STATE OF THE COUNTRY—VIEWS OF THE OPPOSITION.

House of Commons, Friday, September 17.

On the motion for going into a committee of supply, Lord J. Russell, pursuant to the notice he had given, proceeded to give his views of the state of the country, and of the course which Sir R. Peel had announced his intention of adopting with respect to public business. Respecting foreign affairs it was not necessary that he should say much. Europe was at peace, and the state of separation which had for a short time existed between this country and France was happily at an end, and he hoped that the good understanding now existing would be preserved. Our relations with the United States presented an aspect in some respects unsatisfactory. The two governments concurred in opinion that the case of Mr. M'Leod was an affair for national negotiation, but the government of the state of New York took a different view of the case, and if it should act upon that view it would certainly destroy the amicable relations between the two countries. As, however, the opinions of Mr. Webster concurred with those of the British government, he could not but think that the congress and the government of the United States would see that it was impossible that a case of war between the two countries should be allowed to arise out of this transaction. He must say, in justice to the right hon. baronet, that he had seen the appointments in Ireland with great satisfaction, and he inferred from them that the right hon. baronet was resolved to carry into effect the conciliatory opinion he had expressed. Indeed, the character of the noble lord appointed to the government of that country seemed to guarantee that the people of Ireland would be placed in that position in which alone they ought to rest satisfied, that of perfect equality with the people of England. He would only add a hope that there was no intention of bringing forward the resignation bill of Lord Stanley, which he viewed as a virtual repeal of the pledge to Ireland given by the act of union. He now came to matters upon which he differed from the right hon. baronet. It was understood that parliament had been called together so very early after the elections in order to enter upon the consideration of many important subjects, and, after all that had taken place, he must say that the corn-laws should be taken into the consideration of the house. He could not see why the accession of the right hon. baronet to office was to supersede the necessity of the adoption of any measures whatever until the next session of Parliament. The right hon. baronet might be excused as respected the last fortnight, but the reasons upon which that excuse rested could not apply to the next five months. From the construction of the present government he had great reason to believe that there was no intention of making any considerable alteration in the corn-laws. He inferred this from the fact that the Duke of Buckingham had a seat in the cabinet, while Sir George Murray, who had expressed an opinion in favour of a fixed duty of 8s., or even less, was excluded from the cabinet. There appeared to be, in fact, a selection of those gentlemen who were in favour of prohibition, and exclusion of those who were in favour of a greater freedom of trade in corn. Was it possible, under such circumstances, that the country would be satisfied to wait in expectation of a new law respecting a less restricted trade in corn? They might mean only to alter the averages, which would be only to make the existing law more stringent. They might also mean to reduce the sliding scale some four or five shillings, which would be to render the law somewhat less stringent, the result of which would be to leave matters pretty much as they now stand. The noble lord then proceeded to argue for the necessity of an alteration of the corn-laws, which would not only increase the revenue but which would also, by holding forth the prospects of commerce to all foreign nations, tend largely to secure the peace of the world. He deeply regretted, therefore, being obliged to conclude, that the government was resolved to reject the measures proposed by the late government. He knew they would be supported by the majority of the house in that rejection, and it was not his intention, therefore, to propose any question which would lead to a division in order to take the sense of the house on the course proposed by the right hon. baronet, but as an individual member of the house he felt it necessary to state that he would not be responsible to any extent whatever for that course.

Sir R. Peel said he had not sought to commence his government by a controversy of a party character, but the noble lord was at perfect liberty to invite any discussion of the kind, and he felt thankful to him for the opportunity he had given him of making some observations upon the subject he had referred to. He concurred in the desire to preserve our amicable relations with France, and also, still more cordially in a prayer expressed by the noble lord for the protection of that great man who now wielded the destinies of France, from the hands of the assassin. He believed he might say that the good understanding with France was not likely to be endangered by the change of government which has just taken place in this country; and he also believed that an amicable understanding between France and England would largely conduce to the peace of Europe. Each country could well afford to rest under the laurels which each had obtained; convinced that their so doing must be conducive to the progress of civilization and to the welfare of the world. (Cheers.) With respect to the United States, he confessed he viewed our relations with that country with great anxiety; but he could not help hoping that the prevailing good sense of the community would have its influence upon the government of the state of New York. (Cheers, hear, hear.) It was his desire that such might be the result; but at the same time he should make no concession affecting the honour and independence of this country for the purpose of purchasing a temporary tranquillity. (Loud and continued cheers.) The part of the speech of the noble lord which he most regretted was that in which he had said that he would not call for a decision of the house upon the course he (Sir R. Peel) had proposed to pursue. He wished that the noble lord had taken the sense of the house upon the reasonableness of the demand which he had made upon its confidence. He should then have asked if it was reasonable that, on his return to office, after an absence of ten years' duration, he should be called upon within one month to declare as to whether there ought to be an alteration in the corn-laws. (Hear, hear.) He would ask if it was not reasonable that an interval should be allowed him to consult with his colleagues upon a measure of such importance? If he were not to be allowed a short period for this purpose, what was to be thought of a government which held office for five years, and which never, until May 1841, intimated on the part of that government an united opinion upon this important subject? (Cheers.) If that government was so fully convinced that these laws were at the root of a great portion of the distress of the people, what must have been its neglect of duty in having so long delayed a remedy for the evil. (Hear, hear.) When he was prepared with his measures he would state to the house at once the course he meant to pursue. He would not propose measures to be carried here and rejected there—(loud cheering)—but measures upon the success of which he would be prepared to stake the existence of the government. (Loud cheering.) With respect to finance, he had again to regret that the noble lord had not taken the opinion of the house. In what position, he would ask, did he inherit the government of the country? In 1837 there was a deficiency in the revenue to the extent of £1,428,000; in 1838 there was a deficit of £1,430,000; in 1840 there was a deficiency of £1,457,000; and in 1841 there was a deficiency of £1,851,000—thus making an accumulative deficit of £5,155,000. For the year 1842 it was estimated that there would be a deficiency of £2,500,000—making a total deficit of £7,666,000 when he came to the administration of the finances of the country, and yet, when only one month in office, he was called upon at once to bring forward measures to remedy the evil. (Cheers.) If the late chancellor of the exchequer by his budget realised his fullest expectations, he must still have proposed a vote of credit, partaking in character of that which his right hon. friend (Mr. Goulburn) would have shortly to bring forward. The late government had calculated on a revenue during the present year of £600,000, arising from the alteration of the timber duties, whereas it was clear from the communications of Lord Sydenham, that during the present year not one shilling could be derived from that source. The right hon. baronet then proceeded to argue that little or no revenue could be derived from the reduction of 12s. of the differential duties on sugar; and, subsequently referring to the growing expenses of our colonies, and the great expenses of the war in China, asked, if in the midst of such accumulated difficulties it was unreasonable for the house to give him some little time to endeavour to meet them? (Hear, hear.) Was it not reasonable before bringing forward any measure of finance to wait until they saw what might take place in America? (Cheers.) He would say no more on that head, but would turn to Ireland, where it was said that his advent to power was to be the signal for hoisting the standard of ascendancy, and yet not one month had passed away of his administration when the noble lord had admitted that that difficulty he had at least got over—(cheers)—and that he had given a guarantee to the people of Ireland that they would be governed impartially. (Cheers.) He would take care, as far as in him lay, that the law should be administered with firmness and impartiality, and he hoped with vigour; and, at all events, he would take care not to allow the administration of Irish affairs to be influenced by the hope of gaining support in the House of Commons. (Loud cheers.) He had made engagements to render impartial justice to Ireland, and so far as depended upon himself, those engagements should be fulfilled. (Cheers.) The appointment of Lord de Grey as Lord-lieutenant, and of Sir E. Sugden as Lord Chancellor of Ireland, was some proof of the course intended to be pursued. Sir E. Sugden, having a pension as a retired chancellor, for a very short tenure of office, felt the country had a claim upon his services, and had therefore consented to resume his duties; but if he had been prevented by any circumstances from doing so, he, (Sir R. Peel) would have selected a chancellor from the Irish bar, which stood as high as any bar in the world. (Cheers.) His only object in accepting the harassing duties of his situation was the hope of being of service to his country, and in the measures he should propose no considerations of political support should compel him to become the servile instrument to carry the opinions of other people into effect. (Hear, hear.) Power was only valuable to any honourable mind because of the opportunity it afforded of being serviceable to the country, and when he found that that power was denied him in the way accordant with his own feelings and opinions, he would reserve to himself the power of retiring from office when he could no longer discharge its duties to his own satisfaction. (Loud cheering.)

Lord Palmerston, Mr. Villiers, Mr. Brotherton, Mr. Cobden, Mr. Hawes, Mr. S. Crawford, Mr. M. J. O'Connell, and Mr. Hindley, subsequently spoke in favour of the opposition, and Lord Sandon, Mr. Lytton, Mr. Hardy, and Mr. Milnes for the ministry.

Mr. Fielden moved, and Dr. Bowring seconded, a motion to the effect that it was the duty of the house not to vote any supplies until an inquiry should be instituted into the state of the distress of the operative population throughout the country.

The house divided, and Mr. Fielden's motion was lost by a majority of 149 to 41.

One vote of supply was then taken, after which the house resumed, the chairman reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again on Monday.

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE EMPEROR OF THE CELESTIAL EMPIRE.

An abstract of the proclamations lately issued by the Emperor of China, with extracts, may afford some amusement:—The first proclamation which we here notice appears to have been issued after the taking by the English of the Bocca Tigris. The Emperor evidently considered that the English would find it as impossible a matter to clear themselves of their enormous guilt in thus bearding his Celestial Majesty as Lady Macbeth formerly did to wash from her hands the blood of King Duncan; for, he says, "such wickedness and guilt as this would be most difficult indeed for all the waves of the Eastern Ocean to wash out." The Emperor, then, *à la* Van Tromp, after stating that he has specially summoned his Imperial younger brother Meentang, together with the High Minister Hoo, to lead forth a grand army, 50,000 strong, and by journeying day and night to repair to Canton with all haste, exhorts the latter to let the vengeance of Heaven (*i. e.* the Celestial Empire) be exhibited by not allowing a single English sail to return, but sweeping them clean from the face of the seas, in order to fill his Imperial mind with gratification!! The Imperial commands were again issued as follow:—I the Emperor, now order Meentang and the great Minister Hoo to lead forth the army of 50,000, and most decidedly make a thorough extermination of the English rebels, in order to tranquillize the hearts of our people. But if you dare to be cowardly, and privately of your own accord proceed to make peace, most certainly will you be put to death. Let the two words 'make peace' for ever after this find no place in your hearts, nor ever give them form by writing them out. And should you dare to become tardy in your duties and listen to their pretensions to 'make peace,' I, the Emperor, will place myself at the head of a mighty force, and most uncompromisingly make an end of English guilt. All the troops of Keelin, Woolung, and Solun, will also hasten to assemble at the capital, that we may all together advance and exterminate, not allowing so much as a bit of broken plank of the English to return—then will be laid aside my imperial resentment. Respect this."

On the 8th of the third moon (30th of March, 1841), the Imperial commands were again issued by a proclamation. As for Keshen, who is accused of receiving bribes from the enemy, he is disposed of in a summary manner, the Emperor ordering that he forthwith be cut in sunder at the waist; his Majesty also, with the true spirit of a Haroun al Raschid, orders all who officially attended him, whether great or small, his relations, and all who appertain to him, to be decapitated indiscriminately! He disposes of another unhappy wretch, Paoutsung (accused of traitorously combining with the English), by ordering him to be put to a slow and ignominious death, by having his flesh cut from his bones by small bits; and further, that his native place be laid waste for 100 miles round, and his relatives be sentenced to the penalty of transportation!

His Celestial Majesty concludes his bloody proclamation as follows:—"Let the peacock's feather be plucked from the cap of Yihsban for his imbecility and tardiness in bringing forward the troops; let Lungwan be disgraced two degrees of rank; and let Yangfa be deprived of the truly brave rank of How; and let every officer in the province of Canton, whether high or subordinate, be deprived of his official button until they make good their delinquencies by efficiency of effort. Respect this."

The memorial presented by Keshen to the Emperor is a first-rate curiosity. After showing that what he had done he could not help doing, and that he was possessed of no means of grappling with the English victoriously, he proceeds:—

"Your slave has again and again revolved the matter in his anxious mind! In so far as it regards his own person it is unworthy of notice, but the consequences touching the vital interests of the country and the lives of the people involved in it are vast and extending to posterity! But, alas! your slave has sinned in giving battle when he could not command destiny to give him the victory, and he has no less sinned in being unable to settle matters in unison with your sacred Majesty's wishes! Both of these are crimes which affect his poor life, but what is there in this worthy of pity or consideration? Still your slave, though he has sinned in not being able to settle matters in unison with your sacred Majesty's wishes, yet the territory and people of Canton still exist and look up to your most sacred Majesty for his gracious support and protection, while your slave, by having sinned in giving battle when fate denied him the victory, has soiled the glory of his master and poured out the lives of his people, and still more left himself without a sensible plan to put in operation; therefore it is, that after having duly consulted with the Tartar General, &c., we have unanimously come to the conclusion that our defences are not to be relied upon, and that, in the tug of battle, our troops will not stand their ground. Your slave is vexed to death thinking of these things, even till he loathes his food, and till sleep has forsaken his eyelids, forasmuch as he does not shrink from the heavy guilt he is incurring in making all these facts the result of his diligent inquiries, and annoying with them the ears of Heaven's Son; and at the same time he takes everything connected with the foreigners, and all the foreigners' letters, and hands them up for imperial inspection. He humbly hopes that the Holy One will look down with pity and compassion on the black-haired race, and shower upon them an extra measure of clemency, in granting what is therein requested, so that the people of the land may not be turned to ashes."

RUNNING A MUCK.

(From Bentley's Miscellany.

One of the greatest objections to India is the almost certainty of the young man forming those liaisons which are not only dangerous in a moral point of view, but often destructive in our worldly career. Encouraged by example, shut out from the more refined society of European ladies, without a hope of marrying, and unchecked by the laws of society, the young soldier or civilian in India, stationed in some dreary spot, removed from the awe which the presence of virtuous females inspires, is apt to form a connexion as revolting to European taste as opposed to every moral precept. Mr. A——was unmarried, young, and handsome; he had won and carried off a lovely girl of sixteen (that is to say, if loveliness can be imagined with a dark skin). He had lived with her about three years, and had by her two children, whom he in after-life acknowledged and cherished. In him the act was wrong; in her it was excusable, since the form of marriage, the mere thought of such a thing, had never entered her head; her very parents were proud of the honor done her; her rude ignorance blotted out the blame that would otherwise have attached to her: while the only excuse he could offer for the seduction of a mere child was the force of example—the custom of the country. Ayah (so will I call her) was in the bath with her two little babes, amused with their infantine screams, as they nestled closer to her bosom, and shunned the water she occasionally immersed them in: her brother held a post in the house; her sister was her companion; her father filled the situation of porter at the outer lodge gate. The first of these was a religious enthusiast; he had been wrought on by certain Brahmins; he had committed many faults; he determined at once to expiate them. One way only is thought by the pious Malay to lead straight to heaven, and on this he resolved; he offered up his prayers, performed his ablutions, and prepared to run a muck. The fanatic who thus determines first vows to his God to destroy every thing he may meet on his path; to spare neither sex nor relationship, to turn neither to the right nor to the left, but to sacrifice all indiscriminately, till he himself in turn be sacrificed. He first proceeds to oil his body all over to elude capture as long as possible (for the more victims he makes, the more certain is his road to heaven); he casts off everything that may be caught at: shaves his head, lest he should be seized by the hair; takes a large portion of opium, or some other maddening poison; then arming himself with a knife or creece in either hand he rushes forth to immolate all he may encounter. Ayah was leaving the bathing-room, with her children in her arms, her sister and her attendants were following her, laughing and playing with her little babes; a more innocent, a more happy group could not have been found. They were already in the passage, when a sudden noise made the young mother turn round; in another instant she fell a corpse, struck down by her own brother—that brother she had loved so tenderly. A single blow had nearly severed her head from her body, and as she fell the blood gushed over the unconscious little ones that fondled in her bleeding breast; a scream burst from all, as the madman bounded away triumphing in the act. He fled along the passage; an old bearer met him,—in less than time for thought his head was split in two, and his grey beard deluged in blood. The surviving sister rushed after him to stay him in his wild career; he repulsed her, turned to look at her for an instant; he hesitated—he doubtless repented? No, he paused but to make his aim more sure—the creece he carried in his left hand was buried in her breast; he smiled as an exulting demon, and rushed on—the alarm was given; a general pursuit took place, but without effect; the porter was called to close the gates—he came out, and saw his infuriated son; he read his purpose: he hesitated for a moment, and as the paricide sprang towards him, the father stept back, and discharged the contents of his musket into the heart of his child, who, quivering, fell, still grinning in diabolical agony; he died at the foot of him who gave him birth impotently attempting still to strike those who dared not approach to succour him. One of the two bereaved children, fostered by the generous woman who afterwards married their father, died in action, a major in the British army; the other was for a short period the beauty of Dublin; but, unfortunately, after a masquerade at Lady B.'s, where she had gone, dressed as a sultana, she imprudently washed her face with cold water, and a few hours afterwards was a corpse.

THE PRICE OF A FRACTURE.—Last April the diligence between Rochechouart and Limoges, when conveying a number of witnesses to appear on a trial about to come on before the Court at Limoges, was overturned and many were injured. Actions were brought against the proprietor of the diligence, and the following sums have been awarded to be paid by him for the damages occasioned. The list is curious. For a broken thigh, 3,300f.; a bruise on the abdomen, 800f.; a wound in the head, 600f.; the entire loss of a nose, 4,500f.; a broken rib, 1,000f.; a broken shoulder, 1,000f.; a rupture, 2,000f.; a wound in the head, 600f.. a contusion, 500f.; ditto, 400f. Total, 14,700f.

LITERARY PROPERTY.—The manuscript of "Robinson Crusoe" ran through the whole trade, and no one would print it. The bookseller who at last bought it cleared 1,000 guineas by it. "Burn's Justice" was disposed of by its author for a mere trifle, as well as "Buchan's Domestic Medicine;" both of which produced immense incomes. "The Vicar of Wakefield" (the most delightful novel in our language) was sold for a few pounds. Dr. Johnson fixed the price of his "Lives of the Poets" at 200 guineas, by which the bookseller, in the course of a few years, cleared upwards of £25,000. Tonson and all his family rode in their carriages with the profits of the 5*l.* epic of Milton. The copyright of "Vyse's Spelling Book" sold for 2,000 guineas.

SELF CONSOLATION.—Contemplate with the spectacles of good-humoured contentment, how artificial and extrinsic to happiness are the superfluities of this life. Thanks to a discerning public, we can command, while heaven spares us the use of this right arm, as much food as satisfies the cravings of nature, which is all that the great or the affluent can consume. While we have one shirt on our back and the other at our washerwoman's, we have no reason to make an inventory of our wearables. We contrive to procure, by hook or by crook, a good suit of clothes every year; and unless a man chooses to roll himself in the kennel, he cannot wear out a suit of clothes in less time. We surmount our caput with our hat (while D'Orsay does the same *with one* of his hats), and to all outward appearance our heads are equally furnished. We cannot rival *Cecil Forester* in primrose kids; but while the Earl of Wilton wears well-fitting blacks, who shall quarrel with us who follow the fashion of the Earl of Wilton?—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

A STRANGE EXECUTION.—In the year 1386, a sow ate part of the child of a day-labourer of Falaise, named Janet. This accident reached the ears of the judge, who condemned the animal to suffer publicly the penalty of retaliation, as prescribed by law. The face and one arm of the child had been devoured; the sow was mutilated in the same manner, and then hanged by the executioner in the public place, amidst a concourse of people. The judge presided at the execution on horseback, with a feather in his hat. The father was forced to attend, by way of punishment, for not taking proper care of his child. The culprit, when brought to the gallows, was dressed like a man, wore a waistcoat, breeches, and gloves, and a human mask before her snout.—*Excursions in Normandy.*

GYPSUM.—We lately met, in an old Philadelphia paper, the following account of the introduction of gypsum, or plaster of Paris into this country, by Judge Peters:

"In the year 1770, he first became acquainted with gypsum. A small quantity of which was then sent from Germany to a merchant in this city, with some information of its value as a manure, then but recently and accidentally discovered. It was said concerning it, that a labourer who had been employed in mixing stucco mortar, passed and repassed from his work to his cottage, across a sterile field. The succeeding season his path threw up a luxuriant crop of grass, which he attributed to the plaster that fell from his clothes, and was thus induced to make an experiment near his own dwelling with the remainder of the article in his possession. The effects astonished every beholder, and the cottager received a reward from his landlord for divulging the secret. Our president, aware of these facts, began his experiments with a single bushel of gypsum, obtained from a maker of stucco ornaments in Philadelphia, and afterwards pursued and extended them in proprotion to his means. Not long after, about twenty tons of this valuable material came as ballast in a ship from London to this port, without the least knowledge of its worth by the captain who brought it, which stock formed the foundation of the vast improvements to our husbandry, subsequently resulting from its general use. Having altogether satisfied himself of the fertilizing effects of plaster of paris, Judge Peters disseminated the knowledge he had acquired, through many parts of Pennsylvania, and the neighbouring provinces; but his success in persuading his countrymen to credit his assertions, and inducing others to make trial of the sulphate of lime, was at first limited and very discouraging. He nevertheless continued his labours, and by publishing and otherwise enforcing the facts he possessed on this subject, had the happiness to witness the triumph of his doctrines, over the combined force of ignorance, prejudice and ridicule. What have been the consequences flowing from the use of this fertilizing principle, and how much has it contributed to the solid wealth of Pennsylvania, and of many other States in this Union, is far beyond the reach of computation."—*American paper.*

CHARLOTTETOWN: Printed and published by COOPER & BREMNER, Printers to the Honorable the House of Assembly, at their Office, East corner of Pownal and Water Streets.—TERMS 15*s.* *per annum, payable half yearly in advance.*