COMMERCIAL MATTERS.

Sales at the Stock Exchange....MAY 12.

1,000	U. S. 6s, '81, Coup.	108	
2,000	do	107¾	
65,000	do	107¾	
1,000	U. S. 6s, '81, Reg	108	
12,000	Treasury 7 3-10 ₱ ct. Notes, Oct. and April	107	
3,000	do	106⅞	
3,000	U. S. 6s, 1 Yr. Cert.	101⅞	
1,000	do New	99⅞	
1,000	Ohio State 6s '81	111	
2,000	Virginia State 6s	65	
26,000	Missouri State 6s	63½	
14,000	do	64	
32,000	Erie 4th Mort. Bs	109	
2,000	Hud. Riv. 1st Mort 116		
1,000	Mich. Cent 5's Con. 1st. Mt. Sink. F. Bds	121	
2,000	C. B. & Q. 8 ₱ ct. B.	120	
500	Mich. Sou. 2d Mtg.	104	
5,000	Mich. So. Sink. Fd.	110	
500	Ill. Cen. R. R. Bds.	120	
3,000	do	121	
1,000	A. & T. H. 2d M. P.	93	
1,000	do	93½	
3,000	do	93	
5,000	Alt. & T. H. 1 Bds.	84	
3,000	do	83½	
5,000	Chi. & N. W. 1st M.	87	
10,000	Chi. & N. W. 2d M.	79	
17,000	do	5½	
5,000	do	b30	60
1,000	Clev. & Tol. S. F.	114	
5,000	P., Ft. W. & C. 3d	85	
15,000	Clev. & Pitts. 4th M.	87	
5,000	Clev. & Pitts. 3d M.	87	
20,000	Miss. & Mo. L. Gr.	63	
45	Bank of Commerce	105½	
33	Bank of the State of N. Y.	102	
150	Ocean Bank	93	
20	American Ex. Bank	119	
20	Hanover Bank	98	
15	Shoe & Leather Bank	106	
20	Commonwealth Bank	97½	
30	M. & Merchants' Bk.	95	
20,000	American Gold	148½	
80,000	do	148½	
100,000	do	148½	
200	Canton Company	3½	
100	do	3½	
100	do	3½	
27	Del. & Hud. C. Co.	149	
144	Penna. Coal Co.	23½	
50	Cumberland Coal Pref.	23½	
50	do	23½	
100	do	23½	
150	Quicksilver Min'g Co.	47	
150	do	46½	
150	do	b30	46
200	Bucks County Lead	2	
65	American Coal Co.	35	
700	N. Y. Cent. RR.	118	
200	do	118½	
50	do	118½	
250	do	118½	
900	Erie Railway	98	
850	do	98½	
50	do	b60	98
400	do	98½	
100	do	98	
100	do	b30	98½
300	Norwich & Worcester	92	
150	do	91	
300	Erie Railway Pref.	105½	
50	do	b15	105½
250	do	105½	
50	do	b10	105½
200	do	105½	
300	Chic. & R. I. RR.	97	
50	Chic., Bur. & Q. RR.	112	

SECOND BOARD.

5,000	U. S. 6s, '81, reg.	108	
10,000	U.S.6s, '81, coupon	107½	
500	do	108	
3,000	do	107½	
20,000	Tr. 7-10 N. Oct. & April	107	
16,000	Missouri State 6s	63½	
10,000	Chi. & N. W. 2d m.	69	
5,000	do	61	
15,000	Miss. & Mo. L. G.	63	
20,000	American Gold	148	
80,000	do	148½	
60	Bk. of Commerce	105	
100	Canton Company	2⅞	
200	do	b30	3
300	Pacific Mail S S Co.	189½	
100	Q'silver Min'g Co.	x30	47
100	do	47½	
200	do	47½	
500	Erie Railway	98½	
50	do	98½	
500	do	98½	
500	do	b30	98
50	do	98½	
100	do	98½	
2500	do	98	
300	N. Y. Central R. R.	119	
400	do	119½	
200	Erie R. R. Pref.	105	
150	do	105½	
500	Harlem R. R.	96	
400	do	96½	
200	do	b10	95½
200	do	95½	
100	do	95½	
700	Reading R. R.	103½	
150	do	103½	
100	do	b30	104
200	Mich. So. & N. I. RR.	82½	
1300	do	83½	
400	do	83½	
100	do	b10	83½
300	do	x60	83
11	Hudson River RR.	28	
200	do	x30	128
100	do	128½	
100	do	128½	
200	do	b15	128½
300	Harlem Railroad	94½	
100	do	94½	
600	do	94	
200	do	95½	
100	do	95½	
100	do	75½	
130	Harlem RR. Pref.	107	
100	do	106½	
10	do	109	
400	Reading Railroad	104	
200	do	103½	
200	do	103½	
50	Mich. Central RR.	110	
950	Mich. So. & N. I. RR.	82	
300	do	83½	
100	do	b30	83
100	do	x30	83½
200	do	83½	
100	Mich. So. & N.I.G. stk.	112	
300	do	111½	
100	do	b10	111½
300	do	111	
10	Panama Railroad	188	
2	Ill. Cen. R. R. scrip	97½	
300	do	97½	
100	do	b30	97½
200	do	x30	97½
100	Full Stock	93	
50	do	94	
800	Clev. & Pittsb. R. R.	97½	
1400	do	97½	
300	do	b10	97½
100	do	97	
400	do	x30	96½
800	do	x30	96½
300	do	x30	96½
5	Cleve., Col. & C. RR.	154	
269	Galena & Chic. RR.	102½	
100	do	b10	103
100	do	x30	102½
300	Cleve & Tol. RR.	112½	
100	do	112	
100	Mil. & Prairie du Ch.	54	
100	do	54½	
400	do	55	
100	do	55½	
100	do	56	
100	do	56½	
100	do	56½	
100	do	b10	56½
100	do	b3	56½
300	do	57	
100	do	86	
27	Tol. & Wab. RR.	73	
200	do	75	
50	Tol. & Wab. Pref.	80	
800	Pitts., Ft. W. & C. RR.	77	
100	do	x30	76
400	do	76	
100	do	b30	76
100	do	76½	
100	do	75½	
36	do	75	
500	Alton & T. Haute R. R.	52	
50	Alt. & T. Haute Pref.	70	
50	do	77½	
900	Chi. & N. West. R. R.	35	
1050	do	35½	
200	do	b10	35½
500	do	35½	
100	do	b3	35½
100	do	b10	33½

SALES AT THE PUBLIC BOARD AT 4 P. M.

10,000	7-3-10 Notes	107	
10,000	M. & Mo. L. G. Bds.	64	
10,000	Chi. & N. W. 2d M. B.	69	
200	Cumb. Coal Co.	23½	
300	do	23½	
1000	Canada C. Co.	1½	
400	Brunswick D. Co.	6	
500	Pac. Mail S'ship Co.	190	
100	do	b3	190
100	N. Y. Cen. R. R.	119½	
150	do	b3	119½
200	do	119½	
100	do	b10	119½
100	Erie Railway	98½	
600	do	98	
400	do	x3	98
200	do	x10	98
500	do	98½	
2200	do	98½	
600	do	x3	98½
300	do	b3	98½
1450	do	98½	
100	Erie Railway Pref.	105	
550	do	106	
200	do	106	
300	do	105½	
100	do	b3	105
200	do	105½	
100	Harlem RR.	95½	
500	do	96	
200	Chic. & R. I. R. R.	99½	
200	Cleve. & T. R. R.	112½	
600	do	x3	113½
400	Mich. So. & N. Ind. RR	83½	
500	do	83½	
200	do	x3	83½
200	do	83½	
500	Cent. & N. W. R. R.	38	
100	do	b3	38
100	do	x60	38½
100	do	x3	38
100	Chi. & Alton R. R.	78½	
300	do	78½	
100	do	78½	
100	Mil. & P. du C. R. R.	59½	
200	do	59½	
100	Harlem RR.	95½	
500	do	96	
200	Gal. & Chic. RR.	104	
50	do	104½	
100	do	x5	104½
300	do	104½	

TUESDAY, May 12—P. M.

The Stock market at the Morning Board was irregular, but the general tendency was downward for shares. The operators seemed to have the impression that the rise had touched its zenith, and sold largely to realize profits. The buying was well distributed, but the supply of stock of several descriptions was larger than the market could absorb, and shares generally were ¼ to 4 ₱ cent decline. In Governments the movement was without important features, but quotations were firm. After the Board, new buyers came in for shares, and the market became buoyant, and advanced 1 to 2 ₱ cent for some of the prominent faucies. At the Second Board the market was very much excited, and the reaction from the heaviness of the morning Board was marked. All the prominent shares were in demand at advancing prices. Fort Wayne recovered 3 ₱ cent of the decline of the earlier session, selling at 78¼@79. Harlem advanced 1½ ₱ cent, Illinois Central 1½ ₱ cent, Pittsburg 1½ ₱ cent, Galena 1½ ₱ cent, Rock Island 1½ ₱ cent, Pacific Mail 1½ ₱ cent, Erie 1½ ₱ cent, &c. The most buoyant stocks of the day have been Prairie du Chien, which has advanced 8 ₱ cent during the day; Missouri and Mississippi, which has advanced 3½ ₱ cent, and North-Western, which has advanced 4 ₱ cent. The whole street and outside public seem to be buyers of shares, under the great abundance of money and the increasing prosperity of the companies. Government securities at the Second Board were firm, but not very active. At the 4-o'clock call the market was much excited, and the transactions unusually large at full prices. Erie was very active at 2½ ₱ cent advance. Prairie du Chien advanced 1 ₱ cent, North Western ½ ₱ cent, Pittsburg 1 ₱ cent, Galena ½ ₱ cent, Fort Wayne ½ ₱ cent, Pacific Mail ½ ₱ cent, &c. At the close the market was a little irregular, but had a general upward tendency. The latest quotations were: U. S. 6s of 1881, Reg., 107½@108; U. S. 6s, 1881, Coupons, 107½@108; Oregon War Loan, half-yearly, 104@105; U. S. Treasury Notes, 7 3-10, 107½@108; U. S. 1-year Certificates, 6s, 99@99½; Demand Notes (old issue), 147½@147½; Tennessee State 6s, 60@60½; Missouri State 6s, 63½@63½; American Gold, 149½@149½; Pacific Mail Steamship Company, 189½@190; New-York Central Railroad, 118⅞@118⅞; Erie Railway, 91½@99½; Erie Railway Preferred, 105½@105½; Harlem Railroad, 96@96½; Harlem Railroad, Preferred, 108½@108½; Reading Railroad, 103⅞@104; Michigan Central Railroad, 110@110½; Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana Railroad, 83½@83⅞; Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana Railroad, Guaranteed, 113½@113⅞; Illinois Central Railroad, 100½@100¾; Cleveland and Pittsburgh Railroad, 99⅞; Galena and Chicago Railroad, 104½@104¾; Cleveland and Toledo Railroad, 112½@112¾; Chicago and Rock Island Railroad, 99½@99¾; Milwaukee and Prairie du Chien, 59½@60; Fort Wayne, 78⅞@79; Chicago and North-Western, 38@38½.

In Exchange there has been a fair amount of business, and the market is firm. Sterling has sold at 163@164, and Francs at 3.45, closing at 3.35@3.40.

Freights are fairly active and slightly firmer. To Liverpool the engagements are 30,000 bush. Corn at 7@7¼d., in bulk and bags; and per neutral flag 100 bbls. Pork at 4s.; 1,000 boxes Bacon at 27s. 6d. @ 30s.; and per steamer, 1,000 boxes Bacon at 30s., and 2,000 do. Cheese at 60s. To London—1,000 bbls. Flour at 2s. 6d.; 1,000 boxes Bacon at 25s., and per neutral flag, 500 boxes do. at 32s. 6d. To Glasgow, per neutral flag—250 tcs. Lard at 32s. 6d., and 30 tuns Wood at 30s. To Hamburg, per steamer—40 hhds. Tallow at 35s. The charters are a Russian bark to Cork for orders, with Wheat, at 11½d., and a British bark to the same port for orders with Petroleum Oil at 7s. 6d.

The business of the Sub-Treasury was: Receipts, $2,630,994 64—for Customs, $188,000; Payments, $2,916,359 21; Balance, $23,166,165 80.

The receipts of the Harlem Road for the month of April are as follows:

1862	$94,957 56
1863	113,075 10
Increase	$23,117 54

The Galena and Chicago Road earned the first week in May:

1862	$28,762
1863	29,702
Increase	$940

The Michigan Southern shows the same week a gain of about $8,000.

The Rock Island Road earned, the first week in May:

1862	$22,400
1863	$31,800
Increase	$9,400

The Illinois Central traffic in the first week of May was double that of last year:

May, 1863	$63,000
May, 1862	$31,146
Increase	$31,854

The cash collections in the Land Office from the 1st to the 8th were $30,119 73. The sales were very large; upward of 120 purchasers, amounting to $71,123.

The April earnings of the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne and Chicago Railroad were:

1863	$464,186
1862	259,052
Increase	$205,134

Notwithstanding this enormous increase, the earnings of the Fort Wayne are yet in their infancy. The net results of April are much larger in proportion than any other month, partly owing to the stocking the receipts with the Cleveland and Pittsburgh Railroad, which prevents competition, and of course works equally beneficially to the Cleveland and Pittsburgh Company. The earnings of the Cleveland and Pittsburgh Road for April are reported to be $170,000. They receive 26 ₱ cent of the Fort Wayne earnings, which, for April, amounted to $116,046. On these figures the Cleveland and Pittsburgh Company will earn 10 ₱ cent dividends.

The following is a statement of the earnings of the Chicago and Alton Railroad Company:

	Week ending May 7. 1863.	1862.	From Jan. 1 to May 7. 1863.	1862.
Passengers	$10,416 74	$6,973 2	$186,159 26	$122,235 55
Freight	21,448 31	12,034 90	269,569 41	170,402 69
Sundries	974 33	899 33	22,500 03	16,625 32
	$32,839 38	$19,907 95	$477,668 72	$309,292 76
Military to April 30			37,620 69	91,980 42
Total	$32,839 38	$19,907 95	$517,289 41	$401,273 18
Increase	$12,931 43		$116,016 23	

The Michigan Central Road earned the first week in May,

1862	$44,161
1863	48,799
Increase	$4,638

The Pacific Mail Steamship Company have declared a quarterly dividend of 5 ₱ cent (free of Government tax) payable on and after the 22d inst.

The exchanges at the Clearing-House this morning were $58,999,873 78.

The Bohemian brings advices from London to the 1st inst. The bank rate of interest is reduced to 3 per cent. The bullion in the bank had decreased £38,000 during the week. Consols closed at 93½@93¾. American Securities are noticed as firmer. Erie shares 46@47 per cent; Illinois Central 44½@43½ discount. The sales of Cotton at Liverpool for the week were 20,000 bales—prices being ⅛@¼d. ₱ lb lower, but closing with a little more firmness. Breadstuffs without much activity had an upward tendency.

The deposits to-day with the Sub-Treasurer for conversion into five-twenties, reach two millions of dollars. The entire amount of conversions exceeds seventy millions. The receipts of the Government are now so nearly equal to its needs that no further issue of greenbacks or postal currency is being made, and the entire force of the engraving companies is employed upon the five-twenty bonds. Both the National and American Bank Note Companies are now engaged upon models for the National currency and the three year bonds.

The aggregate export of produce and merchandise (exclusive of specie), for the past week, was $2,879,143.

Gold without much activity, is rather higher at the close than the latest quotation of yesterday. The last price is 149¼@149¾.

The Money market is again abundantly supplied and borrowers have no difficulty in obtaining all they need at 5@6 per cent, while some transactions have been made as low as 4 per cent with leading borrowers.

At the election of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Co., the following Board was elected: For Managers—Wm. S. Herriman, Charles N. Talbot, Edward J. Woolsey, G. Talbot Olyphant, Robert Ray, Samuel B. Schieffelin, Abiel A. Low, Robert L. Kennedy, James M. Halsted, LeGrand B. Cannon, John L. Aspinwall, John J. Crane, James R. Taylor.

At the annual meeting of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Co., held to-day, the following report was distributed:

STATEMENT *of the business of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Co. for the year ending March 1, 1863.*

To coal on hand March 1, 1862	$354,446 60
Mining coal	747,936 12
Railroad transportation and repairs	341,592 86
Canal repairs and superintendence	409,589 12
Freight of coal on canal	634,280 84
Labor and expenses at Rondout	63,551 10
Rent, salaries, current expenses, &c., New-York office	38,249 77
Coal yard and harbor expenses, taxes, interest, &c	299,871 15
Depreciation, account losses, &c	33,913 52
Balance	959,450 11
Total	$3,673,234 59
By sales of coal to March 1, 1863	$2,908,570 12
Canal and railroad tolls collected	316,376 97
Miscellaneous profits	102,643 25
Coal on hand at Honesdale, Rondout and New-York, and on line of canal	345,644 25
Total	$3,673,234 59
Balance	$959,450 11

—equal to 11½ per cent on the stock.

The Board has decided to pay the next dividend at the usual time in June, but thereafter the dividends will be published on the first Mondays of February and August. The Bonds of the Company for $300,000—issued in 1858—will fall due on the 1st of June next, and will then be paid out of the Sinking Fund.

Pursuant to a resolution adopted by the stockholders of the New-York and New-Haven Railroad, at their last annual meeting, the Board of Directors have this year prepared their usual report one week in advance of the next regular meeting. The transportation business of the company during the past year has resulted as follows, viz.:

RECEIPTS.

From passengers	$801,754 18
From freight	166,614 73
From mails, expresses, &c	68,068 83
Total	$1,036,437 77

EXPENSES.

On transportation account	$222,372 91
For repairs of roadway, &c	109,535 84
For repairs of equipment	137,069 61
For fuel, oil and waste	83,830 62
For haulage by horse power	29,552 60
Total	$582,351 58
Leaving as earnings on transportation	$454,086 19

The resources of the year, and the disposition of the same, have been as follows, viz:

By cash on hand, April 1, 1862	$118,643 23
By mortgage bonds sold at par	110,000 00
By increase of accounts payable	73,276 45
By earnings on transportation business	454,096 19
Total	$756,015 92
To coupons, for the year	$129,120 00
To losses on existing Canal Road	20,349 34
To dividends paid during the year	360,000 00
To increase of materials on hand	2,297 16
To what extension at New-Haven	153 66
To engine and cars less old engines and cars sold	2,069 94
To cash on hand, April 1, 1863	242,025 84
Total	$756,015 92

Four dividends, of 3 per cent each, were paid during the past year; but of these, two were paid from earnings of previous years. During the year ending March 31, 1862, one dividend was passed over, and a cash surplus therefor remained in hand of more than $90,000, which was soon after increased by the sale of $110,000 of mortgage bonds at par, disposed of to replace so much of the earnings of 1860, used toward retiring an old issue of bonds maturing at this time. The last two dividends paid were made from the earnings of the past year, still leaving sufficient means for one further dividend, which has been declared and paid subsequent to the preparation of this year's report. The result of the year's business, as by itself, is as follows, viz:

Earnings of the road as above	$1,036,437 77
Expenses	582,341 58
Profits	$454,096 19
Canal road loss for the year	$20,349 34
Coupons payable	129,120 00
	149,469 34
Leaving applicable to dividends	$304,626 85

It will thus be perceived that the expenses amounted to 56 3-10ths per cent of the receipts, and the earnings applicable to dividends amounted to nearly 10 1-6 per cent on the capital stock. The business of the road the past year has been larger than during any corresponding period since its organization, and 25 per cent over the traffic of 1862. But the new passenger and dividend tax of 3 per cent, and the enlargement of State taxes, together with the advanced price of materials used and labor required, will necessarily increase the expenses of the company, and may demand a corresponding increase in rates of traffic.

The litigations in relation to the fraudulent stock issued by Robert Schuyler remain in very much the same condition as at the date of the last report. The famous "Omnibus" suit is on the calendar for the present May term of the Supreme Court, and may perhaps be heard. A considerable number of additional suits have been commenced in the Courts of New-York and Connecticut, for damages by reason of alleged negligence, growing out of those frauds, but none of these have yet been brought to trial. The case of Woodruff & Henning against the Company, in the Superior Court in the City of New-York, which directly involved that question, and in which it was decided, at the Special Term by Judge Woodruff, and at the General Term before a full Bench, that the Company was not liable, has been appealed to the Court of Appeals by the plaintiffs; but owing to the crowded state of the calendar of that Court, it has not been reached for argument.

During the past year there have passed over the road 1,252 freight trains and 6,372 passenger trains, the latter conveying 1,174,171 passengers; and during the past seven years, ending March 31, 1863, more than seven and a half millions of passengers have been conveyed over this road, without causing the loss of a single life or limb of any passenger carried.

The loss to this Company by operating the Canal Railroad, which last year amounted to $20,349 34, has this year been reduced to $20,349 34, with flattering prospects that it will be still further lessened during the ensuing year.

The following table will compare the present condition of the banks of the City of New-York with that at the close of the corresponding week last year:

	May 10, 1862.	May 9, 1863.		
Discounts	$130,948,211	$130,114,903	Inc.	$41,166,772
Specie	32,220,668	36,182,633	Inc.	5,862,765
Circulation	8,830,321	7,090,565	Dec.	1,749,756
Gross deposits	145,744,795	227,910,135	Inc.	82,165,340
Net deposits	119,259,279	166,096,513	Inc.	51,097,327
Capital	69,051,505	69,186,505	Inc.	134,950

The land-grant bondholders of the late La Crosse and Milwaukee Railroad Company have organized a new corporation called the Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Company. The Milwaukee papers report Justice Miller of the United States Supreme Court, before whom a bill of review was brought, as deciding everything in favor of the land-grant bondholders, remarking that if it became necessary he should find that the Milwaukee and Minnesota Railway Company had not interest enough in the property to make any questions. The report of the case in *The Milwaukee Sentinel* of the 8th inst. explains the legal position of the parties, which, being interpreted, means that the land-grant bondholders, under the name of the Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Company, have possession of the western division of the railroad (one hundred and five miles), all of the rolling stock (subject to the first mortgage eastern division, and the City of Milwaukee mortgage, on neither of which is anything due), and the exclusive franchise or only right, except such as the receiver has, to operate the whole road.

The leading article from S. Hallett & Co.'s Circular, for the steamer, is an examination of the plea by which the building and equipment of corsairs for the Confederate service is justified in Parliament?

To the complaints of the American Government and people, that corsairs are built and fitted out in England, in the service of the Confederacy, to prey on our lawful commerce, the ready answer across the water has been: "Why, you yourselves have bought large quantities of arms and ammunition, and have even attempted to buy vessels of war equipped and armed for your own service." Both these averments were made by Mr. Laird, in the House of Commons, on the 27th of March, the latter being received with cheers and laughter. Mr. Laird's statement in reference to his being applied to by agents of the United States Government was made with caution, but he certainly meant, as an offset to his agency in building and equipping the Alabama for the Confederates, to convey the impression that early in 1861 the Navy Department at Washington, "through its agents" in England, made application to Mr. Laird's house to build one or two iron-clads. So Mr. Laird was understood by his hilarious colleagues in the House of Commons and by the English press.

Whether Mr. Laird was willing to deceive the House of Commons and the British public, or whether he was himself the dupe of an adventurer, who pretended to be an authorized agent of the Navy Department, we are ignorant, though charitably inclined to the latter opinion. But in either event, we assert, without fear of contradiction, that neither the Navy Department nor any one authorized by it ever made, or even contemplated, a proposal for a vessel of war to be built abroad, but that it was always deemed unwise and inexpedient by the Department to adopt that course. When Mr. Laird, instead of culling sentences and parts of sentences from the letters of his correspondent, will publish them at length, with a truthful narrative of the entire affair in question, either the letters will show of themselves how little authority there is for his statements, or it will soon be proved in the most satisfactory manner that he has himself been imposed upon.

Mr. Laird closes his rather oracular explanations by a compassionate fling at the state of law in this country. He probably alludes to the summary arrest and detention of traitors and those sympathizing with them. It is true we are rather a practical people, and in very urgent cases are in the habit of shutting the barn door before the mare is stolen. But however we may treat our own people (and on that subject we really think the opinions entertained in the Cabinet at Washington as likely to be correct as those which prevail in Mr. Laird's shipyard at Liverpool), it has never been charged upon us that, in what concerns our duty to friendly foreign states, our laws are "almost a dead letter."

Thus the palliation attempted by Mr. Laird for his complicity in fitting out the Alabama, viz., that he had been applied to by the agents of the Government of the United States for the same service, wholly fails.

No such application was ever made to him, and the recent efforts of the British Government to put a stop to similar proceedings are a sufficient proof that the Law officers of the crown are of opinion that, in the building and equipping of vessels to prey upon the commerce of a friendly power, he has been guilty of a violation of the Foreign enlistment act. If, as Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell have intimated, by sending the armament and ammunition to be taken on board the corsair at a foreign port, it becomes difficult to bring the building and equipment of the vessel within the provisions of the Foreign Enlistment act, that circumstance only proves that this act, like the four older ones of which it was an amendment, needs itself to be amended. Whether Lord Palmerston's reason is a good one for not allowing it to be amended, viz: that he lost his office in 1856, in consequence of a similar attempt to amend the criminal law, must be left to the impartial judgment of jurists and statesmen.

What then is the other fact, by which Mr. Laird justifies his complicity in building and fitting the Alabama for sea? It is this, that there have been purchased in open market in England, entered without disguise at the Custom-House for exportation, and shipped to America, since the war began, considerable quantities of arms and munitions of war for the service of the United States. The quantity to be sure was enormously over-estimated by Lord Russell, when he represented it as forming a very large part of the *material* employed by the Federal Government. This, however, is of no consequence, except as showing a willingness to strengthen an argument against the Government of the United States. We admit that in principal it is immaterial whether little or much has been imported into this country. Why should it not be? Such importation contravenes neither English law, nor American law, nor the law of nations.

In the very debate in question of the 27th March, the Solicitor-General quotes authorities from Gen Hamilton, Mr. Webster, and Gen. Pierce to the effect that trade through the accustomed channels, "in articles contraband of war, is free to all parties, and not to be interfered with," and he alludes to these authorities as conforming to the received principles of international law. And yet the fact that articles of this description have been, since the commencement of the war, imported into the United States, is flung in our faces when we complain that, in violation of their own law and the law of nations, their members of Parliament, under pretense of building trading vessels for the Kingdom of Italy and the Emperor of China, really build and equip corsairs to prey on our commerce.

In one and the same debate we are taunted with American authorities to prove that the purchase of articles contraband of war is lawful; and then we are taunted with our participation in this lawful trade, as if we were thereby estopped from complaining of what is admitted to be a breach both of the Law of Nations, and of the Municipal Law of England!

The manner in which President Pierce is cited by the Solicitor-General, for the sake of putting the United States in the wrong on this question is worthy of remark. He cites the following passage from the Annual Message of 31st December, 1855: "The laws of the United States do not forbid their citizens to sell to either of belligerent powers contraband of war, or to take munitions of war or soldiers on board their private ships for transportation, and although in so doing the individuals expose his property or person to some of the hazards of war, his acts do not involve any breach of national neutrality, nor of themselves implicate the Government."

At this passage the Solicitor-General's citation from President Pierce's Message stops, although the Message goes on to say: "But our municipal law, in conformity with the law of nations, peremptorily forbids, not only foreigners, but our own citizens, to fit out within the limits of the United States a vessel to commit hostilities against any State with which the United States are at peace, or to increase the force of any armed vessel intended for such hostilities against a friendly State."

The law of England on this subject does not materially differ from our own. We are, of course, not ignorant of the manner in which it is attempted to be evaded, viz.: that the ship is to be built and in all respects fitted for sea and for service at Mr. Laird's ship-yard, while the guns and ammunition are collected by Mr. Somebody else in some other ship-yard, and then sent to a foreign port, or some out of the way nook or corner on the English coast, to be transhipped.

Safe from detection by this partition of the job, Mr. Laird innocently affirms that the "Alabama" while building was open every day to the inspection of the officers of the customs, "who were on board when she finally left and they declared there was nothing wrong. They only left her when the tide left, and they were obliged to declare that she left Liverpool a perfectly innocent transaction." Such it seems was the opinion of the officers of the customs at Liverpool, on a graver question of international law; they probably pursued the study of this branch of jurisprudence at the feet of the Gamaliel of Birkenhead. So did not, however, think Her Majesty's Government, which, acting on seven affidavits and an affirmation, ordered the Alabama, too late indeed, to be detained; and you yourself, Mr. Laird, knew perfectly well that you had not been building a trading ship for Palermo or Shanghae. You knew that you had been building a corsair for the Confederate Government.

You knew it from the parties with whom you contracted; you knew it from the bankers by whom you were to be paid; you knew it from the build of the ship, from the extra provision for the protection of her machinery, from the strength of her trame, the thickness of her sides, from her port holes, from the traverses on which her pivot guns were to run, from her magazine, from all the points, in fact, by which a merchant ship is distinguishable from a ship of war. You knew all this, and you knew that when she got to a safe distance she would take in the armament for which you had prepared the fixtures.

There is no secrecy affected in these matters, as far as the building is concerned. The correspondent of *The London Shipping Gazette*, writing from Plymouth, under date of 12th April, tells the whole story:

"The screw-steamship Alar, Back, master, that put in here yesterday, brings decisive and important information in reference to the large iron steamship that left Greenock April 2, under the name of the Japan, and was said to be proceeding on a voyage to the China seas. Rumor then attributed her proclaimed voyage to be only a blind, and her real intention to be to fly the Confederate flag. The Alar's news confirms this rumor. The Japan is an iron-built ship, laid down to very fine lines for speed, about 600 tuns, and having engines from 200 to 250 horse-power. She has all the fixtures for carrying heavy guns, shot, and shell, and left Greenock with over 100 men, who were all shipped at very high wages, and in perfect cognizance of the real intention of their voyage."

This is what plausible Mr. Laird calls "a perfectly legitimate transaction." While the Government, being of course in profound ignorance of her whereabout, were telegraphing (it is said from the neglect of the American Consul to state where the vessel lay, though this is denied) to their officers at Liverpool to stop the Japan, she quietly slips out of the Clyde; steams over to the channel islands, and there takes in "twelve Whitworth guns, ten 68-pounders, and two 100-pounders with a large quantity of powder, shot and shell," which good Capt. Back had been so obliging as to bring in the Alar from New-Haven, on the coast of England; and thus armed, the vessel under the name of the Virginia, is now on the high seas upon her errand of piracy. This is precisely *mutatis mutandis* the history of the Alabama, and under the contemptible plea that he did only a part of the work, Mr. Laird, amid the applending shouts of the House of Commons, declares it a "perfectly legitimate transaction."

Even the Premier doubts whether, till the guns and powder are actually on board, there is any breach of the law. "Fixtures for carrying heavy guns, shot and shell," may be there, and the heavy guns, shot and shell may be all ready in another vessel; but inasmuch as gun-carriages, portholes, and magazines are harmless without powder and shells, and less much as guns, powder and shells are harmless without gun-carriages, portholes, and magazines, the Alabama has not broken the foreign-enlistment act, and the vessel that conveys the armament and powder has not broken it, and it is doubtful whether the law can touch any part of the concern. As for altering the law, though thus admitted to be "a dead letter," the Government and people of the United States are politely informed by Lord Palmerston that they are not to be allowed to make "political capital out of a fly against England," and that "they must not imagine that any cry which may be raised will induce us to come down to the House with a proposal to alter the law," and this because his Lordship once lost his office "by an attempt of that sort."

At the close of his speech Mr. Laird mounts the high horse, and having instructed Parliament and the world with his views of international law (of which the only defect is, that they are at variance with all the authorities domestic and foreign), he now favors us with a lecture on moral obligation. Honest Jack, when he quits the deck for the adder, usually shows himself but an awkward reefer; and if Mr. Laird's views are as unsound as his teachings on ethics and jurisprudence, the mallet and chisel will not be heard much longer in his shipyard. He really thinks, or at least he says he thinks, that building of piratical corsairs in the service of Rebels, who have not been acknowledged as a Government by any Power on earth, to prey upon the commerce of a friendly nation, is in a moral point of view far less objectionable than sympathizing with the Government of the friendly nation in its efforts to put down that Rebellion, which boasts itself to be founded on the corner-stone of Slavery.

His imagination glowing with visions of posthumous renown, he declares that he "had rather be handed down to posterity as the builder of a dozen Alabamas, than as a man who applies himself deliberately to set class against class—[loud cheers]—and to cry up the institutions of another country, which, when they come to be tested, are of no value whatever, and which reduce liberty to an utter absurdity." [Renewed cheering.]

We are afraid that Mr. Laird's fond hope that his name "will fly down the stream of time and gather all its fame," on the quarter-deck of the Alabama will not be realized. We doubt even if the contemporary world will agree with him in this new version of national ethics. It may be a very bad thing "to cry up the institutions" of another country, but really sinking and shelling piracy (and by the municipal laws of all civilized States, the Alabama is a pirate) is rather worse.

Mr. Laird's *naïve* declaration, that he had rather build twelve Alabamas (of course at a reasonable profit), than sympathize with the Government and loyal people of the United States, however warmly cheered in Parliament, will gain him no credit with honest men of the present generation or of posterity. We do not envy him the self-complacency with which, when he hears of the next capture of a valuable merchantman by