

**Miscellaneous.**

**THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.**—In a lecture which was delivered at Crosby hall, by Mr. Pepper, on the properties and phenomena of magnetism and electricity, the electric light, and the apparatus by which it is produced and regulated, was introduced. The brilliancy of the lights is almost beyond what can be conceived of the powers of artificial light—that is, of light produced by scientific means from simple natural causes. It was so vivid as to make the numerous gas lights by which the hall was illuminated completely ineffective. Its intensity to those close to it was almost painful, and it was impossible, when the shade or paper screen by which it was surrounded was removed, to look upon it. It is a white or sun light; there is no yellow tinge, no vapour or smoke, and none of the attendants of light which partake of combustion. The exhibition of this certainly extraordinary light was witnessed by a very crowded company of visitors, who expressed their satisfaction in a marked manner on its merits. The apparatus by which its power is produced and sustained can scarcely be described; it is a piece of mechanism of comparatively simple construction, by which pieces of charcoal, &c., are supplied and adapted; it can only be understood by being seen and inspected. If the generating and regulating powers of this invention can be sustained, and the expenses attendant upon them kept within reasonable bounds, as the patentees assert they can be, this light will at some period supersede all others; and a statistical account affirms that upwards of £25,000,000 is annually expended in England and Wales for lighting,—an important saving will accrue to the public, and a benefit be conferred, which all will be able to appreciate. An exhibition of this new light was made on Tuesday night, between the hours of eight and nine o'clock, from the portico of the National Gallery. A better site for such an experiment could not have been selected, and the novelty of the exhibition soon attracted to the spot a large assemblage of spectators, who filled the street and terrace opposite the gallery, as well as a great portion of the square below. The moment the experiment commenced, the large open space in front was filled with a flood of light, which paled the lamps, not only in the square, but also some distance down Whitehall. So intense was it, that, when thrown upon the people, one could scan the countenances of those who were most distant from the gallery, and discern the cut of a man's coat, or the pattern of a lady's dress, at the outskirts of the crowd. Every now and then a strong pencil of light would be thrown upon the Nelson column, bringing it out from the surrounding obscurity, from its base to its summit. The light was as steady as it was intense, and the shadows which it cast were as deep and positive as those which accompany the strongest sunlight. On the whole the experiment appeared to be successful in the hands of the operator, and satisfactory to all who witnessed it. It has also been exhibited with success upon the Great Western Railway, between London and Slough.

**PIRACY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.**—It is not often that we have to record a well-authenticated case of piracy in the vicinity of a British fortress, but the Pasha, from Gibraltar, brings us details of an extraordinary piratical attack on an English brig, on the part of the Moors, but which appears to have been chastised by the energy of Captain M'Cleverty, of her Majesty's steamer Polyphemus. It appears that the English brig Three Sisters, Captain J. H. Foster, which arrived at Gibraltar on the 24th of October from Glasgow, cleared on the 30th with a cargo of gunpowder and bale goods for Malta. She was becalmed about twelve miles off Cape Tres Forcas, coast of Morocco, when six piratical boats filled with armed Moors, put off from the shore and attacked the vessel. The captain, finding there was no hope of escaping unless by abandoning his ship, took to the boat with his crew, eight in number. After being exposed to an open sea for about twelve hours, they were picked up by the English brig Dawn, which arrived at Gibraltar on the 7th. Captain Foster reported that the Moors had taken possession of the vessel and run her ashore. Upon the circumstances, of the case being represented to Sir Robert Wilson, the governor, his excellency immediately despatched the steamer Polyphemus, Captain M'Cleverty, to recapture the vessel, which was accordingly done after a smart action close to the shore off Cape Tres Forcas, and the Polyphemus towed the Three Sisters into Gibraltar Bay on the morning of the 10th inst. We regret to state that Lieutenant Wasea and three men were wounded (the Lieutenant and one man very severely). The Moors had plundered the master's cabin, all the afterpart of the ship, one tier of the cargo, and all her sails, and had got a good booty of gunpowder. They had mounted a long gun on the deck of the brig, with a heavy fire from which, and frequent discharges of musketry, they received the Polyphemus. About 500 Moors were engaged in the encounter, and the Polyphemus severely chastised them. The Polyphemus had no communication with the shore, the recapture of the vessel having been performed by cutting-out expedition, covered by the steamer's guns. This circumstance had created some excitement at Gibraltar, and it was supposed that Her Majesty's Government would demand satisfaction from the Emperor of Morocco for this wanton aggression on the part of his subjects.

**ARMY STATISTICS.**—The following is an abstract of the army estimates for the current year:—The whole number of men voted was 138,769. Of this number 24,922 are borne on the Indian establishment, and are not, therefore, paid for by the Home Government.

The East India Company, also, it is to be observed, pay a sum of £60,000 a year into the British Treasury, to cover the outlay for retiring pay and pensions, and other similar home expenses incident to the service of this portion of the army in India. The army actually maintained out of the taxes of the United Kingdom comprises, this year, 113,847 men of all ranks. Of these there are—officers, 4,862; non-commissioned officers, trumpeters and drummers, 8,308; and rank and file, 100,677. The total cost of the army for the year is estimated at £6,318,686. About one-third of this sum is paid for what are called non-effective service, as follows: In-pensioners of Chelsea and Kilmainham Hospitals, £38,580; Out-pensioners, £1,223,810; superannuation allowances, £38,232; compassionate allowances, bounty warrants, and pensions for wounds, £98,000; widows' pensions, £129,855; half pay and military allowances, £414,715; full pay for retired officers, £57,000; army pay of general officers, £76,000; rewards for military services, £15,507. The effective services are estimated to cost £4,201,178. Out of this sum upwards of 108,000 men are provided with food, clothing, lodging, arms, and medical attendance. If we allow £32 per head per annum for these purposes (and we do not see how they can be effected for much less,) this makes £3,464,000; leaving for the 4,862 officers, £737,138; which gives them, on an average, very nearly £150 a year each.

**THE ITALIAN OPERA IN PARIS.**—Such is the complete desertion of Paris by that class of persons who usually compose the audience of the Italian Opera, that that theatre has been obliged to close its doors. It will not be re-opened for the present season, unless Government enables it to do so by a subvention, which, in the present state of the finances, is not likely. This is, it is said, the first time for nearly a century that Paris has been without an Italian theatre. The "Academie de Musique" does not average a gross receipt of so much as 2000 francs a night, its actual outgoings being more than double that amount.

**PROJECTED VISIT TO PARIS.**—Arrangements are now in progress for the introduction of some fifteen hundred of the good citizens of London, for a certain sum to the gaieties and gravities of the French capital. The chief projector of the trip is Colonel St. Parent, who has served in Algiers, but who has been for some years resident in this country. The arrangements will be completed, we hear, in about a fortnight.

**CORRUPTION AND HOARDING.**—Keschen, the Governor of Canton, in 1840, was degraded, and his property confiscated to the Emperor. It consisted of 270,000 oz. of gold, 3,400,000 oz. of pure silver, 2,000,000 foreign money, besides houses and land to an enormous extent. Hokwan, a Prime Minister, met with a similar fate a few years ago; but his property far exceeded the above in value.

**ADMIRALTY RAILWAYS.**—It has been determined by the Admiralty to introduce a system of railways, or tramways, in the different dockyards of the kingdom, for the transmission of timber and Admiralty stores to the water's edge, and to one part or other of the neighbourhood.

In 1843 the total number of lunatics in England and Wales was computed at 20,000, and in 1847, at 23,000. The number at present is estimated at 30,000. Of these, about 5,000 belong to the higher and middle classes, and 18,000 are paupers.

General Sarazzin, who commanded under General Humbert in the expedition against Ireland, which ended in the capture of the French troops by Lord Cornwallis, died a few days ago at Brussels, in the 78th year of his age.

Letters from Wellington, New Zealand, to the 1st of August, state that the Government House had been destroyed by fire. The damage is estimated at £20,000.

At the Liverpool Steeple Chase on Wednesday last, the principal stake was won by Mr. Henderson's The Doctor, beating The Victim (2), Venom (3), and six others.

It is stated that Jenny Lind and her partners, Messrs. Lumley and Knowles, netted £10,000 in a fortnight in poor distressed Ireland.

It was announced during the week that the English Government had received intelligence of the death of Ibrahim Pacha.

The senate of King's College, Aberdeen, have unanimously re-elected the Earl of Ellesmere Lord Rector of the University of Aberdeen.

The Paris thieves have lately begun to steal the gas lamps, and whole streets have been occasionally left in darkness in consequence of these depredations.

Considerable quantities of pilchards have already been taken by the Cornish fishermen in the neighbourhood of St. Ives.

The census of France, taken in 1846, shows that since the previous census, in 1841, the population had increased 1,170,000, or at the rate of 234,000 per annum.

A few days since, a bird known as the "great northern diver," which seldom visits England except in very severe winters, was killed on the River Eden, near Bolton Bridge, in Westmorland.