The Destruction of Rangoon, in Asia, by Fire.

[From the Calcutta Star.]

The following is an extract of a letter from Rangoon, dated the 29th of January, giving an account of a terrible fire which occurred there on the previous day. It should, perhaps, be stated that the edifices are, without exception, constructed of wood, and consequently, during the dry season, are much more inflammable than at any other time:—"I may, in truth, say, 'Rangoon is no more!' Yesterday, at 11, A.M., a dreadful conflagration broke out in the heart of the town, utterly defying every measure put in force to check its progress. The custom house, main wharf, Armenian church, and the principal merchants' houses, are totally destroyed; whole streets, of great length, present to the view heaps of ashes; and so complete have been the destructive effects of the fire, that old inhabitants have difficulty in pointing out the site of their former residences. *It is estimated, on a rough calculation, that at least 2,000 houses have been utterly destroyed, and the loss of property, at the lowest estimate, amounts to fully thirty lacks of rupees, while that of life is incalculable.* The fire extended about two miles in length, and one in breadth; and, in its fearfully rapid progress, communicated to a number of country cargo-boats, loaded with inflammable goods of considerable value. From these the fire extended to the shipping in the river. Nine vessels, of which five had completed their lading, were burnt to the water's edge, and the remainder barely escaped destruction, by slipping their cables, and anchoring on the Dalla side of the water. The schooner Thane, the property of Messrs. Crisp & Co., had a most narrow escape; but, by the skill and coolness of her commander and officers, was extricated from her dangerous position. Surrounded by burning vessels, her foresail and topgallantsail took fire, and were speedily burning from their respective yards; her bulwarks also caught in several places; but the flames were soon extinguished, and, I am happy to say, she escaped in safety. In the neighborhood of the Armenian church, the fire raged with inconceivable fury. Scarcely an article of any description could be saved, so rapid was the progress of the flames. A large portion of the natives saved themselves from destruction by rushing into the river, where they remained, deaf to every entreaty made to them to strive to arrest the progress of the devouring element. At 10 p. m., the custom house, in which was stored a large quantity of gunpowder, blew up with a tremendous explosion, causing death and destruction far and near; in fact, with the exception of a few mean huts in the suburbs, scarcely a single house remains of what once formed The large and thriving town of Rangoon. It is out of the power of language to express the misery and destitution that meet you on every side; the eye beholds whole families crouching in abject despair under the still smoking ruins, and thousands who have saved scarcely sufficient covering for the purposes of decency. A visitation so terrific in its nature, has never before been experienced in this town. Whichever way you turn, the half-consumed carcases of dogs, pigs, and other domestic animals, meet your gaze; it is altogether the most complete scene of misery and desolation that can be well conceived; and it will be many years, I fear, ere Rangoon again assumes its former importance as a trading port. The origin of this dreadful conflagration is somewhat remarkable. The Burmese ship Yathna ye Mahon had just dropped anchor on her arrival from Calcutta, when a native, induced by curiosity to see her, left a handy of oil on the fire in his house, and betook himself to the main wharf for that purpose. During his absence, the fire, by some unaccountable means, communicated with the oil, and in an instant the house was in a blaze, which speedily communicated to the adjoining habitations, and in an incredibly short space of time the whole town was wrapt in one body of flame. A strong eastearly breeze blowing at the time, greatly aided the progress of the fire, and rendered its extinction hopeless."

[This is the second disaster of the kind that has occurred to Rangoon. It was nearly destroyed by fire in 1814.—Ed. Herald.]

Fashions for March.

[From Le Follet—Journal du Grand Monde.]

The ball last week at the Elysée called forth a more than usual display of taste and elegance, affording us an opportunity of selecting a number of beautiful toilettes for the benefit of our readers. First, we would notice a robe of Chambord green brocade, covered with small broaches bouquets of lilies, the foliage of gold; these bouquets are large at the bottom, gradually diminishing towards the waist. The lady was a la Grèque; the sleeves were very short, and slightly raised en draperie, with a diamond button. The coiffure was composed of light leaves of shaded velvet, mixed with lilies of the valley in diamonds, brought forward on the forehead a la Marie Stuart, forming large bunches on either side.

A robe of tulle, with a double skirt, both trimmed with a wide bouillonne of tulle. The top skirt was raised on the side, with a chatelaine of pompon roses, formed into graduated rings, linked together and fastened to the waist. A berthe, covered with bouillonnes of tulle, descended en cœur to a point at the band. The opening at the berthe was filled with a bouquet of pompon roses, producing a complete parterre on the front of the body. The coiffure a la Valoise. The hair forming a roll round the forehead, with a wreath of pompon roses over it, and fastened behind the plait.

A robe of white droguet over a white satin skirt, open on the sides, and held together with a slight wreath of oak leaves and small gold grapes. This wreath descends from the waist to the knees, whence it is terminated by a band of leaves, mixed with gold grapes, which raises the dress. The satin skirt was trimmed with bouillonnes of tulle. The coiffure was composed of a plait of the hair, forming a coronet over the bandeaux, with a magnificent open-worked band of diamonds twisted round the plait. A necklace of a double row of diamonds, and ear-rings composed of leaves of diamonds, completed this splendid toilette.

Among the half-dress, or négligés du soir for theatre toilettes, we have noticed one of orange-red velvet, the body à la Louis XV., trimmed with black satin ribbon and light gold fringe, crossed over the opening of the body, and trimming the bottom of the sleeves. Coiffure, composed of a gold resille, fastened on each side with black broche velvet ribbon, with long floating ends. A narrow black velvet round the throat, fastened with a triangle of diamonds, with a narrow diamond fringe on the ends. A magnificent large black point-lace shawl is thrown over the shoulders, and falls gracefully over the arms.

Another, of white poult de soie, with two flounces form edged with a triple plaiting of satin, and ing a heading to each flounce. The body à la Louis XV., had an échelle of the same plaiting. Over this low body a small casque, with basques of white poult de soie, trimmed all round with plaiting to match. The bottom of the half long sleeves are trimmed to match. The fronts of the casque remain open, showing the front of the body, a wreath of myosotis, forming bunches onh eae side. This toilette was distinguished for its simplicity and good taste.

A robe of white moire antique, with broad satin stripes paridessus à Kazawek, with basques of white terry velvet, edged with three rows of narrow white gauze ribbon, with a lace edge. The front of the body was closed from the throat to the waist with a bow of grelots buttons of diamonds; bracelets of pearls and diamonds. A point of white blonde, fastened on each side with a white moss rose, fixed with two diamond pins, with drops of pearls and diamonds, forms the coiffure.

Apropos in speaking of toilettes for the theatre, we have remarked the great success La Villière coiffure meets with; it is composed of a black lace veil, rounded behind, and falling over the neck, an t the two sides descending like a scarf to the waist. Under this veil, just above the forehead, is placed a wreath of small brown velvet leaves, mixed with other long foliage; these latter are of gold, mixed with gold buds, which, being on elastic wire, tremble with the slightest movement among the brown leaves.

A lighter style is formed of a white lace veil, with wreath, of rosebuds, or branches of eglantine, falling on either side.

A most elegant coiffure is composed of a fichu o gold lace, the four points rounded; those on th side descending no lower than the ears; that behind covers the plait and reaches the neck; the front of the fichu reaches the parting of the bandeaux. The edge of this fichu is in points, having at the end of each three small gold beads, which give a Chinese appearance to the coiffure. A large bow of orange-colored ribbon, broche with gold with long flowing ends, terminated by a fringe of gold beads, is placed over each ear. This coiffure is called Mandarine.

Among the many pretty bords, we must mention one of dark blue velvet, placed on a resille of pearl beads, which forms the crown, and falls over a large bow of velvet, and pearl beads on one side; on the other, a single white feather, turned spiral, and falling very low behind. The beautiful materials at present *à la mode* are remarkable for their novelty and richness. We notice, first, a robe of sky-blue droguet, covered with enormous bouquets of roses. A robe of rose-colored droguet over a white satin skirt, trimmed with three rouleax of marabouts raised *en draperie*, with butterflies of pearls and diamonds; the body à la Louis XV., and the small sleeves are trimmed with marabouts, and fastened with butterflies to match. A wreath of Chambord roses, with some very small diamond butterflies lighting upon them at distances. Pink satin shoes with pink heels complete this toilette.

Most magnificent ribbons or beautiful flowers always accompany the light trimmings which ornament evening dresses. A young lady is never more beautiful than when dressed in one of those robes, so rich in their simplicity, and distinguished by their embroideries, form, and trimmings.

Of this last style is a robe of tarlatane, trimmed with seven flounces, deeply scalloped and worked with straw-colored silk. The same trimming, proportionably narrow, covers the berthe and sleeves. When worked with white silk, this dress is still more stylish.

White or black lace cancaous, worn with low-bodied silk dresses, are very much admired. They are open over the chest, and more or less worn with basques or straight trimmings round the waist, with half long sleeves, fastened up on the front, for the arm, by a ribbon bow.

Caps are composed of points, or falls of English lace, fastened with floating ribbons or bunches of flowers, and are the prettiest coiffures for demi-toilette. Caps formed of magnificent Valenciennes, mixed with coques of velvet or ribbon, are worn for "home" toilette. Among the novelties of the season we must not omit to mention the triple skirts now worn, which appear like three deep flounces, but more graceful, each falling quite independent of the other. On the edge of each of these skirts are placed three rows of quilled gauze ribbon, alternately white and pink. The berthe descends heart-fashion to the band entirely covering the small sleeves trimmed with ribbons to math. On each side of the two top skirts are placed bouquets of roses.

A robe of yellow crape with three deep flounces, with a heading of cut crape, separated in the middle by a rouleau of yellow satin; these flounces are raised on each side, with three satin ribbon bows, with long ends. The body cut square à la Louis XV., the front trimmed with an echelle of small crape ruches. The same ruches cover the short sleeves, descending half way to the elbow, with a ribbon bow in the middle. With this toillette should be worn a coiffure of long brown velvet foliage, mixed with lillies of the valley in diamonds.

A robe of salmon colored gros de tours, with the skirt covered with two deep black lace flounces, raised on each side with choux of satin. A black lace berthe falls over the sleeves and trims the sides of the open body. A small bord, trimmed with a bunch of small white feathers on one side, and on the opposite side long floating black velvet ribbon, completes this toilette.

As we have before stated, the rich materials, with colored flowers, mixed with gold and silver, are of great elegance this winter. Their price is such that none but the most richly dowered ladies can command them; and, we might add, that none but the beautiful should wear them.

Foreign Miscellany.

The American frigate Raritan was in Valparaiso harbor, sorely in want of music. We see she has advertised for five musicians, to apply immediately on board.

The Austrian army in the Papal dominions is to receive a reinforcement of 6,000 mon.

The Austrian garrison at Hamburg is to be reduced from 5,000 to 4,000.

M. Dupin, the President of the Legislative Assembly has been confined to his bed by an attack of acute rheumatism.

The Carnival commenced at Rome on the 22d of February.

It is stated that a convention has been concluded between Austria and Denmark.

Accounts from Bologna state that nine persons have been executed in that town for murder and robbery.

The Neapolitan King has formed an army of 120,000 men, to aid Austria in her designs on the Italian continent.

It has been calculated that there are at present 40,000 persons confined in their apartments in Paris by the prevailing influenza, exclusive of those in the hospitals.

For the first time since the revolution, permission has been granted for the procession of the *bœuf gras*, which took place in Paris on Sunday, three weeks ago.

The Austrian Cabinet is preparing to address a circular to the chief Powers of Europe. This circular will contain a lucid and satisfactory statement of the German policy of Austria.

Denmark proposes to enter into the Austrian Customs Union, abolish the constitution of March, 1848, and adopt a representative system of estates. In return, Denmark receives a guarantee for all her provinces.

The Spanish ambassador at Paris, the Duke de Sotomayor, has been recalled, in consequence, it is supposed, of his having paid unusual and uncalled-for honors on General Narvaez.

The town of Cassel is occupied by a battalion of Austrians and another of Prussians, in addition to three battalions, much reduced in numbers of Hessian troops. It appears that it is not the intention of the Prussian judicial courts to abandon the prosecution against M. Hassenpflug.

The first portion of the Turin and Genoa line of electric telegraph, reaching to the royal villa of Moncalini, has been completed. The line will reach to Asti before the end of March, and the whole will be completed in the course of three months.

A committee of English gentlemen has just been formed at Calcutta, under the title of the "Vernacular Translation Committee," whose object will be to promote the translation of standard works, in general literature, by English writers, into the vernacular languages of India.

The King of Saxony, by a cabinet order of the 25th ult., has established a new order of knighthood—"the Order of Albrecht." It is to consist of five classes, and is to be bestowed for services rendered to the State, and for distinguished merit in arts, sciences, and literature, and also for civic virtues.

Some little excitement has been created in Rom by a pretended plot on the part of the English residents, to assissinate the Pope. The plot was said to have been formed at the house of an English Protestant clergyman. The real concoctor was an old woman, a servant, who appears to have bamboozled the police to get a little pecuniary reward.

Several of the most influential members of the Assembly went to the Elysée, to urge upon the President of the republic the propriety of seizing on the present opportunity (after the rejection of M. Creton's motion) to select a definitive ministry. The President refused; he declared that he was quite satisfied with his present ministers, and had no intention of changing them for the present.

The Emperor of Austria held a review at Vienna on the 24th ult. The young Emperor was surrounded by a brilliant staff of one hundred general officers. A concentration of Austrian troops is to take place at Semlin and Altgraditzka, under the orders of the Ban Jellachich, to intervene, if necessary, in the Bosian provinces. A small flotilla will cruise along the Dalmatian coast, making Zara its headquarters.

Great sensation has been lately caused at Florence by an intended duel with pistols between two countesses, in consequence of a political dispute. One of those ladies had taken an active part in the war of independence, and the other is a fair daughter of the north, whose name is well known in the diplomatic world. The combatants were on the ground, and the pistols charged, when fortunately their husbands arrived, and put a stop to the affair.

A correspondent of the London *Times*, writing from Vienna, says, with reference to the system of espionage pursued there:—"What the 'secret expenses' of this government now are I cannot pretend to say, but that Austria is just now particularly well served by her agents abroad is undeniable. Every step of Mazzini in Geneva, and every project of the central committee in London, are probably as well known to the 'high' police here as to the parties themselves."

The Swiss journals state that a sanguinary conflict had just taken place at Matten, in the district of Interlacken, between the troops and a band of insurgents, in the course of which two of the former and eight of the latter were seriously wounded. Several of the insurgents have been arrested, amongst whom are MM. Seiler, ex-prefect; Michel, ex-director of the prison of Interlacken; Stachli and Ritschard, ex-substitutes of the prefect; Branner, formerly judge of the district; Indermuhle, ex-secretary of the prefecture; Rubini, usher of the tribunal; and Shasser, a medical practitioner.

An attempt is being made in Aberdeen to send out another expedition in search of Sir John Franklin.

The *United Service Gazette* notes a curious nautical fact, namely, that a ship in the Persian Gulf, in the course of twenty months, had her copper encased with living coral to the thickness of two feet.

At the last Court ball at Vienna, a lady belonging to a high noble family, refused, rather disdainfully, to dance with a young officer, decorated, but not noble. The Emperor, observing what had taken place, exchanged a few words with his mother, the Archduchess Sophia, and then addressing the officer, said—"My mother wishes to waltz with you."

Mr. Sheriff Alison, the historian, has been elected Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow, by the casting vote of Colonel Mure.

A company has just been formed at Gothenberg, in Sweden, under the direction of M. Fahlmann, merchant and vice-consul of Denmark in that town, for the purpose of getting up pleasure-trips to London and Paris. Several of these expeditions have been already organized for the exhibition of London, and not less than 500 persons are inscribed for the first. On their way home, the travellers will be carried from London to Paris, and thence to Havre, where steamers will be in readiness to carry them to Sweden. The delay in London and Paris will not exceed ten days. All kinds of expense will be comprised in the first charge. The same company has also the intention of organizing pleasure tours, at a moderate expense, from France and England to the most picturesque parts of Norway and Sweden.

A late traveller among the Ionian Isles says, the first thing he met at Athens was a Greek girl selling "Morison's Pills."

On Tuesday the Duke of Brunswick made a very splendid ascent in the Royal Nassau balloon, with the intention of making an aeronautic voyage to Germany. We hear since the voyage soon came to an end.

Considerable excitement prevails in the papal States. Some manifestations have taken place in Rome, but they were put down by the French troops. The Austrians are on the alert. It is feared that a serious movement will take place in the spring.

Land Ownership—"Leave to Toil."

"See yonder poor o'erlabored wight,
So abject, mean and vile,
Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil.
And see his lordly fellow worm
The poor petition spurn,
Unmindful, though a weeping wife
And helpless offspring mourn." Burns.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD.

Sir—Ask me not why a motto of the united Irishmen was "Half rent and no tithe"—ask me not why the military trend of "the hearts of steel," and "Tommy Downshires" woke the moonlight echoes of Armagh and Down, half a century ago—why half that time since, the "levellers" demolished the stone built bounds in which, under landlord's lock and key, lay the starving cattle of the defaulting tenant—why "the carders" transferred the operations on tow and wool to the bare backs of agents and bailiffs—why the mid-day rifle of Tipperary clanged on the still air a quick and startling death knell of landlord or his minion—why the peasants of France illumined their old revolution with the blaze of burning chateaus—why the serfs of darker Europe occasionally rise in fevered paroxysm, trampling to death the "lords" who have brutalized them—why the long delusions of Daniel O'Connell were broken in upon and swept away before the cool reasoning of Sherman Crawford, and the withering impetuosity of John Mitchel—why the same voice arose fourteen years ago among the half desert mountains of our own State, loudening and deepening till the portals of our capitol flew open to its approach, preliminary, I trust, to its entering the capital of the nation—why it has pealed in your own streets and workshops from 1844 to the present time, gathering strength and volume each succeeding year—why it has struck into sparks of civil war among our golden sands of California! Do not shirk the question, sir; answer it truly. Say it is an eternal instinct in the human race, that will not see why a landlord should, as Shakspeare has it: "cover the sun with a blanket, and put the moon in his pocket."

The fundamental right of every hungry, naked, and unhoused man to go and ask his mother earth (in the only language she will understand, labor,) to clothe, and feed, and shelter him, is so rational and philosophic that no sound thinker can for a moment doubt it. The wants of nature press upon us irresistibly and incessant; and if provision had not been made to supply those wants, man, perishing on a globe of rock, could raise his eye to heaven, and tax even his Creator with injustice. What, then, should his feelings be towards either popes or patroons, kings or congresses, who shut him out from his Father's heritage, rendering this fair world to him a rock of aridness and sterility!

The first great right of man to fall back upon the soil, to seek employment at the hands of nature, whose wages is fixed and regulated by God himself, has never, so far as I am instructed, formed more than a secondary article in the creed of Mr. Greeley, or the communists, or the socialists. Time after time, both here and in Europe, have they organized communities, and as often have rents and mortgages helped largely to break these communities down. Nevertheless, they do not appear to have understood the importance of having free land to base their experiments upon. The movement for land reform in this country—for redeeming American earth to its legitimate use—was not commenced by the socialists in this country. It was commenced by the homespun farmers of Albany county, in 1838. Doubtless, as good men as these have been infidel and socialist; but infidel or socialist these men were not. Theirs was not the ardor of the French youth bursting upon surrounding despots, to the soul-lifting voice of the Marseilles hymn of liberty. No; like the soldiers of Cromwell's army, three-fourths of their inspiration and their hope was drawn from the Bible. Of socialistic ideas they knew little, and cared a great deal less. The family and the individual home were sufficient for them, if they could only be permitted to enjoy those blessings in security and peace.

But this they were not permited. Lord ridden Europe had spawned upon our shores a dirty example of its aristocracy, in the shape of patroons. The trade and occupation of these patroons was to levy a tribute of "good marketable wheat" from every farmer; and, moreover, compel him to cut down and draw home the patroon's fire wood, and to fork over to the patroon a "quarter sale," being 25 per cent upon the price of every farm, every time it changed hands. The farmer was also bound to saddle himself, once in each year, with a bundle of live ducks, and deposit them at "any place designated, within a mile of the manor house," for the use of my lord patroon's table. This patroon also reserved to himself all "mines and minerals," "waifs and estrays," "kills, creeks, and running streams," "timber and fire-wood;" and, in fine, burdened the leases with such restrictions and penalties as left them entirely worthless in point of law.

You may well ask, "why did the farmers take such leases?" It was done in this way. During the first seven years of occupancy, there was no rent harged—none could be paid, as the settler's labor was directed against the primæval forest. This took many a "sturdy stroke" to overthrow its empire of a thousand years. The log-rolling, too, in order to get this ponderous wreck into burning piles, was rather more laborious than the similar labors now so fashionable among the "national settlers" at Washington.

The forest cleared, the cabin raised, and half a dozen fields fenced in, then arrived the time for taking up the leases. These were found to contain all the reservations and restrictions above referred to, in addition to the wheat rent originally agreed upon. Many of the settlers could not even speak or understand the English language, and took the leases just as they were offered to them, believing the patroons and their lawyers to be "all honorable men." To the shrewder men who remonstrated, it was replied that these things were a mere formula, designed to fill up the lease, and make it of a reasonable legal prolixity. If still unconvinced, they were told they might take the lease, or otherwise they must leave the farm, and with it all the results of their seven years labor. This settled the dispute. The farmer retired to renew his labors, shorn of hope and of security.

Now, if the sons and successors of these men should stand forward at the present day, and proclaim to the world that a piratical Holland Company, or a profligate English king, never had, never could have, legitimate authority over American land, which they had never either seen or set foot on—if they denied that congresses in this country had power to sanctify a wrong at once so absurd and so dangerous—if they affirmed that the Power who created these lands intended them for the free use of His free children—if they maintained, with Blackstone, that human laws, openly conflicting with the laws of God, were and are of no force or validity—if they averred, with the Congressional committee of 1844, that "tenantry is favorable to monarchy," that "freeholders are the natural supports of a free government"—if they hurled passive defiance at the landlords as the Irish farmers did at the Irish barons and their holy claims for tythe, they would, even from this high position, eventually triumph.

But this is not their position, and I am sorry that it is not. They merely ask that the courts shall decide whether the parchments of drunken Charles of England, and of the company which made its power out of piracy in the West Indian seas—whether these have been genuinely executed to the patroons, or are mere cheats and forgeries. If they turn out to be forgeries, then the farmers desire to become tenants, or purchasers, of the State. If genuine, purchasers, not tenants, of the patroons.

That is their position, as laid down in all their official proceedings. I think it is a very modest one.

But whatever may be their merits or their crimes, Mr. Greeley has very little to do with either the one or the other—with their origin, absolutely nothing.

No, at the time the farmers of Albany county were raising the free land banner, Mr. Greeley was too busy among log cabins and coon skins either to assist or notice them, for the first seven years of their political existence. When, after a seven years nonage, they grew sufficiently powerful to decide the elections of the State, it was impossible to overlook them any longer. That Mr. Greeley, since that time, has done considerable service to land reform, nobody is better aware of than myself. That he has been largely requited, in the triumphs of his party, is also well known.

With regard to national land reform, the question at issue might lie in a nutshell. By the present system of disposition, wealthy men may, for a matter of 70 cents an acre, acquire the absolute and unending ownership of the choice lands of the republic—with water privileges, water power, sites of future cities, minerals, and all else appertaining to those lands. The national land reformers say that this is a rather European policy—that if it is permitted to continue, it will sow this republic with the tares of destruction. Eleven-twelfths of the public domain is yet in the hands of the nation. The reformers demand that it shall be reserved so, for the free use of cultivators forever. In this they see the future wealth, strength, and glory of the republic—the present elevation of the working masses, who must now take long hours and low wages, because they have no other resource to fall back upon.

The national land reform movement originated in New York city, in 1844, and it was thundering through its streets for eighteen months before Mr. Greeley took the slightest notice of it. I do not mention the fact for the purpose of criticism on that gentleman, but simply to show that our paternity cannot be traced to so distinguished a source.

I know that you are not afraid or ashamed to let the truth be known. Then, tell the great men at Washington that the land reform force, national and local, never presented such a power as they will bring out at the Presidential contest of 1852. Tell them, too, that they are neither to be coerced nor cajoled into the support of any man who is not known, through his previous character, to be at heart a land reformer. Let them know that on this single pivot will turn the roll in New York State—that their destiny is in their own hands—that they may choose for themselves defeat, or victory.

Sir, I know it is a difficult task to

"Stem the torrent of a downward age,"

wring justice from statesmen who vote themselves $30,000 for sleeping a night in their beds at Washington; to bring to a sense of shame the men who vote away 20,000 acres of the public lands to furnish an "outfit" and "infit" for a single ambassador to a royal court in Europe. I know that, with slight exception—

"The name of commonwealth is past and gone
O'er the three quarters of the groaning globe."

I know that if duplicity, rapacity, and corruption forms any index to a nation's decay, our own "commonwealth" is following headlong in the highway of destruction. But I hope, sir, that God has not forsaken us: I hope that the last and brightest beacon-light that ever flamed above the rocks of time is not doomed to be cast down and trodden out, leaving the world to darkness and the nations to despair. Not so, sir,—there is some faith among us yet; but, as, "faith without works is dead," we shall work like thunder at the next presidential election.

Thomas Ainge Dwyer.

Williamsburgh, (L. J. J.) March 5, 1851.

Intelligence from Oregon.

We have received files of the *Oregonian*, published at Portland, O. T., to the 25th of January, inclusive:—

IMPROVEMENTS IN OREGON.

Since the passage of the Land Bill, a large majority of the farmers in this territory are making preparations to put up good substantial houses and barns, and extend their fields and operations in the various branches of agriculture. The neglect heretofore in Oregon, has been owing to the uncertainty which existed in regard to the titles to their claims. Another season will see many fine residences erected throughout the territory, and much of the lands now lying waste will be redeemed, and the desolate places made to "bud and blossom as the rose."

SHEEP IN OREGON.

Many of our farmers have not turned their attention to raising sheep, because they allege they have no market for their wool, or the increase of their flocks. This is a mistake. California affords as good a market for sheep as can be found in the world. There is no place on the whole Pacific coast where they bear as good a price, and meet with as ready sale as at San Francisco. They can be raised in this territory at a trifling expense, and shipped to San Francisco every two or three weeks by the Gold Hunter, and thus find an excellent market for the increase of their flocks. The G. H. carried down about one hundred head on her last trip.

REAL ESTATE IN MILWAUKIE.

Not long since a gentleman was induced to purchase some property in a small town located between this place and Oregon City, called Milwaukie, on which he was assured he could double his investment in a short time. After having made the purchase, he began to reflect seriously upon the advantages and disadvantages of the place, and became so fully convinced of the nominal value of his purchase, and the entire loss of his purchase money, that he became deranged, and is now laboring under an aberration of mind. He frequently speaks of his purchase as being entirely worthless, and unfit for anything. We learn, however, by his friends, that the property can be sold, but at a considerable loss.

WESTERN TRIBUTARIES OF THE WILLAMETTE.

The country lying between the Willamette and the coast range of mountains, is perhaps, as beautifully situated and well watered as any part of the territory, or we might with propriety say, as any part of the continent. The Tuality, which empties into the Willamette above the Falls, has several branches, whose sources are in the coast range of mountains, and running northeast and southeast, mingling their waters on Tuality Plains, and running thence east to the Willamette. Along this river and its branches may be found an abundance of fir and cedar, with alternate strips of prairie. Several mills have already been erected and are now in operation on the branches near the base of the mountain.

The next tributary of importance is the Yamhill river, which empties some twenty-two or three miles above the mouth of Tuality. It is navigable for batteaux within three miles of Lafayette, which is located at the falls just below the junction of the North and South forks. The valley of the North fork is small in extent, and not very well timbered, many of the farmers being compelled to go five or six miles to the mountains for their timber for rails. There is some oak along the hills which answers every purpose for wood. The South fork has a more extended and beautiful level valley. Along the banks of the stream may be found considerable fir and other timber, yet many farmers on the broad spread prairies, and along the foot of the coast range, are compelled to draw their timber several miles. The bald bluffs along the west side of the valley affords them plenty of stone, which can be worked to very good advantage.

There is a gap in the range of mountains separating the valley of South Yamhill from that of the Rickreal, through which an excellent road may pass, without the least perceptible rise. The distance from the crossing of Yamhill river through this gap to the Rickreal, is variously estimated at twenty to twenty-five miles. The valley of the Rickreal is gently undulating, and, to the view, is as beautiful a part of the country as we have seen. The want of timber in this valley will be seriously felt when it comes to be settled; but, when these extensive prairies shall become cultivated, this valley will be looked upon as the garden of Oregon. Many claims have been taken on the prairies by the last emigrants, but there are still a few more of the same sort left. There is considerable timber along the stream, so that those who settle upon its banks are abundantly supplied. The stream is by far the most beautiful we have seen in Oregon. It is from one to two rods wide, about one foot deep in low water, very rapid current, and a beautiful gravelly bed—the water as clear as crystal. The country south of the Rickreal has more timber than the north part of the valley, though mostly oak, which is not fit for rails, being scrubby.

From the Rickreal to the Lucamute is from twelve to fifteen miles. On approaching the Lucamute, the country becomes more rolling and better timbered. The stream is about four rods wide, very deep, and rather sluggish. The country on both sides sufficiently timbered for all purposes. There are no flouring mills on this stream—the one farthest south on this side of the Willamette being Nesmith's, located on the Rickreal, near the base of the coast range of mountains. The soil along the Lucamute, and between that and Mary's river, a distance of eighteen miles further south, is of excellent quality. There are many beautiful locations yet to be made in that section of the country, and we think if a man cannot suit himself there he is hard to please.

The town of Marysville is located on the Willamette, at the mouth of Mary's river. The site of the town is on a prairie, which extends six or seven miles northward; but timber is plentiful along the banks of the Willamette and Mary's rivers. The mouth of Mary's river may be considered the head of navigation above the falls at Oregon City, owing to very heavy rapids which, we were informed at Marysville, steamers could not get up.

In addition to the streams mentioned as the western tributaries of the Willamette, there are numerous small creeks and rivulets, whose waters flow into the Willamette, watering the valleys in their meanderings, rendering that part of the country desirable to those who seek convenience, comfort, and pleasure combined.

A new weekly mail route has been established, running from this place by Harris' Ferry, on the Tuality, thence through Chehalem valley to Lafayette, and then on nearly a direct line through the gap in the mountain, of which we have spoken, to Col. Ford's, on the Rickreal, Mr. Linville's, on the Lucamute, and thence to Marysville. This will accommodate our friends in that section with as good mail facilities as any portion of the territory enjoy.

LAUNCH OF THE NEW WHARF BOAT.

"The morning commenced most beautifully." The glittering rays of Phœbus shone upon the snow capped summit of Mt. Hood, which reflected the silvery light into the valley below—the wild beasts of the forest hied from their lair, and nature's children walked forth at early dawn to enjoy the "mild and lovely temperature" of the "pure and life-giving atmosphere," and reflect upon the great event which was about to transpire.

Saturday being the day for launching this beautiful craft, which was built here within the last few weeks, "a large concourse of people assembled from the surrounding country to witness the launch of a boat which must be of incalculable benefit to the interests of Oregon."

At about 3 o'clock, P. M., everything being in readiness, and the proprietor, Mr. Ankeny, on board, she was let loose from her fastenings, and slid down the ways, not "like a meteor from heaven," but like a thing of earth, in beautiful style. Her dimensions are as follows:—

Length	106 feet.
Beam	20 do.
Depth of hold	4 do.
Draft of water	1½ do.

She is to be finished off with storehouse on first deck, and office and warehouse for light goods above.

She was christened "Lot's Wife, of Oregon," by the committee appointed to select a name.

The music was postponed until evening, when the Jewsharp band met, and regaled the visitors with "Yankee Doodle," and other national airs.

A NATIVE OF OREGON.

Salem, Dec 23, 1850.

Mr. Editor—Please publish the following:—Another large turn up!—Christmas gift!—Burr—Mrs. S. H. Goodhue of a son, 25th inst. Weight 13½ pounds. If any one can beat the time and weight, please report, and I will draw off the tap.

S. H. Goodhue.

WHOLESALE PRICES CURRENT.

Portland, O. T., January 11, 1851.

Portland—Building Materials—Bricks, none domestic; lumber, per M. $30 a $40; shingles, do. $10; nails, $7 a $10 per keg; window glass, $3 a $4 per box; sash 8 90c. a 40c. per light. Candles—Sperm, per lb., 60c. a 70c.; adamantine, 50c. a 60c.; tallow, 25c. a 30c. Segars—Manila, per M., $25 a $40; Havana, $35 a $50. Cordage—None in market. Dry Goods—Sattinets, per yard, $1 25 a $1 37; 4-4 bro. sheeting, 15c. a 20c.; do. bleached do., 15c. a 20c.; 7-8 drills, 15c. a 25c.; prints, 15c. a 18c.; red flannel, 50c. a 60c.; blankets, per pair, $6 a $10; tickings, 20c.; cloth caps, per dozen, $12 a $15; boots, heavy, do. $36 a $48; do. fine do., $48 a $60; brogans, do., $30 a $36. Drugs and medicines—none wanted. Groceries—brown sugar, per lb., 15c. a 20c.; crushed do., 20c. a 25c.; loaf do., none; coffee, 22c. a 25c.; teas, $1 a $1 25; pickles, quarts, per doz., $7 a $10; do., half gal., $10 a $12; molasses, per gal., $1 25 a $1 50; vinegar, 75c. a $1; saleratus, per lb., 15c. a 20c.; dried apples, 18c. a 25c.; do., peaches, 18c. a 25c.; powder, 50c. a 60c.; lead, 15c. a 20c., scarce; sheet iron, 15c. a 20c. Liquors—brandy, per doz., $6 a $8; whiskey, 10 a 12; ale, 4 a 6. Provisions—flour, per bbl., $15; beef, fresh, per lb., 10c. a 16c.; pork, do., 15c. a 25c.; salmon, out of season; butter, 75c. a $1; lard, 20c.; cheese, 30c. a 40c.; salt, 4c.; potatoes, 5 per bush.

The Probable Drought of Next Summer in California.

[From the Alta California, Feb. 16.]

It is now past the middle of February. There are not two weeks of winter, properly so called, left. Not more than five or six weeks of the season usually looked upon as, and called, "rainy," to remain. Yet we have not had as much rain since the close of the last rainy season as fell in the first rain in October, 1849. From the present indications, and those which have prevailed for some two weeks, it seems more than probable that the "dry season" has actually begun. The cold west winds have commenced swelling in upon us from the old ocean, and scarce a hope remains that we are to have even the quantity of rain usual between this date and the end of March.

Under these circumstances, independent of our interest in the miners, and their prospects in the dry diggings, the question naturally arises, what is to become of the live stock of the country? Agricultural pursuits will undoubtedly suffer exceedingly in consequence of the want of rain; and the misfortune will fall very heavily upon many who have but just commenced farming, and have involved their all in the new undertaking. Wherever they have arranged their land so that they can irrigate, they may be able to avoid the ruin which a severe and long drought would otherwise inflict; for, however superior rain is to irrigation, the latter will answer when the former cannot be had, and good crops may be realized by its use.

But the question as to live stock has yet to be answered. The wealth of many of the people in this State consists in their stock. The life of their stock depends upon the supply of water and grass to which they can have access. In many parts of the country, the long season intervening between the close and beginning of the rainy season, even after the rain has been abundant, suffices, with its dry sun and hot winds, to make both water and grass scarce. What will be their condition by next September, should no more rain fall, is not difficult to imagine. The grass will be dead and worthless, the springs dried up. So much impressed that such will be the case is a large owner of cattle to the east of this bay, that we wot of, that we hear he offers to sell sixteen hundred head of cattle for thirteen thousand dollars, obligating himself to drive them wherever the purchaser may desire. He fears they will all die with the coming drought.

It is said that such seasons have been experienced here before, and that the cattle died by thousands, for want of sustenance, water and grass. How ought the rancheros to act, in view of such an emergency? Very little idea of improvement heretofore has been entertained by the people of this country, and that of saving cattle by artificial means, could scarcely have been tried, if thought of, so indolent, generally, are those who vegetate on these ranchos, like the weeds and thistles, and gophers.

Yet on many of these ranches, or stock farms, the means of irrigating the soil and turning water upon land which, without it, is valueless and herbless, are easily found. Wells can be sunk in places possessing considerable elevation, and water found at a point so much above the level of much of the land, that a stream might be turned upon it, and thus a sustenance forced from the earth to support the poor brute creation. In many of the little valleys among the mountains there are streams which never dry up, and which a slight acquaintance with engineering might enable the farmer to wield to his own will and the salvation of his stock and crops.

We understand that some have already commenced preparing for the approaching time of trial by examining and surveying preparatory to turning, by slight canals, the water of the creeks into new meadows, and for new purposes. It may be, after all, that this dry season, should it prove so, will be an immediate means of developing the resources of the country and the energies of her people, by forcing them to devise ways and means to make themselves, their flocks, and farms independent even of the annual rains. The irrigating precaution should be tried—the work commenced at once, ere it be too late.

The Discovery of Coal in California.

[From the California Courier, Februar 10.]

We have now in our office, says the San Jose *State Journal*, a specimen of coal, from a deposite discovered about fifteen miles from this city, by Mr. Vanderslice, who has purchased the property on which the mine is situated. The specimen seems to be of the quality called "cannel coal," not of quite so much density as anthracite, but equally useful. The deposite is very extensive; the work of mining has been already commenced, and it is but fair to expect, as greater depths are penetrated, that coal of a very superior quality will be obtained. The discovery of this much needed article, almost within our reach, cannot fail to entail upon us, as a community, the most beneficial results; and when our railroad shall have been completed and put into operation, one of its largest sources of revenue will be the transportation of coal to San Francisco. The mine is situated within two or three miles of the proposed route of the railroad.

Nativity of the Members of the California Legislature.—It is interesting to know what States of the Union are represented in the Legislature of California. I have ascertained the places of nativity of the several members, and I give them to you as follows:—Messrs. Thorn, Field, Brown, Richardson, and Bennett, are natives of New York; Messrs. Baldwin and Saunders are natives of Alabama; Messrs. Sisle, Hall, Kendrick, Welkins, and Bodley, are natives of Kentucky; Messrs. Bigler, (the Speaker) Bradford, and Lind, are natives of Pennsylvania; Messrs. Campbell, Crane and Merrit are natives of Virginia; Messrs. McCandless and Carr are natives of Tennessee; Messrs. Robinson, Carnes, Yeiser and Stearns are natives of Massachusetts; Mess