

LATEST FROM ENGLAND.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MARCH 22.

SLAVE APPRENTICESHIP.—West Indies.—Mr. Powell Buxton had heard with much satisfaction that it was the intention of government to bring in a bill for the purpose of continuing the act on this subject which had been allowed to expire in Jamaica. In moving for a committee it would not be necessary for him to occupy the house at any great length, for the importance of the subject must be apparent to every one, affecting as it did 5,000,000 of human beings who had been in a state of slavery in other countries. (Hear, hear.) The people of England felt a deep and lively interest in the question. The best proof he could adduce in support of the fact was, that when petitions were pouring in from every quarter of the country, praying for the emancipation of the slaves, they were answered by West India interests. "Well, tell your constituents their prayer shall be granted, but they shall pay for it." Well, their prayer had been complied with, and had they heard the slightest complaint from the people of England? But the people who contributed their money to purchase the freedom of the slave had a right to know how that money had been disposed of. (Hear.) He thought it was desirable that every hon. member whose constituents were interested in the matter should know whether the West Indians had made any attempt to evade the conditions for which that money had been granted—whether they had attempted to deprive the negroes of any portion of that liberty which the British people had bought at so costly a price. He contended that such was the case, and it was only within the last half hour that he had ascertained that the government had had the courage to say, if that act expired in Jamaica, they would re-establish it in a British House of Parliament. (Hear, hear.) He would proceed to show that at the moment of their receiving that enormous grant, at the very outset, at a time they ought to have thought of nothing but expressing their gratitude for that large sum, they had attempted to lay violent hands upon the essential and sacred principles of the Abolition Act. It was necessary to know what were the promises made to the British people by the West Indians. They were, that during the interval the apprentices should be exempted from the system of irremissible corporal punishment, and that not a taint of slavery should remain—that, with the exception of being obliged to work a certain number of hours in the week, they should have all the rights and privileges of freemen. That imposed an obligation on both parties:—on the British government to pay the twenty millions, and that obligation they had faithfully discharged: next was the obligation of the negroes to work industriously for a certain number of hours, and he (Mr. Buxton) would show that they had not only performed it, but by their industry they had surprised not alone the cold calculations of the West Indians, but the warmest expectations of their warmest friends. There were two acts passed by the Jamaica House of Assembly—one in December, 1833, and the other in July, 1834. It was only with the first of these acts he had to deal, as the other had been virtually repealed. (Hear.) In that act there were not less than 23 striking discrepancies between the British act and that of the Jamaica House of Assembly. Lord Sligo's words were, that "it was an imperfect act of abolition." (Hear, hear.) Lord Glenelg spoke of it in the same manner in one of his dispatches. His hon. friend, the member for Devonport, thought as badly of the act as he did; otherwise what meant the notice they had just heard, that the government would take the proper and laudable step of coming forward and doing that which the West Indians had refused to do themselves? He had received returns of the quantity of sugar imported for the year 1834, and when he compared it with the quantity imported in 1833 he confessed he was himself astonished at the smallness of the reduction which, under the circumstance, had taken place. (Hear, hear, hear.) The quantity of sugar imported in 1833 amounted to 3,655,000 cwt., and in 1834, to 3,524,000 cwt.; and yet the Governor of the Bank of England headed a deputation of West India proprietors to Earl Grey, and told his lordship that a panic greater than 1835 would be produced if the negroes were emancipated. (Hear, hear.) The hon. member read extracts from Lord Sligo's dispatch, in which he states that a much greater quantity and a better quality of sugar has been produced since the slaves were emancipated; and that the price of land had, in many instances more than doubled. The hon. member concluded by moving for a select committee to enquire into the working of the system with regard to apprentices, &c., in the West India colonies.

Lord Stanley contrasted the present apathy evinced by the house, from the satisfaction arising from a conviction that the emancipation scheme had succeeded, with the excitement and alarm which prevailed three years ago when Lord Grey's government brought forward the measure, and he heartily congratulated the house and the country on the alteration in the tone of public feeling. The noble lord then read extracts from the correspondence between the colonial office and Lord Mulgrave, the then governor of Jamaica, in order to show the difficulties which the government had to encounter in carrying the measure into effect. He was free to admit that the success of the experiment was in a great measure to be attributed to the judicious and conciliatory administration of his noble friend Lord Mulgrave.

Sir G. Grey said it was not the intention of His Majesty's government to oppose the motion of the hon. member for Weymouth. The house had a right to know how their money had been disposed of, and every other information as to the working of the system. In conformity with this principle he cheer-

fully and cordially acquiesced in the motion, and he did not see how any hon. member connected with the West India interest could entertain the slightest apprehension that their rights would be prejudiced by such enquiry. The result of the investigation he was satisfied would show that freedom was a safer system than slavery, and that the West India merchants were not losers by the change, but that, on the contrary, every class of the people had been benefited by it. The hon. member deprecated statements which had been made at public meetings of the anti-slavery Society, at which it had been asserted that the condition of the negro slave was infinitely worse than at any former period. He particularly referred to a speech delivered by the hon. and learned member for Dublin, at a meeting in Birmingham.

The hon. member expressed a hope that his noble friend (Lord Stanley) would give the Committee the benefit of his valuable assistance, and add the weight of his character to the investigation upon which they were about to enter. (Hear.) He deeply regretted the differences which had taken place between Lord Sligo and the Legislature of Jamaica, and said it was the intention of government to bring in a bill to perpetuate the supplemental act during the apprenticeship of slaves, unless the Legislature of Jamaica passed such an Act itself.

Mr. O'Connell said that the statement referred to by the hon. member was made by him upon the authority of faith-worthy individuals. He had received documents in which it was stated that the condition of the slave was worse than before the passing of the Emancipation Act, inasmuch as the master exacted a greater quantity of work, knowing that he was entitled to the services of his slave for a limited period. He (Mr. O'Connell) did not, however, mean to say, that great good had not resulted from the measure. (Hear.)

Mr. T. Gladstone denied that the sum of money granted as compensation to the proprietors of West Indian slaves was entitled to be denominated enormous. Call it generous, call it liberal, but let it not be called enormous. (Hear, hear.) He thought that there was much mistaken philanthropy thrown away by those who complained that the apprentices in the West Indies were obliged to work eight hours a day. Was it not, he asked, a notorious fact that there was a bill on the table of the house, brought in by the President of the Board of Trade, by which it was provided that children of eight years and upwards should work in factories twelve hours a day? If the government found it necessary for their own vindication to grant this committee he would not object to it, but he could wish that the inquiry had been restricted. (Hear.)

Sir J. Reid said, that the slave population were as happy as any other in the world, not even excepting the British people. (Hear.)

Mr. Borthwick said a few words, after which

Mr. F. Buxton explained.

The motion was agreed to.

THE COURT.—On the 30th March the King held his usual levee, after which the Duke Ferdinand and the Prince Augustus of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha went to the Queen's house, and had an audience of her Majesty to take leave on their return to Vienna. The Queen has been suffering from an inflammation in the chest, arising from a severe cold, but her Majesty is now convalescent. Her illness prevented her Majesties departure for Windsor till Thursday evening, when their Majesties left town. The Queen, yesterday, had nearly recovered, but, owing to the weather, was still confined to the Castle.

Prince Ferdinand of Portugal is speeding on his voyage from this country to the dominions of his young consort, the Queen Donna Maria, to whom he was recently married, and whom he has not yet beheld. His Majesty's steamer Lightning with the Manchester steamer, conveying the Prince and his suite to Lisbon, arrived at Plymouth on Saturday from Portsmouth.

Easter term begins the 15th April, previous to which, according to a new regulation, all individuals who intend to apply to be admitted attorneys, must undergo a rigid examination before Commissioners appointed for the purpose, touching their qualifications and pretensions to be admitted.

English and French Post Office.—It is agreed on both sides that newspapers and all other stamped publications exchanged between the two countries shall be charged a postage of one halfpenny in England, and of four centimes in France, the halfpenny being as near as possible equivalent to the four centimes paid on French papers circulating in France. Thus, in lieu of two pence now paid in England, and ten sous (five pence) paid in France, in all seven pence, on a newspaper coming from England to France, and vice versa, the trifling of one halfpenny will be charged on both sides of the water, making the whole postage amount to one penny on an English or a French newspaper destined for either country.

Death of the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry.—We have to announce the death of the Hon. and Right Reverend Henry Rider, D. D. Lord Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, which event took place at Hastings on the afternoon of Thursday, March 31. His Lordship had been for a length of time in a declining state of health. (The Right Reverend was consecrated Bishop of Gloucester in 1815, and translated to the diocese of Lichfield in 1824; he was also a Prebendary of Westminster. The deceased was the youngest of the three sons of the first Lord Harrowby, and brother of the present Earl. The Bishop was born in 1777, and married Sophia, daughter of Thomas March Phillips, Esquire, by whom he had a family of thirteen children, all of whom survive him except one son, Charles, who was drowned at sea in 1825. His eldest daughter is married to Sir George Grey, the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. The late Bishop's principles were generally considered to lean

towards the party which is styled Evangelical.

State of Trade.—We believe it may be said with truth that, at no period since the peace—if indeed, during the war—has the trade of the country, and its manufacturing and labouring population—the great reduction in taxation being borne in mind—been in a more healthy condition, or had more favourable prospects, than at present. The great staples of commerce are in demand, at advancing prices. Silk, wool, cotton, hemp, flax, indigo, salt-petre, and other chief articles, used in the manufactures of the country are all in the most active request; indeed in silks, wools, &c., it is feared that the high prices now demanded will tend to check consumption, the manufacturers obtaining with difficulty a rise in goods equal to that in the raw material. This remark will apply to the raw material of the silk, which continues to rise with great rapidity. The state of the markets from West India produce is favourable for the planters. The *Gazette* average price of brown or Muscovado sugar on the 31st March in the last year, exclusive of the Customs duties, was 30s. 3d. per cwt.; but by the official return made up on the 1st inst. we find that the average at present of the same quality of sugar is 38s. 2d. per cwt., showing a rise in this important article of colonial produce of very nearly 8s. per cwt. Jamaica rum is now from 6d. to 8d. per gallon above what they were at this period of last year, and Mauritius sugars command an advance of 5s. per cwt. on the fine, and 8s. to 9s. on the brown qualities. The trade with India, China, Canada and America, is greatly improving. At the last dates from Canton, there was not less than 40 British vessels waiting for cargoes, and 15 at Lintin, showing a great increase in the intercourse with the Chinese, as compared with the period during which the East India Company held a monopoly of the trade. The port of London is in a very animated state at present; nearly 200 vessels for the Baltic, Canada, Sydney, Canton, India, Mauritius, and other places, are taking in their cargoes preparatory to sailing for this season.

COTTON MANUFACTURE.—The present state of our British cotton-manufacture will receive, we trust, before long, the serious attention of the legislature. On the vast importance of this branch of national industry, not only as tributary to domestic comfort and commercial prosperity, but as affording subsistence to a million and a half of our population, men of all parties are agreed: and the only wonder is, that after the varied and voluminous evidence evincing the impolicy of the existing tax on the raw material, the revision of this impost should have been so long deferred. Viewed as affecting the British manufacturer's ability to compete with foreign rivals, it is quite clear that, being unaccompanied with any export drawback on cotton fabrics, the present duty of 5-16ths of a penny per pound weight imposed on all importations of cotton wool, except the 11 per cent. thereof grown in our own colonies, must operate most prejudicially against our manufactured cottons in transmarine markets, when competing with goods of a similar kind from the American and European states, whose low rate of wages, taxation, and provisions, as compared with these matters at home, contribute so essentially to cheap production. Accordingly while this impolitic tax on the raw material has been continued by one administration after another, under the delusive idea that our pre-eminence in cotton manufactures was above all rivalry, it appears that since the peace of 1814, previous to which period our monopoly was almost wholly unassailed, the progress of this branch of industry in Switzerland, Germany, and the United States, where cotton wool is duty free, has been such that these countries can undersell us in third markets; that our export trade in heavy fabrics and coarse yarns, whose cost of production consists chiefly in the price of the raw material, is all but destroyed; and that German hosiery, although taxed with a duty of 20 per cent., can actually be imported into Great Britain, and profitably disposed of for home consumption. With reference more especially to the insensibility which prevails, regarding the pernicious influence of the British Cotton tax, a great error has been committed in viewing it under the general aspect of an item of revenue, bearing so impartially and equally on all descriptions of our cotton fabrics as to be little more than 1 per cent. on the value of the whole. In point of fact, however, its real pressure is very unequal indeed; for while it falls with almost imperceptible lightness on the fine and valuable goods in demand by the rich, the principal cost of which consists in the wages of labour, it bears with its whole aggravated force on the coarse and heavy fabrics, consumed by the great mass of society, and into the cost of which the raw material extensively enters. —*Times*.

EFFECTS OF BEER DRINKING.—It is for the public safety to have it known that, whether from some peculiarity of the London climate, or of the London beer, a copious London beer drinker is all one vital part. He wears his heart upon his sleeve, bare to a death wound, even from a rusty nail, or the claw of a cat. We remember to have heard, or read, we cannot positively say which, in a lecture of Sir Astley Cooper, that the worst patients brought into the metropolitan hospitals, are those, apparently fine models of health, strength, and soundness, the London draymen. When one of these receives a serious injury, we think, Sir Astley said, it is always necessary to amputate, if you would give the patient the most distant chance of life. The draymen, it is well known, have the unlimited privilege of the brewer's cellar, and, of course, exercise that privilege with boundless liberality. In the lecture to which we have referred, Sir Astley illustrated the effect of such indulgence upon the constitution by an incident that had, a short time before, oc-

curred to him in his practice. He had been called to attend a drayman, a powerful, fresh coloured, healthy looking man, who had suffered an injury in his finger from a small splinter of a stove. Supperation had taken place in the wound, which appeared but a trifling one, and Sir Astley, of course, opened the small abscess with his lancet. Upon retiring, the justly distinguished surgeon found that he had forgotten his lancet case, returned to recover it, and saw his patient in a dying state; and dead the patient was in a few minutes, or, at most, in a few hours, we cannot accurately remember which. But the impression was upon Sir Astley's mind, and that which he evidently intended to impress upon the minds of his pupils was, that in London, at least, the most trifling surgical operation can scarcely be resorted to in the case of draymen and other beer drinkers, without considerable hazard of losing the patient. Of course, where a surgical operation is dangerous, the injury, calling for it, must be more dangerous still; so that every medical man in London, above all things, dreads a beer drinker for his patient in a surgical case. —*Standard*.

The New Fourpenny Pieces.—A gross oversight has been committed at the Mint in regard to the new fourpenny pieces, by adapting a die of the exact size and form of a small copper coin issued for circulation in the Colonies only, and in value about half a farthing. It was the uniform practice heretofore at the Mint to confine the figure of Britannia to the copper coinage, in order to prevent fraud: and the mischief that may occur from the present inconsiderate proceeding is obvious. The officers at the Mint are in a state of perfect dismay at the discovery.

The National Debt.—The actual surplus of the revenue over the expenditure, for the year ending 31st January, 1836, amounts to £1,620,940 4s. 11d. 1-4. One-fourth of this sum, or £405,235 1s. 2d. will be applied by the Commissioners for the reduction of the National Debt, between 7th April and 5th July.

The last of the thirteen magistrates who were first sent out to Jamaica to aid in carrying into effect the new law, died a few days before the last packet left the Island.

The horrible atrocity perpetrated by the Christina general, Nogueras, at the express command of Mina—the shooting of Cabrera's mother—has been met by that Carlist chief in a spirit similarly wild and horrible, but under circumstances certainly not unnatural. He has ordered the publication of a list of persons in his power of the Christina party, every one of whom, male or female, including the wife of a colonel, are to be shot in expiation of his mother's murder.

We have heard for some days past of an order said to have been given to all the Russians to quit France. This news is important, and would indicate a new system in the policy of Europe. It requires confirmation. —*Quelidienne*.

The line-of-battle-ship *Trocadero* has been burnt by accident in the Toulon roads. The loss is rated at not less than 3,000,000f.

THE KING OF GREECE.—It is contemplated to marry King Otho to the Archduchess Maria Theresa Isabel, the eldest daughter of Prince Charles of Austria. The negotiations are very active. Otho is to go to Germany for a few months, and pay his addresses in person to the Princess, who is not yet twenty years of age, and who is said to possess all the good qualities of her father.

The King of Prussia, at the request of the Sultan, has sent him fifteen able field-officers to form the general staff of the army of the Porte. The intrigues of English and French officers, the Sultan says, are troublesome, and he dare not ask such a favour of Russia, because of the jealousy of those powers.

On the 7th March a dreadful explosion took place in a large building of the suburb of the Turkish capital, in which 460 artillerymen and others had been employed, during 40 days, in preparing fire-works for the marriage of the Sultan's second daughter with Said Pacha. Eighty dead bodies were removed from under the ruins on the first day, and it was feared the loss of lives was much greater.

Foreign relations.—The Trident's triumphs.—We rejoice to perceive that our Government has assumed, with foreign powers, that imposing attitude to which Great Britain is unequivocally entitled—both by her moral and physical resources. As the Queen of the empire of thought, England has a right to speak out the energetic language of the commonwealth. Let her brow be like the frown of the Jupiter of Homer, the righteous avenger of injustice and tyranny. Let her diplomatists be the Drakes, the Nelsons, the Collingwoods, the Exmouths—let her protocols be seventy-four-gunships, and the place of diplomatic discussions the port of Sebastopol—Russian ambition must be curbed. If Lord Durham fails, our invincible navy will not. If the bar of the Dardanelles is not removed through persuasion, it must be removed by the more convincing argument of British thunder. We have had enough of foreign quibbling; we must now have English eloquence—the eloquence of the Trident. The present fratricidal contest in Spain must speedily be put an end to. Humanity, justice, religion, to say nothing of expediency, imperiously claim it. —*Monthly Magazine*.

CRACOW.—The Cracow of this day is a little isolated place in the midst of the three Russian, Prussian and Austrian territories, which in size is about as big as Marylebone, but in population not so large as a country district, containing at the outside not more than 130,000 inhabitants. Its government has been in the hands of a President and Senate, and as, from the internal position, there is but little trade, so its political importance is most trifling. Russia rules over

the broad lands of Poland, of which it is a part; Prussia possesses the whole of Posen, and Galicia is Austria. Yet this is the little place that these great powers, whose armies perhaps, exceed a million of men, deem dangerous to their existence. The peculiarity of Cracow, however, in its importance as regards other states, is, that it exists only in treaty, and can only be tolerated as an independent state by sufferance. Its guarantee is European. The independence and integrity of the Cracovian territory is a prominent part of the treaty of Vienna, which forms the arrangement of territory in modern Europe. It is a curious fact, that not only was it stipulated, upon that occasion, that no foreign troops should, "under any pretext," violate the territory of the little republic, but its internal constitution, which does not usually enter into treaties, was incorporated in this. The independence of Cracow, is, therefore, as was stated by Sir Stratford Canning, the most striking part of the treaty of Vienna, and therefore is its violation the greater offence to all the parties to that treaty. * * * The manner in which this matter was treated in the House of Commons was quite satisfactory. On all sides, the conduct of the despots was condemned as unjustifiable. Lord Palmerston excused himself from expressing any Ministerial opinion, though he shared in the general deprecation, upon the ground that he had not received any official information, but he admitted that the three powers ought to have consulted England—as a party to the treaty of Vienna—as to what they proposed to do against Cracow. Lord John Russell deprecated, and, perhaps, properly, any substantive vote upon this subject; but the discussion, we have no doubt, will not be without its effect in other parts of the world. —*Morning Herald*.

According to the *Messenger*, the report was confirmed that the unfortunate Pole suspected of being a Russian spy (Pawloski) whose assassination there had been the principal pretext for the late violation of the Cracow territory, had fallen by the dagger of a Prussian student, and not by the hand of a Pole.

"The protecting powers" are clearing out the territory of Cracow. Four hundred suspected refugees were compelled to leave the city and take shelter in the forests, where those wretches had scarcely bestowed themselves when hordes of Cossacks were poured out upon them for the purpose of dispersing, and driving them from the territory. The city militia has also been disbanded, so that the devoted republic is in the complete military occupation of its self-styled "protectors."

DREADFUL FIRE.—Destruction of the new City of Canton.—About eight o'clock on Sunday evening, (Nov. 21,) the alarm of fire in the new city was given. The circumstance did not at first attract much attention; the gates of the city were closed, and entrance was refused to natives as well as foreigners. The wind, however, freshened from the northward; the fire extended south, east, and west, and about nine o'clock it began to assume a very alarming appearance. The flames continued raging throughout the night, and the streets of the suburbs were thronged by a dense crowd of people moving to and from the scene of destruction, conveying their goods, or guiding their female and aged relations. The clamour of men and clash of weapons as they cleared the way, shouting, screaming, threatening, and complaining, were stunning and horrible. All the bad characters of a vast population flew, like harpies, to a scene which promised them employment in their vocation and a rich harvest. The "noisy and nasty" Chinese were ten thousand times more noisy and nasty. Beds and bedding and wearing apparel appeared to be the things first saved, then domestic utensils and furniture and goods. About two o'clock in the morning several foreigners found their way to the walls at—not through, for it was burnt—the Chuhlan gate, and traversed them to the north-west as far as the Taeping gate. At that time the females and children of many families were on the walls, sitting or lying on their furniture, while others were supporting and guiding their helpless, aged, blind, and bed-ridden relations; the infant at the breast, and the head over which 100 winters had rolled. The behaviour of the women was particularly remarkable; it was most admirable; no complaining, no fainting, no screaming, but calmness, resignation, and entire self-possession. The tones of their voices were noticed as they occasionally gave directions to their children or servants, and they were bland, subdued, and polite. The sight of a burning city is dreadful anywhere; but its horrors are multiplied in China. The city of Canton is surrounded by walls between 30 and 40 feet high, and above 20 feet thick. Most of the houses consist of but one story, therefore, with a very few exceptions, in private dwellings, and the public offices and temples, the roofs of the houses are nearly upon a level with, or a few feet higher than the walk on the walls, from whence the city is overlooked. The widest of the streets are narrow, as is also the space between them and the walls; that space is the widest on the north side; on the west and south sides houses and wooden sheds are built up against the wall. The access to the walls from the city is by flights of steps, in bad order, at the different gates. The rapid and uncontrollable spread and destructive effects of a fire raging in a well, thus closely walled in, the egress from which is through narrow gateways; the terror of the women and children, driven out from their retired apartments; the difficulty of escape to those who are, by a refinement in cruelty, crippled in their feet; the heat and clamour; the shoutings of the firemen, the falling in of roofs and burning rafters; the tumbling down of walls; the hollow murmuring sounds of the spreading devouring flames in the narrow avenues—hope lost, and ruin, despair, and a painful and horrible death