HOUSE OF COMMONS—WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2.

The SPEAKER took the chair at twelve o'clock.

THE BRITISH BANK.

Mr. BRADY asked the Secretary of State whether the scale of remuneration for the payment of the witnesses summoned on behalf of the Crown at the trial of the Royal British Bank directors, had been arranged; if so, when might the witnesses expect payment?

Mr. WALPOLE said he would give an answer on Friday night. At present he had not inquired into the subject.

MR. WASHINGTON WILKS.

Mr. M. GIBSON said that Mr. Washington Wilks having unreservedly retracted his imputations against Mr. Clive, in his petition presented last night, he begged to move that he be discharged.

Mr. AYRTON seconded the motion.

Mr. CLIVE said he could have wished that the retractation in this case had been as ample as the charge. He had seen all the counsel engaged on both sides in the case of the railways before the committee that morning, and they had all authorised him to say that up to the close of the inquiry they did not know what was the inclination of the chairman. As far as he was personally concerned, he had no objection to the discharge of Mr. Wilks.

Mr. WALPOLE was of opinion that there had been a clear acquittal of the charge of corruption and partisanship on the part of Mr. Clive. The retractation he looked upon as ample and complete.

The motion was agreed to, and Mr. Wilks was ordered to be discharged on payment of fees.

MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS BILL.

Mr. COWPER moved the second reading of this bill, which would secure a register of properly qualified medical practitioners, thus putting the public on their guard against quacks, and would at the same time abolish the objectionable system of local jurisdictions. His bill would also provide for an improvement in the preliminary examination, a proposition which the Hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Duncombe) had struck out of his bill.

Mr. BRADY seconded the motion.

Mr. BLACK said that there was no necessity for entering into any great complicated scheme for securing medical efficiency. He did not see what was the use of registration, for Mr. Churchill published very good medical directories every year—one for England, one for Ireland, and one for Scotland, and tolerably good-sized books they were. He thought Mr. Churchill was quite as competent to provide a good medical registry as that House. The bill proposed to raise the standard of education. That was a very desirable thing, but it could easily be done without legislative enactments, as it had already been done in the army and navy. Some of the bills before the House proposed to put down quackery, which he considered should be the great thing aimed at. He thought the best bill that could be introduced would be one which did not increase legislation, but one which did away with the legislation which had already passed. (Hear, hear.) If all restrictions and monopoly were done away with, those who were now constantly fighting against each other would be well satisfied. Of the three bills before the House he preferred that of the Hon. Member for Finsbury, because it contained fewest restrictions; but it contained same restrictions, and he was for throwing over all the bills. (Laughter.)

The motion for the second reading was agreed to, after some discussion upon a matter of form as to whether Mr. Black had said "No" at the proper time, it being doubtful whether he had not reserved his negative until after the Speaker had said—"The Ayes have it," and when of course it was too late.

The SPEAKER—The question now is, when shall this bill be committed?

Mr. COWPER moved that it be committed on Tuesday, June 8.

Mr. BLACK moved as an amendment that the bill be read a second time this day six months.

Mr. BRADY pointed out the inconvenience arising from the present system of rivalry amongst the various medical bodies. He could not conceive that the Hon. Member for Edinburgh had read either of the bills before the House. These bills had been well considered in the various medical corporations, and their principles had received general assent. (Hear, hear.) His experience had been large, and he could solemnly assert that no bill had ever been before the House on the subject of medical reform which had received a more general assent from the profession.

Mr. WALPOLE wished to state the view he was inclined to take of the three bills. The subject had been for a long time under the consideration of the Legislature, and it had been a difficult thing for the House to see its way to legislation, because so many plans of various sorts had been brought under its notice. He thought that all the bills, that of Mr. Cowper, Mr. Headlam, Mr. Duncombe, and Lord Elcho, contained principles which were worthy of adoption by the House, but in all there were some things which he doubted whether the House ought to entertain. He thought those who were anxious for medical reform should confine themselves to reciprocity of practice, a register properly ascertained, and a council partly representative and partly nominated by the Crown. (Hear, hear.) The Right Hon. Gentleman proceeded to examine the propositions of the various bills. He considered the council proposed by the Right Hon. Gentleman the Member for Hertford was the best that had been proposed, inasmuch as both the medical corporations and the Crown would be adequately represented. At the same time the Right Hon. Gentleman gave the council enormous powers, which would override and overrule the independent action of every one of the universities, and of all medical constitutions, and that would destroy the rivalry from which the public generally derived so much advantage was much, inasmuch as it kept up a high standard of professional acquirement. (Hear.) Though his suggestions might not lead to such an extensive reform as might be expected, yet he considered it would be a safe plan, and would not raise the differences which would inevitably be created by the adoption of either of the bills before the House. He thought the present bill might be taken as the one in which improvements might be introduced.

Mr. HEADLAM considered that if the Right Hon. Gentleman would support the bill there might be some chance of effectual medical legislation this session. He thought the medical profession had great reason to complain of successive Governments who had pointed out all sorts of difficulties, but who had not taken any means to bring about any solution of them. (Hear, hear.) He should be glad to give any assistance towards rendering perfect the bill before the House. The medical profession agreed upon those cardinal points indicated by the Right Hon. Gentleman, the Home Secretary. They were in favour of reciprocity of practice, of a high standard of examination, and then that there should be an authorised register of duly qualified practitioners. Having legislated upon those points, he thought they should interfere as little as possible with the existing state of things. What he complained of in the three bills was, that they were based upon the theories of individual members, and which, whether they were right or wrong, had not the slightest chance of passing that House. (Hear, hear.) One of the bills (that of Lord Elcho) recommended a council nominated entirely by the Crown, but that course he believed would never be submitted to; and with regard to that bill and that of the Hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Duncombe) he complained that they disturbed institutions which, whether good or bad, had come down to us and were well known to the public.

Mr. T. DUNCOMBE considered that the Home Secretary had dealt fairly with the difficulties, and that they should bring in a bill. In that case he would withdraw his bill. There was no chance of carrying the bill this session, and all this discussion was useless. His bill went one step on the way of medical reform, and would give reciprocity of practice, for any one who proved himself a duly qualified practitioner would be able to register himself, and to practise anywhere. His system of registration was very simple. It would be through the instrumentality of the Registrar-General, who would be able to accomplish this object at once, speedily, and satisfactorily, and without any expense to the country. (Hear, hear.) That was not the case with the bill of the Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cowper), for he provided that the Treasury should pay the expenses connected with the operations of his bill. He believed there were so many difficulties connected with the council, that the House would never be able to agree upon any plan, and it was on that account that he had not provided for a council in his bill. He wished to do away with the anomalies which now existed. Everybody knew that the examination for diplomas was more severe in the University of London than anywhere else, and yet these diplomas did not enable a man to practise within seven miles of the College of Physicians. The whole affair was a question of fees, and that was what these medical corporations were looking to. (Hear, hear.) That there were difficulties in the way of legislation was too apparent, and he was not surprised when he saw the bigotry and intolerance exhibited by the medical profession towards each other, that Government shrunk from dealing with the subject. He advised the Government to stick to Political and Church Reform, and to have nothing to do with the doctors. If the Right Hon. Gentleman's bill was carried, his would fall to the ground, and he should take care that he would never turn his hand to the subject again. (Hear, hear.)

Lord ELCHO considered that something more than registration was necessary, and that the public should have a security that no man's name should appear on the registry who had not shown that he had gone through a certain standard of registration. That would not be carried out by the bill of the Hon. Member for Finsbury. He (the Noble Lord) should not press his bill, but would support that which was now before the House; at the same time, he warned the House against the interested views of the corporations. He would suggest, that if nothing should be done this session in the way of medical bills, a Royal commission should be appointed to inquire into the subject.

Mr. LEFROY was glad to find that the three bills were to be merged into one. Although the power of the council proposed was great, it would be composed of so many persons, from such various quarters, that the danger would be considerably mitigated.

Mr. GROGAN congratulated the House on the probability of seeing a termination of this long-vexed question. The Right Hon. Gentleman, the Home Secretary, had laid out three short but pregnant points, and if the bill was restricted to these it would have the effect of bringing about most important amendments, which would give general satisfaction.

Mr. CRAUFURD hoped the council would be restricted from establishing more than one register for the United Kingdom.

Mr. COWPER said he should be prepared to assent to that view. He added that it never was his intention to give the council any undue control over the examining bodies.

Mr. BLACK withdrew his amendment, and the bill was ordered for committal on Tuesday the 8th of June.

MEDICAL PROFESSION AND MEDICAL CORPORATIONS BILL.

Mr. DUNCOMBE moved the second reading of this bill.

Mr. WALPOLE urged him to withdraw it, as it would be easier to work on one bill.

Mr. DUNCOMBE said that probably some mishap might befall Mr. Cowper's bill, and then his might be found of use.

Sir W. HEATHCOTE and Mr. BRADY urged the Honourable Gentleman to postpone the bill.

Mr. DUNCOMBE—I certainly shall not withdraw my bill; if you want a withdrawal, withdraw your own. I will postpone it. (Laughter.)

The bill was postponed till the 23d instant.

Lord ELCHO withdrew the Medical Profession Bill.

PROPERTY QUALIFICATION BILL.

Mr. LOCKE KING proposed that the Speaker do leave the chair, in order that the House might go into committee on this bill.

Mr. BENTINCK moved as an amendment that the House will, upon this day six months, resolve itself into the said committee. He referred to the past history of the measure in this House, and said he had a right to anticipate that this measure would have been opposed both by the present and the late Government. Finding that it would be hopeless to oppose the second reading under the circumstances, he took the present course of opposing the committee. He was opposed to the bill on principle, for it was, he thought, indispensable that there should be a property qualification for that House; and in the second place he looked upon it as part and parcel of a reform bill, and that such a question should not be considered in detached parts, but as a whole. First, as to the principle of the measure. It was known that the qualification did not apply to Scotland, and he had it on the authority of the honourable member for Midhurst ("Warren on Election Law"), that the reason why the principle was not applied to Scotland was that the estates were so small that it would be difficult to find persons who were qualified. It had also been stated by the same Honourable Member that the law was frequently evaded. That, no doubt, was true, and it was a reason why the law should be amended, but no reason why it should be repealed. Again, it was said by the same Hon. Gentleman that the repeal of the law would open the door to bankrupts, spendthrifts, and paupers, and that that would be dangerous when the House of Commons had to deal with such vast pecuniary interests. (Laughter.) If men of that class were admitted into the House, it would be impossible to maintain that freedom permanent which members now enjoyed, and thus the House would become the refuge for bankrupts and discreditable characters of all sorts. (Loud laughter.) The Hon. Gentleman quoted from the proceedings of Lord Palmerston, Sir George Grey, and other members of the late Government, showing that they had always opposed the measure, while now, when they were no longer in office, they affected to support it. (Hear, hear.) In order to show that he might claim support from the Ministerial side of the House, he quoted from the speeches of the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Henley), who said that this was part of a reform bill, and ought to be deferred. If such were the case at that time, it was of still greater importance that the measure should be postponed now when there was on each side of the House an earnest desire for the introduction of a comprehensive measure of reform. He appealed to the Treasury Bench to oppose this committee, because he was quite sure that if the gentlemen who were now in office had been on the other side of the House, they would have voted with him, and the same might be said of Hon. Gentlemen opposite.

Mr. H. KER SEYMER considered that the experience of Scotland upon this point was quite decisive, for he believed it would be admitted that Scottish members were quite equal to English members in respectability, intelligence, and property. (Loud cheers.) The estates in Scotland were not so small as they were supposed, and if the Hon. Member (Mr. Bentinck) were consistent he should attempt to extend the qualification to Scotland. He (Mr. Seymer) had had a great deal to do with election committees, and he had come to the conclusion that the qualification laws were a snare to honourable members, while they would never keep out persons who were unqualified, who could easily get a qualification.

Mr. DRUMMOND considered that if they dissociated property from political power, it would be found impossible to preserve both. The argument about the Scotch exemption was worth nothing, for nobody ever supposed that a Scotchman would come into Parliament. There was no law against a Jew coming into Parliament, for there was never any idea that a Jew would ever come in. (Hear, hear.)

Sir G. C. LEWIS understood the Hon. Gentleman to say that, if the property qualification were abolished there would be nothing to prevent men of the lowest class to enter into that House. But he considered that the great security the House had was the necessity to appear on the hustings, and to go through the severe ordeal there which was usually imposed. (Hear, hear.) He did not think that the bill would make any difference in the qualifications of that House, but that they would merely remove the pitfalls which too frequently were thrown in the way at election committees.

Mr. NEWDEGATE objected to questions of reform being submitted in this detached manner. He considered the present measure a mere means for obtaining political capital for thrusting upon the House of Lords the necessity of rejecting measure after measure, in order to bring about a collision between the two departments of the Legislature. (Cries of "Oh, oh," and great confusion.) He was convinced that a reform bill would be submitted to the people, who ought to be able to judge of it as a whole, and that they ought not to be interfered with by partial measures. He did not understand the ground upon which her Majesty's Government had lent their sanction to this measure. (Hear, hear.) At all events, he thought they were wrong, and as an independent member he did not think he was bound to alter his vote without any new ground being assigned.

Mr. D. GRIFFITH alluded to the case of Mr. Glover as one of injustice, and he trusted that when this measure became law Mr. Glover would be released. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. KNIGHTLEY looked upon property as the basis of our representative system, and he objected to the abolition of the qualification. Allusion had been made to Scotland; there ought, he thought, to be some alteration there. They would be surprised to see the Hon. Member for East Surrey or any other Hon. Member, walk into the House with his shirt sleeves on, and yet in Scotland breeches and trousers were discarded. (Laughter.)

Sir M. FARQUHAR opposed going into committee, on the ground that piecemeal legislation was undesirable.

Mr. HENLEY said he held the same opinion which he did two years ago, that this was a portion of a large scheme of reform, and he therefore opposed it.

The House divided, and the numbers were—

For the amendment,	109
Against it,	222
Majority,	113

The amendment was therefore lost, and the House went into committee.

On Clause 1,

Mr. BENTINCK called the attention of the committee to the remarkable position in which the House stood with regard to the measure. The Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Locke King) had brought forward this matter so consistently, but so decided had been the opposition on both sides of the House that sometimes it had been refused being brought in, and it had never passed a second reading.

Mr. L. KING said the second reading was carried last year.

Mr. BENTINCK said he hoped some explanation would be offered by the present Government, and the leaders of the late Government, as to their extraordinary change of conduct on this question. (Hear, hear.) He believed that these changes would materially damage the character and reputation of that House.

Mr. WALPOLE said, that after this emphatic challenge he felt bound to say a word. Before Lord John Russell went out of office in 1852, he proposed a Reform Bill, of which the abolition of the property qualification formed a part; and when Lord Derby's Government came in, Mr. Tuffnell brought in a bill identical with that of Mr. Locke King. It had not been proposed since until it was taken up by Mr. Locke King; and last year he voted against the measure, in order that it might be postponed for a year, and he had never expressed an opinion on the question until he spoke the other night on the second reading. (Hear, hear.) He admitted that the representation should be based upon property as the best means of securing independence, but that did not affect the present question, inasmuch as the measure now before the House only went to the abolition of a nominal sham. (Hear, hear.) Gentlemen of large professional incomes and independence were at present excluded from the House unless they resorted to this disgraceful sham. Not 30 years ago a constituency returned a gentleman to that House in his absence, and he was unable to take his seat in that House in consequence of not being able to produce a nominal qualification. That gentleman was not a pauper, an insolvent, or a bankrupt, but a most eminent literary and political character—no less a man than Mr. Southey.

After some further discussion clause 1 was agreed to, and the bill passed through committee.

Mr. SLANEY moved the second reading of the Public Grounds and Playgrounds Bill.

The motion was agreed to, and the bill was ordered to be committed on Wednesday next.

The Marriage Law Amendment Bill passed through committee *pro forma*, and some amendments were introduced.

The House adjourned at twenty minutes before six.

ENGLAND.

MISS CUSHMAN.—We find, by the American news just received, that Miss Cushman and her sister, Mrs. Dr. Muspratt, had the honour of a presentation at the President's levee, and were received by him with very marked attention. They received invitations to dinner from Lord and Lady Napier, Governor Seward, and others of the distinguished notabilities at Washington. Miss Cushman, previous to her departure for England at the end of June, acts a fortnight in New York. Her engagements everywhere have been marked with the greatest success.—*Liverpool Daily Post.*

RIOTS IN BELFAST.—Further riots in Belfast broke out on Sunday afternoon, on the occasion of the burial of a woman, the daughter of a member of the Roman Catholic gun club. The mourners seem to have walked in procession, and some of them carried green boughs—an emblem of offence to the Protestants. Many persons were injured with stones, the constabulary and the magistrate having suffered severely. The Riot Act had to be read, and orders were given to the police to fire on the rioters, but that extreme step was happily found unnecessary. Another Roman Catholic funeral took place on Monday evening, when the rioting was resumed. A number of houses were wrecked, and many persons severely injured. A few arrests were made.

THE ORLEANS FAMILY.—In the course of the very just tribute paid to the memory of the Duchess of Orleans in your article of Wednesday last, you contrast her conduct in the days of February, 1848, with that of all the "other members of the Orleans family." I fully acknowledge the noble bearing of the Duchess on that occasion, but in justice to others, I hope you will allow me to remind you and your readers, that when the crisis suddenly arrived the Duc D'Aumale and the Prince de Joinville were absent from France, engaged in the public service, and that their support was thus unavoidably lost to the cause of the constitutional monarchy.—*Letter in the Times.*

THE ATLANTIC TELEGRAPH EXPEDITION.—The squadron sailed on their experimental trip on Saturday afternoon, for the purpose of testing machinery and rehearsing various operations connected with the laying of the cable. They reached the offing at ten minutes past five P.M., and steamed in line for the south-west in the following order:—Gorgon, Valorous, Agamemnon, and Niagara. The squadron will return to Plymouth on Thursday the 4th of June, previous to its final departure to lay the cable.—*Times.*

ACCIDENT ON THE MANCHESTER AND SHEFFIELD RAILWAY.—On Wednesday evening two goods trains going at a moderate speed came into collision on this line between Kiveton Park and Woodhouse, causing damage to the amount of about £100. The down line was blocked up in consequence, and to insure the safety of passenger traffic all the stations to the east and west were warned by telegraph of the occurrence. The guard of the express train from King's Cross to Manchester, leaving London at 5 P.M., accordingly received the information at Newark, nearly 40 miles from the spot. This train was therefore stopped at Kiveton Park, transferred to the up-line, and piloted as far as Woodhouse, the detention being only about 10 minutes. All the trains were dealt with in the same way, the road between these two stations being thus worked as a single line until the obstruction was removed.—*Times.*

ESCAPE OF THREE DESERTERS.—Early on Friday morning an occurrence of a most daring character took place at Fermoy, resulting in the escape of three soldiers from the guardhouse, where they were temporarily confined awaiting the sentence of a court-martial, before which they had been that day tried and convicted for desertion. At about one o'clock, finding the entire of the sergeant's party on guard—12 men—lying about the room fast asleep, one of the fellows, named Smith, put on his shako and overcoat and left the room, followed by the other two prisoners. They attacked the sentry, who alone was keeping watch, and beat him in a terrible manner. The three deserters—two Englishmen and the other an Irishman—then scaled the barrack-wall, and effected their escape so successfully that up to a late hour on Friday evening all search had proved fruitless. The sentinel lies in a precarious state.—*Clonmel Paper.*

WONDERFUL ADVANTAGES OF VEGETABLE DIET.—According to certain statistics of life made by a gentleman in Flanders, it appears that those persons who subsist entirely on farinaceous and vegetable diet live longer than those who eat flesh, in the proportion of nine to seven, and that they enjoy better health, and die with little or no pain. Such "curious statistics" are very common. The world has been full of them for several thousands of years, and we might add another to the list more curious than all that have yet been mentioned. It is the fact that all the working animals are now and always have been vegetarians. No flesh-eating animal can endure severe and prolonged toil. The horse, the ox, the reindeer are herbiferous; the camel, whose extraordinary capacity to endure seems almost marvellous, who will travel sixty miles per day for several days under a heavy load over the burning sands of the desert without food or drink, derives its whole nourishment from the simplest herbage, as boughs, grass, thistles, &c. The great physiological truth that underlies the explanation of these "curious statistics," has been too long overlooked. If human beings would take nature for their guide in all matters which would pertain to organic life, they would have better health, greater vigour, longer life, and a more natural death as the consequences.—*Phonetic Journal.*

THE ACCIDENT TO THE PRINCESS FREDERICK WILLIAM.—Preparations are making at Dantzic for the reception of the Prince and Princess Frederick William in the ensuing month; and it is fortunate that the Princess has now so far recovered from her late accident as to be able to give an assurance that she will be quite able to undertake the journey at the time fixed. Much anxiety has latterly been evinced as to the state of the health of her Royal Highness, and it is matter of general congratulation that nothing more serious has happened than the spraining of the foot, which was, nevertheless, attended with some inconvenience, but which is now so far recovered as to admit of a promenade being again taken in the grounds of the Castle of Babelsburg, in the neighbourhood of Potsdam, where their Royal Highnesses have for the present taken up their residence. The anxiety of Queen Victoria as to her daughter on this occasion must have been much relieved by constant telegraphic communications forwarded to her Majesty in London, from whence a very handsome garden chair has recently been received, as a token at once of affectionate interest and of her desire that the out-of-door exercise, to which all the Royal family of England have always been so much accustomed, should, as far as possible, continue to be practised. It is stated that even before the time fixed for the journey to Stettin, Dantzic, and Konigsberg, the Prince and Princess contemplate a visit to Coburg, where a union of the members of the Ducal family is to be held, for the purpose, it is said, of the inauguration of a mausoleum. The Prince Consort of England is expected to be of the number.

EXCAVATIONS AT ROME.—A letter from Rome of the 8th, in the *Débats*, says:—"The excavations in the Via Latina have led to the discovery of two other sepulchral chambers—the second in particular is in a wonderful state of preservation. The marble tombs are covered with sculptures of great beauty, but what is of still more decided interest is the paintings with which the roof and sides are ornamented, and which are as fresh and as bright as if only executed yesterday. Some of the compartments contain animals and human heads of a perfection nearly equal to that of the best cameos. The whole would be just as they were the first day had not some Visigoth secretly detached one of the heads. It is thought that the Roman Government will purchase these monuments and the surrounding ground."

A MARTIAL EDITOR.—The *Indian Empire* started into existence under the auspices of Mr. E. P. Moore, who appears, from the following paragraph, to find a greater charm in "war's alarms" than in fighting with his pen:—"Mr. E. P. Moore—This gentleman so well known to the newspaper reading world of India for his varied talents, and whose name has been associated with this infant journal, is, as the song says, 'Off to the wars again,' having taken up his old trade and renounced the grey goose quill for the warrior's sword. Our friend, we hear, is going to lead a gallant band of marines against the savages of Chybassa. May success attend him! We hope to see him back among us with as many scalps as would satisfy the biggest Cherokee chief. As Prince Hal said of a dear friend of his—'Oh, I should have a heavy miss of thee.'"

BLOCKADE OF PORTO PLATA, ST. DOMINGO, BY THE DOMINICANS.—A blockading flotilla, from the City of St. Domingo, consisting of a barque and 5 schooners, appeared off this port on 23d April; on the 25th, a decree of President Baez, dated the 7th, was sent ashore, declaring this port and those of Azua and Romana to be blockaded; that 15 days were allowed for vessels coming from the Antilles, 30 days from America, and 60 days from Europe; 15 days also were allowed for vessels in port to depart. Notice was given that if the town did not surrender, it would be bombarded in sixteen hours from the hour mentioned in the notice. The Consuls sent a strong remonstrance and protest in reply, the letter of the Commander being the first notice of blockade that had been received here. On the 1st inst. they opened fire on the town, but only one ball reached it, and it did no harm. Two Danish, one Dutch, and one English schooner, have been seized and detained by the flotilla.

THE MONSTER GUN.—Whatever may be the shortcomings of the present Government, its members, in their official capacities, are deserving of the praises of Mr. Bright, in the recent memorable debate, for the civil attentions they pay to any representations made to them. One instance of this has come to our knowledge. It is well known that the unique monster wrought-iron gun, manufactured at the Mersey Steel and Iron Works, remained neglected, month after month, at Shoeburyness, the various communications to the officials of the late Government respecting it barely eliciting the most curt of formal acknowledgments. It gives us pleasure to hear that "the great gun" is at last to receive that attention which its importance, as a gift to the nation, and as the most wonderful piece of ordnance ever constructed, deserves. In strong contrast with the failing of Lord Panmure to put the gun to some practical use, we may mention that General Peel, immediately on the fact being represented to him, has ordered that the gun shall be placed in a suitable position on the fortifications of Portsmouth. This may be a matter of some importance, if, as many wise people have supposed, occasion should arise for defending our coast against French gunboats, though we rather incline to the opinion that, in the event of hostilities between the two countries, in which we do not believe, the fight would be nearer the French shores than our own.—*Liverpool Albion.*

LETTERS OF THE DUCHESS OF ORLEANS.—The lamented Duchess of Orleans has left in the hands of her executors some interesting letters which she had serious thoughts of publishing herself more than a year ago. They relate to affairs in France subsequent to the death of her beloved husband, and are dedicated to the Prince de Joinville. It is now highly probable these documents will be given to the world.

A GOLD COAST NEWSPAPER.—The *Athenæum* says:—"Englishmen sow the dragon teeth of type in every land to which they carry their energy and their genius, and in due season they spring up armed giants. Here is a newspaper from the Gold Coast—a small paper, something like the *Mercuries* of the Commonwealth, and called the *West African Herald.* It is not yet a giant, rather a mannikin, but the infant Jove is already in rebellion, and he may in due time wield the thunderbolts—a Cape Coast *Times* curbing Accra and civilising Ashantees with printers' ink. Success to our African brother!"

RETIREMENT OF MR. JUSTICE COLERIDGE.—We have reason to believe that Mr. Justice Coleridge, who has for so many years sat as one of the Judges of the Court of Queen's Bench, is about to retire; and that an intimation has already been given by the Lord Chancellor to Mr. Hugh Hill, Q.C., of the Northern Circuit, that he will be appointed to the vacancy thus occasioned.—*Times.*

AGRICULTURAL PROSPECTS.—Farming prospects in the north-midland counties are generally of the most satisfactory character. A more favourable spring than the present, both for seeding operations and cleaning the land, has never been known, and, as there have been frequent showers of rain within the last month or two, all the grain crops have come up remarkably even and well, while the root crops give promise of unusual weight and produce. There is no deficiency of wheat plant anywhere; on the contrary, it stands much too thickly on the ground in many places, notwithstanding the efforts that have been made to reduce the superabundance. The long prevalence of cool, dull, and rather humid weather, has had the effect of turning some of the crops yellow in places, and instances are reported of the plant being already laid by the rains; but as the temperature has now taken a higher range it may be hoped that the crops thus deteriorated will soon recover. If the weather should prove bright and warm for the greater part of the next two or three months there will be an abundant wheat harvest. Barley has generally come up even and fine, and promises to be of excellent quality generally. Beans and pease look very healthy. Potatoes also have a vigorous appearance. Turnips and mangold-wurtzel are now generally above ground, and have come up very satisfactorily. Orchards and fruit gardens give promise of unusual abundance. Generally speaking there has been a large fall of lambs, but in some districts considerable losses of ewes have been sustained. Sheep-shearing has been rather later than usual this year, owing to the coldness of the weather; but on all hands a good crop of wool is spoken of. The hay harvest will not now be so late as was at one time anticipated. Both meadows and old pastures have a luxuriant appearance.—*Times.*

THE PRICE OF A METROPOLITAN SEAT IN PARLIAMENT.—Those members who aspire to the honour of becoming candidates for a metropolitan seat in Parliament would do well to peruse a very instructive return which was issued to members on Saturday, as to the cost of becoming a metropolitan member. Some may think it a little too dear to pay "for one's whistle;" others, on the contrary, may think that, like an article at a dear shop, it must be good because the price is so extravagant. However, here are the prices at the late general election. They are as follow:—London—Russell, £3222; Rothschild, £1313; Duke, £1068; Crawford, £999; Currie, £970. Tower Hamlets—Ayrton, £1337; Butler, £1133; Clay, £806. Finsbury—Duncombe, £412; Cox, £2308; Parry, £736; Reed—Major Reed's accounts do not appear. Lambeth—Roupell, £5339; Williams, £1705; Wilkinson, £2688. Southwark—Napier, £1219; Locke, £3880; Pellatt, £684. In Westminster and Marylebone, no contest—Shelley, £115; Evans, £163; Hall, £100; Ebrington, £150. The above returns show that an election for a metropolitan borough, if contested, may cost any sum varying from £1500 to nearly £6000. In addition to election expenses, it is said that the subscriptions to local charities vary from £300 to £1000 per annum.—*Globe.*—[It would be observed from returns recently published by us that the "article" is much dearer in Glasgow than in London.]

AN ARRIVAL FROM EUPATORIA.—The barque Ivy Green, Captain Lancaster, has arrived at Hull from Eupatoria, a port well known as the Allies' landing place in the Crimea. She took out a cargo of coals from Newcastle for the Turkish Government at Constantinople, having been chartered to go to Eupatoria for a cargo of bones. While at Eupatoria the weather became more severe than had ever been remembered by any one in the place, and the ship was completely frozen up for three months. At the commencement of this severe weather Captain Lancaster's thermometer stood at 11 degrees in the inside of the cabin. He states that even the blankets in his bed were frozen to the ship's side and his breath congealed thereon. Neither Captain Lancaster nor his mate shaved during the time of the frost, and when they happened to go on to the deck from the cabin (which was on deck), their beards were sometimes so frozen and covered with icicles that both of them were unable to speak. So severe was the frost that on one occasion the captain was able to walk several miles on the Black Sea. There were also frozen up at Eupatoria seven sail of English transports, one French man-of-war, a Turkish, and several other vessels, including some which had remained since the heavy gales which occurred there some time back. Captain Lancaster reports that the town itself is pretty much battered down, and it has not been repaired since the war.—*Eastern Counties Herald.*

FATAL RAILWAY ACCIDENT.

An accident of a very alarming character, and which has resulted in the death of a railway engineer and the destruction of much property, took place at about 23 minutes past 11 o'clock on Friday night, at the termination of the Hyde branch of the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway, which termination is at present in Hyde, at the back of the Commercial Inn, kept by Mr. John Atkinson. It seems that a goods train, consisting of an engine (a new one called the Archimedes), a tender, and six carriages, left Manchester on the above evening, intending to go on the main line for Retford, and previously to this a passenger train had gone from Hyde to meet a train at Guidebridge station. Unfortunately the pointsman at the Newton-wood junction did not turn the points after the latter carriages had passed him, and the consequence was that the goods train from Manchester proceeded at a rapid and fatal speed on the branch line to Hyde. After the goods train had gone off the main line the pointsman, it appears, discovered that it was a wrong train, when he called out, and made what noise he could to warn the persons with the goods train of the error, and of their danger. The persons with this train consisted of the engineer, the fireman, and the guard, and we understand that the guard and fireman heard the alarm given by the pointsman when they got to a bridge some distance from him, and that they then put on the breaks, but finding they could not stop the train they both jumped off and were not hurt. The bridge to which we have alluded is about a quarter of a mile from the termination of the Hyde branch, about 60 yards from which there is a small station, the termination being about 25 feet above the level of the ground, consisting of a coal-yard, supported by large beams of wood, and a shed over, having been intended as a coal depot, but as yet not used as such. As we have said, this branch line terminates at the back of the Commercial Inn, and it is level with the bedroom windows, so that it is most fortunate that the guard and firemen heard the call of danger, otherwise the train would, there is no doubt, have broken through the coal-shed, and, it is probable, would have seriously damaged the Commercial Inn, if it had not knocked it down and killed its inmates. As it was, the breaks at the terminus were sufficient to throw the engine and tender, which were in front of the train, into the yard below, dragging with them four carriages, and smashing the coal-shed and its supports as if they had been made of matches. Two constables were on duty in the neighbourhood at the time, and Mr. Little, the assistant chief constable, and others were soon on the spot, and endeavours were speedily made to ascertain the result of the fearful crash that had taken place. The engineer, James Wilson, a man about thirty years of age, was found under the engine and boiler. He was released as soon as possible, and Mr. Payne, surgeon, Hyde, attended him until his death, which took place in about two hours. The deceased had no bones broken, but was dreadfully scalded. He resided in Openshaw, and leaves a widow and one child. The engine is completely destroyed and several of the carriages much damaged, which, added to the destruction of the coal-shed and the line of rails for a considerable distance, will inflict a damage amounting to something like £2000 on the company. The goods in the train were not damaged. The accident has clearly arisen in consequence of the pointsman not having turned his points when the train left Hyde for Guidebridge; and we understand that he alleges that he did not do so as he expected the carriages and engine to return from Guidebridge. Whether that explanation will be sufficient to save him from being committed for manslaughter will be determined by the jury which will sit at the Commercial Inn, in Hyde, this day (Monday). The pointsman is, we understand, a very steady man, and he has not been apprehended, though the authorities have been somewhat pressed to take him into custody, as, after making inquiries, it was not considered necessary to do so. This branch had only been opened on Friday, after being closed for a fortnight in consequence of proceedings in Chancery.—*Times.*

SCOTLAND.

HUGH MILLER'S MUSEUM.—We have seen a letter from Miss Burdett Coutts, announcing a contribution of £100 "towards preserving this valuable memorial, not of science only, but of untiring energy and perseverance, to its country. You do not," she says to her correspondent, "name the deficiency; but I should hope, with some slight extraneous aid, sufficient funds may be collected in Hugh Miller's 'ain countrie,' to whose list of celebrated men he has added another. The object, however, is of general, and not local interest, as the Government grant proves. Pray let me hear again of its fortunes."—*Witness.*

DEATH OF LADY HARRIET G. SUTTIE.—We are sorry to announce the death of Lady Harriet Grant Suttie, who died on Sunday last. Her Ladyship was seventh daughter of the late Earl of Wemyss, and married, September 3, 1829, Sir George Grant Suttie, Bart., by whom her Ladyship leaves a large family. The Earl of Wemyss, Lord and Lady Elcho, Mr. and Lady Louisa Forbes, Lady Charlotte Fletcher, and other families of distinction are placed in mourning by the demise of her Ladyship.

COURT OF SESSION—WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2.

FIRST DIVISION.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE *v.* LORD SALTOUN.

Lord Saltoun succeeded his uncle as heir of entail to Ness Castle under a destination executed by his grandmother. If he inherited directly from his grandmother, the succession-duty on the estate will be 1 per cent.; if he inherit as a collateral from his uncle, the succession-duty will be 3 per cent. The question is whether his grandmother or his uncle is to be considered his predecessor. Their Lordships considered it of so much importance that it is to be argued before the whole Court.

OUTER HOUSE.

WESTERN BANK—IMPORTANT CASE.

Mr. Baird of Closeburn died in December, 1854, leaving very large successions. Mr. George Baird of Strichen was served tutor-at-law to the deceased's infant daughters. Part of the deceased's estate consisted of between three hundred and four hundred shares in the Western Bank, which had been purchased by the deceased himself. The tutor was so satisfied with this security, that he made no attempt to alter it till the accountant of Court recommended to him, that in respect the Court did not approve of judicial factors continuing to hold said property, the tutor ought to take steps for realising it without unnecessary delay.

In obedience to this recommendation the tutor attempted to dispose of the shares, but before he had effected a sale of more than fifteen, the bank stopped payment.

In December, 1857, the accountant of Court, in respect that the tutor had not realised the shares in question, appointed him to consign in bank the value thereof, as stated in the inventory of the deceased's estate, amounting to nearly £26,000, and reserving such further liability on the part of the tutor for loss beyond the value of the shares as might arise to the pupils for being continued as partners in the bank.

The tutor gave in objections to this requisition, pleading that he had not been guilty of *culpa lata*, and could not, therefore, be personally liable; and the case was enrolled before the Junior Lord Ordinary.

Last week Mr. G. Graham Bell was heard before his Lordship (Lord Kinloch), on behalf of the accountant of Court, and Mr. James Mitford Morison on behalf of the tutor, Mr. Baird. In consideration of the importance of the case, his Lordship has reported it to the First Division, observing in the conclusion of the note to his interlocutor, "the matter in dispute is of so much importance, that it was most proper for the accountant, by one form of proceeding or another, to bring it before the notice of the Court." "It appears to the Lord Ordinary to be of great moment, that all occupying an official position like that of the tutor-at-law, should be warned against unnecessarily continuing a hazardous investment of this description. On the other hand, the Lord Ordinary has not found sufficient authority for enforcing so summary and stringent a measure as is implied in the proposed consignation."

THOUGHTS ON PUBLIC HOUSES.

(From the Dumfries Courier.)

We have neither Exeter Hall nor General Assembly May meetings here, but this is to some extent atoned for by an annual field-day of the Quarter Sessions Court of Justices of the Peace on the subject of public houses. Not the least remarkable of these exhibitions took place on Wednesday week. The principal question before their honours was the due ordering of public houses; and it would be well if better order and rule were maintained in this worshipful court. The proceedings were overruled; and the proceedings themselves, taken in conjunction with those of previous courts, can hardly fail to have one good effect at least, and that is to strengthen the views of those who desire the substitution of stipendiary for unpaid magistrates.

The regulation of houses of public entertainment is a question which has excited much controversy in Scotland for several years, and is at present in a very unsatisfactory condition. That the very repressive measure of Lord Kinnaird, commonly called Forbes Mackenzie's Act, has done good must be admitted by all unprejudiced persons; but it has excited an amount of heart-burning—it has set so much class against class—it has led so extensively to violation of the law—that the good effected has been very materially modified; and the time has certainly arrived for a Parliamentary inquiry into the working of the measure. All whose opinions are worth listening to are agreed as to the terrible evils of drunkenness, the extent to which the vice is unhappily carried in this country, and the vast importance of remedying the evil; there are both permanent and temporary causes in operation, which must render the process of cure slow, and probably never entirely successful; and the main sources of cure must be in the religious, moral, and temporal improvement of the people. This is a view of the subject which goes far beyond the mere question of public houses, but these certain

"ENGLAND." Glasgow Herald, 4 June 1858. British Library Newspapers, https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/BB3203490248/BNCN?u=bayreuth&sid=BNCN&xid=9e0afa1b. Accessed 20 Oct. 2020.