

From our London Correspondent.
The Labour of Parsons—Fleets and the Harvest—Money Crisis in France and Europe—English Taxation, the Income Tax, and Literary Men—Concord, Viscountess and the Coming Contests—Agitation in two London Parishes—Electoral and Political Questions—Cottagers and Landlords—Influence of Clergy and Clerical—Parliament—Lord Stanley—The “Band of Hope” and “British Workman”—Wood Engraving and Religious Literature—John Gilbert—Doctor M’Crie—Professor Korse and the Telegraph—Direct Trade with Western America—Postscript.

LONDON, October 15, 1856.
The Times has called attention to the recommendation of the United States Commission, that the Isthmus of PANAMA should be taken possession of at once by the American Government. It predicts fresh complications and difficulties arising out of the Central American question. Should such recommendation be entertained by the President and his Cabinet, England would oppose the proposition. It is a pity that nothing should arise in these gloomy times to increase public anxiety, especially after it was supposed that the “difficulty” between England and America was finally disposed of. Let us hope that nothing serious will arise out of this matter.

THE RAIN which has fallen within the last few weeks, has been greater in quantity than the period than for many years, and has swept away shocks of grain and of hay in several places; and both in Scotland and Ireland there have been great anxiety and alarm among the farmers. In the South of England, we have an earlier, and therefore more certain harvest. In Highland districts in Scotland, in the North and West of Ireland, it is unusual for shocks of grain to be seen in fields in November, sprouting from, or sometimes covered with the early falling Winter snow.

THE MONEY MARKET has been so severely disturbed—especially in Paris—that our arrivals of gold from Australia are judiciously purchased for exportation. In after the Bank of England was compelled last week to raise the interest on bills for sixty days, to 6 per cent., and for longer period to 7 per cent., to the diversion of the funds, and a serious disturbance of trade and commerce, the Bank of France instructed its agents to buy gold here largely premium and positive loss. This has been adopted to stave off a panic in the French Bourse, and a suspension of payments altogether. A money crisis seriously aggravates the difficulties of the new Emperor.

Men’s hearts,” (even while we have great peace) “are failing them for fear,” what a short period may develop known only to the All-wise God. He given the nations—and this nation the rest—a breathing time from contention to be resumed with greater energy on other fields, and with other issues? The Chancellor of the Exchequer, recent public dinner, spoke of the probability of war, and of the necessity of a standing army being kept up. Meantime, there are reductions in the number of officers and men in various regiments; the British Legion, Legion, an admirably disciplined force, is being disbanded, and part of it is going as Military Colonists to British Columbia. But our fleet remains useful, and a Land Transport, or Military Department, is being reorganized.

MORD PANNIER, the War Minister, has been retained at a public dinner in Scotland, and just takes credit to himself for having he has taken to increase the efficiency of the army, and to elevate the soldier morally, by abolition of temptations to drink, better provision for married soldiers, and giving access to regimental libraries and schools. He also notices, with particular satisfaction, the gratifying increase of true religion in the army. Lord Pannier is a man of the Free Church of Scotland, and a friend of civil and religious liberty, very anxious to see Lord John Russell again, and it must be confessed while the latter has been unpopular of late, a man more patriotic, or well-principled could not be found in any Government.

SATIATION with us is a very serious thing, likely to men of the learned profession, have to pay an income tax on the profits of the *sweat of the brain*, and whose sons (unlike those where parents have had or funded property) lose all when hard-working author, artist, editor or writer dies. This income tax was tolerated the war, but it is at a double, or three, or even four, elevation; so that high prices for houses, parish and local taxes added to education of children and life insurance policies, the income tax comes upon man almost like the feather which breaks the over-loaded elephant’s back! That all us this is to be reduced to 7d. and 4d. in April, 1858; but who can say that a new war may raise it, even to 10d. or 12d. per cent. It is an easy way to raise revenues, and the elasticity of the country, despite of it, indicates enormous wealth. It has been estimated that in and around London, there are two hundred billion pounds in trade and property! And there are times when rich England has been brought to her knees, and has been compelled to own herself poor. It was so during the money panics of 1825, 1837, 1847, 1857, and after the Irish famine and the railroads, and it may be so again ere long. *Amens*, or in other words, a Christian prophet, who believed that “all things shall be haranized in beauty and order before the final anxiety and bankruptcy, anticipates the day when, as in Solomon’s time, the earth shall abound as the stones in the streets, when the garners of every nation and race shall be full, affording all manner of store, and when the prosperity and peace of the “mild age shall obliterate the memory of a poverty-stricken and wretched past. Nay the Lord (even through stormy and cloudy) haston it in his time!

We have had, recently, in two parishes of London, illustrations most significant of the STATE OF PARTIES IN THE ENGLISH CHURCH. The first is furnished by Islington, which, after many years’ residence, I have to call our “parish.” Its remains, both religious and literary, carry us back to Islington martyrs for truth in Mary’s time; to Queen Elizabeth and Walter Raleigh, who used to hunt over the valley near her Canoberry Tower; and later still, in the fields here; to Queen George’s, when “merry Islington” was the favorite resort for holiday seekers; when Oliver Goldsmith used to frequent White Conduit public house, unable to tell friend came to his help and paid his reckoning. But the history of Islington in this century, marks an era in the reformation and extension of Evangelism.

For forty years ago, Daniel Wilson (Bishop of Calcutta,) succeeded a very vicar of the gay and worldly school, (as I can testify from personal observation,) and by his bold assaults on card-playing and worldly pleasures, as well as by his “new-fangled” Puritan preaching, not only roused the gentry to furious opposition, but made the Sabbath-breaking tradesmen by his scathing denunciations. But afterwards came the victories of truth in increasing power, until now, with a population of upwards of one hundred thousand, Islington, as far as the Church of England is concerned, is without exception, evangelical in its ministry. New churches are being constantly built, and into every one of them an earnest preacher of the old doctrine of the Reformation is introduced. The present vicar, (the son of the Bishop of Calcutta,) is a man along with the trustees of every new church, in the election of a minister. The Tractarians have churches outside the borders, but never could obtain a footing among us. A Mr. McKeith, a rich layman, recently wanted to get up a Puseyite church, vicar resisted, and the Tractarian, in his disappointment, has abused his courteous opponent very bitterly.

The second case is that of the neighboring parish of Clerkenwell, where, as the exception to the general rule, the election of the incumbent is in the hands of the parishioners. The excitement arising out of an appeal thus made recently to the popular voice, has been very great, and the crowds that have repaired to the church to hear the candidates have been very large. Meetings have been held, addresses delivered, and the vestrymen, in whose hands the election ultimately lay, have been easily canvassed. Three of these were Evangelicals, and one of them, Mr. Lester, had studied theology under Chalmers and Welsh, after finishing his University course in England, besides being an author of some reputation. The popular Protestant candidate was a Mr. Maguire, Secretary of the Islington Protestant Institute. Many heavy blows has he dealt to the Cardinal and his satraps in “our parish” during the last few years. The Papists of Clerkenwell and the Latitudinarians and High Churchmen were for Mr. Roberts, who had been curate of the parish for some time, and who ignobly sought to curry favor with Romantics by depreciating Art; and the result? says the Times, was “received with loud cheers by a large concourse of persons.” Mr. Maguire was elected by a majority of fifteen over his opponent. I know the successful candidate well; he is an earnest catholic-spirited man. He is sure to fill the long-deserted pews, and to visit the people in their homes. It is a triumph of evangelism over worldliness, and gives a signal illustration of the value that the lively attach to the fragment of a popular right, which the vile system of patronage and purchase in the English Church has so wickedly wrested from them. In London there are other “fragments” of the same system, especially in the case of “Afternoon” or “Evening Lectureships”; and it is in this way that William Romaine and others eminent in usefulness, kept alive the torch of truth amid the thick darkness of the last age, and the earlier portion of the present century. The power of election resting, however, in the representatives of the *rate-payers*, and not in the communicants, is but a poor imitation after all, of the Scriptural and Presbyterian system of election by the communicants.

Turning to COUNTRIES OF THE EAST, it appears that in Persia, Russian influence preponderates, and Persia is preparing an expedition against a neighboring State. Two war-steamer have been ordered from Calcutta to the Persian gulf.

In CHINA, the insurgent forces have for a considerable time been going forward on their path of conquest. A rally in favor of the old Tartar dynasty seems lately to have taken place; but its success is probably only partial and temporary. The “rebels” are, undoubtedly, to a certain extent, under the influence of Bible principles, although these are mingled with that is to be deplored.

The results of this mighty movement are in the hands of Him who, in the comparatively slow developments of his mighty plans, exercises the faith of his Church. How narrow our views; how impotent our spirits; and how prone to unbelieving, when the enemy seems to prevail! The Church will have rewards, if she but have long patience. It is the first conviction of many, that the next ten years will be full of wondrous things—awful, stupendous, undreamt of by politicians, but “the burden” of prophetic and Apocalyptic vision, and in the issue inconceivably glorious.

A discussion in writing has been going forward between the Secretary of the BRITISH TEMPERANCE LEAGUE AND LORD STANLEY, on the principle of compulsion in reference to the sale of intoxicating drinks, and as illustrated by the Main Liquor Law. The correspondence is elaborate on both sides. It seems to me that we are very far from a state of public opinion, or of social habitude, which would give practical and present interest to such a question. The Government persists in the licensing system; and in thus drawing revenue from the people whom drinking habits brutalize, consigning many of them to those prisons, and subjecting them to those prosecutions, which form such a frightful item in our annual expenditure. I think the principle is sound, that to attempt to enforce a law which there is no heart to keep, but rouses enmity, both in the individual and the mass; and I believe that any attempt to suppress drinking by a wholesale sweeping measure, would lead to a terrible reaction for evil. It is melancholy to look around and see the misery caused by gin palaces and public houses, and by their being open also on the Lord’s day. The facilities of temptation might be much diminished by wise and Christian legislation. Meantime, let sanitary reform; the making of the houses and homes, by landlords, more comfortable; the education of the young; the establishment of working men’s “Homes,” in which coffee and tea can be had, of the best quality, at low rate, with access to a pure literature and the newspapers; let them be cheered to the utmost; and let arguments, based on reason, on religion, and on medical testimony, be addressed both to young and old, to persuade them to abstain.

Among the moral means employed for the REFORM OF THE WORKING CLASSES, the least promising are two publications issued by Mr. Smithies, a gentleman of rare philanthropy. He is an employee in one of our public works, and without any personal advantage; my, hitherto at a positive loss, he commenced, some years ago, and still sustains, “The Band of Hope,” and “The British Workman.” The first is for children; and by sweet stories, golden sentences, and beautiful wood cut illustrations, (as I can testify from personal observation,) each, after many years’ residence, I have to call our “parish.” Its remains, both religious and literary, carry us back to Islington martyrs for truth in Mary’s time; to Queen Elizabeth and Walter Raleigh, who used to frequent White Conduit public house, unable to tell friend came to his help and paid his reckoning. But the history of Islington in this century, marks an era in the reformation and extension of Evangelism.

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THE PRESBYTERIAN BANNER AND ADVOCATE.

young people are taught in the most charming way, lessons in favor of self-denial, mutual love, and humanity to the dumb creatures. There are many “Band of Hope Societies,” for the promotion of temperance, abroad over the kingdom. Next, there is “The British Workman,” for the laborer and artisan. There lies a number of it on the table while I write. Here at the top are wood cuts of six or seven different trades, each in the person of a proper representative, and in the midst—

“A STAFF FOR THE TIMES.”
“Let us be all settled
For Friday night be gone,
The weekly work be ended
By Saturday at One
Let himless recreation
Give it after hours a zest,
And the Sunday be done
To worship and to rest.”

The first article is “A Visit to the Haggerston Coal Heavers;” and it gives us with portraits of four of this class, a delightful account of “men who were once apparently hopeless characters, the husbands of heart-broken wives, the fathers of ragged and wretched children, and the constant visitors of police courts, now sober and industrious characters, some of whom are doing well, not only for this life, but the next; and who may now be seen on the Sabbath, accompanying their well-dressed families to the house of God.” Next comes the continuation of a series of articles on workmen who have risen to eminence; and here it is “celebrated Shepherds,” both home and foreign. Among the former are the Rev. John Brown, of Haddington, a William Cow, author of a recent work, “Truth free among the Heathen,” a Prize Essay on the Evidences of Christianity; and David Saunders, “The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain,”—while among Shepherds of other lands, are Andrew Montague, who became Professor in a French College; and Giote, who became the painter, sculptor, and architect of Florence.

Papers like these, inspiring workmen with self-respect, and with the idea of what good conduct and self-reliance may make them, together with tales, maxims, columns for husbands and wives,” “full of wise counsels in pithy Saxon,” and such papers as “What will Ruin Children,” “Drink,” the father handing the foaming tankard, as the wood cut shows, to his little boy, for the first time)—are admirably calculated to do great good.

Referring to these publications, I am reminded of the gratifying fact, that Art, especially in the matter of wood cutting, is now so much employed in the advancement of religion and morals. It is true, that *The London Journal*, *Reynolds’ Miscellany*, and publications of even a viler character, advance their circulation by such means. But Art is becoming a consecrated talent on both sides of the Atlantic, in connexion with literature, and will do so more and more. To meet the increased expense, three cents will be charged for the copy containing the Selections. They may be had in sets, or in the Selections alone. Orders should specify “with the Selections.”

This gentleman was one of those福音传教士, as a fox-hunting, worldling hand, I sketched in a former letter; but at the same time he possessed both tact and eloquence. At last the hour for final decision came, and amid intense popular excitement; and “the result?” says the Times, was “received with loud cheers by a large concourse of persons.” Mr. McGuire was elected by a majority of fifteen over his opponent. I know the successful candidate well; he is an earnest catholic-spirited man. He is sure to fill the long-deserted pews, and to visit the people in their homes. It is a triumph of evangelism over worldliness, and gives a signal illustration of the value that the lively attach to the fragment of a popular right, which the vile system of patronage and purchase in the English Church has so wickedly wrested from them. The artist, who began his career in connection with the Society, has (not by its managers only, but by other employers and patrons, both in painting and wood engraving,) amassed a fortune, I am assured, of £50,000! He is not more than thirty-five years of age. His genius is extraordinary. What can be done by genius, or by a piece of wood, will reveal itself to your eye, if you permit me, (whenever you visit London,) to take you into our sub-editor’s room, and show you some of Gilbert’s beautifully carved blocks, among his stores.

A splendid entertainment was given last evening to PROFESSOR MORSE, the eminent American who invented the Electric Telegraph. The Chairman, Mr. Cooke, a distinguished director of the English Electric Telegraph Company, who with Professor Wheatstone first practically established the Electric Telegraph in Great Britain, gave a most interesting sketch of the rise of the railway system, and its speedy traveling, as contrasted with the mail coaches of the olden time. Next he referred to the establishment of Ocean Steamers between England and the United States, in which he said, “America takes the lead—produces the swiftest ships, yachts, and steamboats.”

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