, Restigouche.

GEORGE MORRISON.

January 2, 1852.

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Communications.

To the Editor of the Gleaner.

Sir,—I notice in the last Gleaner a description of a Chinese laundry, which graphically portrays the process of doing up linen by the industrious Celestials. I can assure you I had my nationality a little stirred by the writer's remarks about the superiority of ironing by these "ching tong foos," and more particularly when he hazarded the assertion that "this invention beat the Yankees all hollow." If he only knew how the girls iron the boy's shirts, and their own *firings*, in my State, he would give it up, I know.

I will tell you, Mr Editor, how they come it there. When there is to be an "ironing frolic," the girls meet together, prepare a long table, spread all the clothes out at once, then, having heated the irons to the proper *fritz*, by a simple contrivance fasten them to their feet, and skate over the clothes like all nature. This the girls call "going it hot foot," and I guess is about the greatest *smoothing* ever invented. The Celestials can't come up to that by a quarter, I think.

JONATHAN.

Newcastle, January 23, 1852.

Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI:

CHATHAM, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1852.

ALNWICK AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

A meeting of the inhabitants of the Parish of Alnwick, was held at the residence of Roderick McLeod, Esq., in Tabusintac, on the 22nd instant, for the purpose of organizing an Agricultural Society in that District. George Kerr and Peter Mitchell, Esquires, having attended by special invitation, to assist in carrying out so desirable an object, the former of these gentlemen was called to the chair, and having explained the object of the meeting, he entered fully into the benefits to be derived by a proper organization for the encouragement of Agriculture, and by a judicious use of the bounty afforded to local societies by our Provincial Legislature. If this Society, when organized, subscribed and paid the sum of 25*l*., they would then be entitled to draw from the Provincial Treasury the sum of 75*l*., which would give them the sum of 100*l*. to begin with. A judicious application of such a sum annually, would give a great impetus to rural pursuits in the Parish; and the emulation which would be excited by the offer of prizes for superior skill, and the social advantages to be derived from the interchange of views at the frequent meetings of the farmers, which must follow such an organization, would be of very great importance. The chairman also gave a brief history of the former as well as of the present Northumberland Agricultural Society, of which he has so long been Treasurer, and to the efforts of which he ascribed, in a great measure, that standing which we as a County have acquired in an agricultural point of view, and pronounced by Professor Johnston to be unequalled by any other County of the Province. The Northumberland Society has for years devoted its attention to the improvement of our breed of Cattle, by importation as well as by the selection and improvement of our present stock. By their Ploughing Matches, and Cattle and Grain Shows, they have encouraged by premiums a laudable emulation among our rural population; by the importation of Seeds and labour-saving machines, they have afforded to the farmer facilities for prosecuting his business possessed by the agriculturist of more favored lands, and which they would not otherwise have enjoyed here; and recently the Society, by their bounty of 50*l*. to Mr Flett, has secured the erection of a Cloth Factory, and supplied a want long felt in the County. It gave him pleasure in saying that he believed the establishment of Mr Flett was most efficient, and reflected much credit, as well on the enterprising spirit of that gentleman, as the Society that encouraged and promoted its erection. These are some of the benefits which have resulted to the County from the efforts of an organized Society for the encouragement of agricultural pursuits, and he looked forward to similar results in this extensive Parish, from this association.

Mr Mitchell also expressed his views upon the benefits of such an institution.

The sum of 25*l*. was then subscribed and paid, as required by law, and a Constitution was prepared and Rules adopted for the government of the Society, which was organized under the name of the "Alnwick Agricultural Society." The meeting then

proceeded to the election of Office Bearers, when the following gentlemen were chosen for the ensuing year:

President—Roderick McLeod, Esq.
Vice Presidents—Hon. James Davidson, James W. Hierlihy, and Lewis Robicheaux, Esquires.

Treasurer—Mr James Johnston.
Secretary—Mr William Russell.
Directors—Alexander Davidson, Esquire, Messrs. Henry Eagle, Wm. Simpson, James Brown, Wm. Morrison, Peter Allan, Finlay Morrison, Wm. McLeod, and Alexander Murray.

WM. RUSSELL, Secretary.
Alnwick, January 22, 1852.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

According to our promise, we give below Mr Howe's answer to our Petition, respecting the recent unsatisfactory alteration in the Mail arrangements:

"GENERAL POST OFFICE.
St. John, January 21, 1852.

"Gentlemen,

"I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Petition on the subject of the recent changes in the mail arrangements in the North eastern portion of the Province, pointing out certain alterations which would afford greater accommodation to the community at Miramichi, and urging the propriety of discontinuing the carriage of the mails on Sundays.

"In reply, I have to state my regret at the dissatisfaction which has been occasioned by the changes, and that I am fully aware the days pointed out in the Petition would be preferable to the present arrangement, if it were possible to connect them with the Saint John and Halifax line; but the new arrangements were fixed at the last Special Session of the Nova Scotia Legislature, and I had no choice but to make the best arrangements I could in connection therewith.

"With reference to the question of Sunday travelling, &c., no person would rejoice in its abolition more than the officers of the Post Office department, but so long as the practice is allowed at all, exceptions cannot be made in favor of particular localities, but the different Postmasters, &c., must take their turns, as the general arrangements may render it necessary. In the United States, Canada and Nova Scotia the practice has been discontinued, and it is the change in the latter Province, in order to avoid the Sundays, which has deranged all our mail services.

"In answer to a similar Petition from the inhabitants of Richibucto, forwarded to me through His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, I have stated my opinion, that the present arrangement is the best which can be made for the North Eastern Section of the Province, under the existing arrangements in Nova Scotia, and I shall forward by this day's post to His Excellency, a copy of your Petition, with my reply thereto.

"I am, Gentlemen, your most obedient servant,

J. HOWE,

Postmaster General.

Messrs. Gilmour, Rankin & Co., and others."

It appears from this document, and from the paragraphs we annex from Novascotia papers, that the entire blame rests with the authorities at Halifax. The mails for this Province are closed there at 10 o'clock P.M. on Monday and Thursday, and are not despatched until the mornings of Tuesday and Friday. This accounts for the extraordinary delay. The evil might be obviated by closing and despatching the mails at noon on Monday and Thursday, and it would also do away with the Sunday delivery. We hope our Provincial Government will make a strong remonstrance to the Nova Scotia authorities on the subject.

The following articles are copied from the Halifax Recorder and Pictou Chronicle, and by them it will be seen that the present arrangements are as unsatisfactory to them as to us. The Recorder says:

"This department of the public service, for some cause or other, upon which, perhaps, all are not agreed, fails—lamentably fails—to give satisfaction, or to inspire confidence in the mode of its management. Situated as Halifax is—the first port of embarkation of mails from abroad, and the last place of their collection for embarkation, they hence diverge, and here converge; as the capital of the Province also—its postal conveniences deserve the maturest consideration. Our postal relations with New Brunswick and Canada are very intimate, important and considerable, but in the recent alterations which have occurred they have been entirely sacrificed. Our exchanges from St. John, which have reached here on Monday for twenty years past, are now delayed till Wednesday night, or rather Thursday morning; and those which we previously received on Fridays are now thrown back to the ensuing Monday, for the mail due here on Saturday night at seven o'clock, will rarely reach us before Sunday morning, and our letters and papers of course must remain locked up till Monday. It is too bad. Some of the towns of our Northern frontier, Amherst, River Philip, Fort Lawrence, &c.,—places that had two mails a week, that is, could be written to hence twice a week and reply, and vice versa, have been deprived of this important advantage by the recent alterations. As between Saint John and Halifax, what is needed, and what we must have is a *tri weekly* mail leaving both places at the same hours on