

the Petitioners that night, he thought it had been highly unwarrantable, and he trusted enough had been said to show that there was not the smallest ground for the ridicule of the Hon. Member.— This subject, so distressing and grave in its nature, had been treated with a levity of which he could not help complaining. He concluded by repeating his desire, that his Majesty's Ministers would, early in the Session, adopt the inquiry proposed.

Mr. J. SMYTH said he felt it imperative upon him to state some facts connected with the Petition which he believed were known only to himself. He was convinced that his Honourable Friend (Mr. Grenfell) erred with respect to the way in which the Petition had originated, merely through ignorance. He was sure he could not say an unkind thing of any of the very respectable characters whose names were signed to that Petition, if he were not misinformed. The fact was, that the Petition had originated with a merchant of the first eminence, of large fortune, great talents, and excellent character—a merchant who was not connected with any of those persons who engaged in speculation, but one who, if he did enter into such speculations, had means to carry him through them. With respect to what had been reported there of the interference of the Noble Lord, he could confidently say there was no truth whatever in it. He (Mr. Smyth) was called upon by the Gentleman he had described, upon the subject of the Petition, on Wednesday last. He was a person who did not take any part in politics, but if he had any feelings on the subject, they were not in favour of Ministers. In the conversation which he (Mr. Smyth) had with that Gentleman, not only the other topics to which the Petition was said to refer were omitted, but he could positively state, that the Bullion question was not introduced. The principle on which he (Mr. Smyth) was applied to for his support to the Petition was the decline of trade, and the failure of propositions which had been previously made in Parliament, with a view to the investigation of the causes of such decline; one of which propositions had failed, because it was said to involve political doctrines; and another, because the more unsharply entertained some erroneous notions with respect to the mode of ameliorating the conditions of the lower classes of society. The Petition before the House was, therefore, drawn up with a view to the exclusion of all political matter and all party feelings. Certainly, great exertions were made to procure signatures immediately, but that was occasioned by the lateness of the period when it was first thought of; for he could positively affirm, that until a day or two ago it had never been contemplated by the author of it. If, therefore, exertion had not been made, it could not have been presented before the adjournment of the House. As to his Honourable Friend (Mr. Irving), he was convinced that he knew nothing of it earlier than yesterday. He (Mr. Smyth) had been applied to, in order to name a fit person to present the Petition. He mentioned the name of the Member for Taunton (Mr. Baring), but that Gentleman could not attend. He then thought of another Hon. Friend, then at his right hand (Mr. Ellice), but for some reason he did not undertake it. It was afterwards that it was put into the hands of the Hon. Gentleman who had just presented it. As to the signatures, they were of the most respectable class. He was sure the Hon. Member for Marlow (Mr. Grenfell) had not seen them, or he would have been surprised that so many very respectable names could have been procured in so short a time. He trusted that the objections which Ministers had made to other proposals would not be found applicable to this Petition, and he thought that the immediate effect of its reception would be to afford a ray of hope to those who were suffering from the pressure of the times. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. RICARDO rose, and expressed the great satisfaction he felt at the application now made in behalf of so respectable a body as the Petitioners. But the inquiry, if adopted, to be effectual, must be a general one, and he could hardly see how they could avoid reconsidering the subject of the Bullion Laws, and the effect which had arisen from them upon the price of bullion, since their enactment. Various causes he knew had been assigned for this fluctuation in the price of bullion, but he thought them all inadequate to account for the difference. He was happy in agreeing with his Hon. Friend in the opinion, that an inquiry into the state of the Country ought no longer to be protracted. If the present opportunity were allowed him, he should like to explain some mistakes and misapprehensions which had gone abroad respecting the suggestions he threw out on a former night. It was said that he had proposed a plan for the liquidation of the national debt, which had not the merit of originality. He was not aware, that, when he stated that plan, he had claimed for himself the merit of being its inventor; he knew that, previous to his existence, there had been plans of this, as well as of other descriptions, submitted for public consideration, with a view to the payment of the national debt. He thought that he might have been permitted, without claiming any originality for himself, to have adverted to the plans of others, wherever they appeared to him wise and salutary—and to have expressed, with the modesty that became him, his own opinion of them to the House. (Cries of Hear! from both sides of the House.) No man was more aware than he was of the value of the time of the House, or had a less disposition to press his own unimportant observations upon them; but as an honest man, so long as he was a Member, he thought he had a right to express his opinion upon a subject to which he had devoted

as much attention as he was capable. (Hear!)— In looking at the financial state of the Country, the first thing that struck him, as entitled to primary consideration, was the inadequacy of the capital of the Country, as it was now applied, to meet the public or national debt. Then came the consideration of the cause of this apparent deficiency; and how the difference happened now in the means of the Country, as compared with former periods. On reviewing this subject, he thought it a clear principle, that when profits were high in other countries, and comparatively low in this, there was a natural tendency in the capital, where the low profit was, to remove itself to the country where its value was higher. This he thought was a principle as clearly capable of demonstration as any problem in Euclid. He would then ask, whether the existing system of legislation was a wise one, respecting this state of capital—and whether the movements of the Legislature had not rather a tendency to aggravate than to mitigate the evil? There were various instances in which he thought their acts had had this evil tendency. First, the Corn Bill, he was clearly of opinion, had aggravated the evil it was applied to remedy. That was his opinion, and however it might be received, he was bound to state it. (Hear, hear!) It aggravated the evil by its tendency to raise the price of an essential necessary of life—this increase of price necessarily raised the price of labour—and that, as a necessary consequence, diminished the profit of the agriculturist. The effect of this was then an increase of the evil. With respect to the national debt, his recommendation of the plan for its liquidation was pronounced chimerical; it may be so, but nevertheless he held it, and still thought it a good one. The particular promise of its reduction which was held out by Government, he thought unwarrantable; that opinion he had invariably entertained. He lamented upon this point the state into which the Country had fallen; but it was not invidious and unparalyzing lamentations that they were to spend their time—they were rather called upon to see how they were to get out of the difficulties of the state. (Hear, hear!) The only way, in the 2nd economical mode of getting out of the difficulty, was, in his opinion, to pay off the debt. Why did he think so? Because he saw the state of things daily withdrawing capital from the Country—the obvious effect of this was, to absorb the capital so removed from its liability to pay its proper share of the national debt. It not only, in this manner, absorbed itself from its responsibility, but it threw an additional burden *pro tanto* upon the capital not withdrawn; and did not this aggravate the evil? What appeared to him wise to be done in the present time was, that him wise should be lost in taking an account not a moment should be lost in taking an account of the capital, while it yet remained in a considerable and adequate portion in the Country, and that the amount of capital so estimated should be assessed, to get rid of the debt. He would willingly bear whatever imputation of extravagance was cast upon this recommendation, but he did not see any great or insuperable difficulties, if once fairly and fully entered into, of its accomplishing the ultimate end, and giving relief to the Country. It was a gigantic plan, he admitted—(hear!)—but he saw no better way of meeting the evil. The payment might be extended to four, five, or more years; it might be even done through the medium of a paper currency, issued for the specific and particular purpose. Suppose a cheque were given to each of the public creditors, and that this were payable for the taxes, no great demand or variation would then affect the regular circulating medium of the Country. As to the free trade, or protection, or alteration of protections, which a Committee upon the general question might hereafter recommend, it was impossible to say anything with precision. They might discover the wisdom of getting rid of many of the present shackles upon trade; but these changes could never be effected so as to benefit the People at large, by looking at the particular regulations affecting merely one, two, or three trades; it must be by the proper examination of the whole system, and by a slow and gradual, and deliberate alteration of that system, where its parts were found to require it; the alterations must be made by slow degrees, and upon deliberate consideration and demonstration of their necessity.— (Hear, hear!) He also thought the Committee should be empowered to see if other prohibitions than those generally mentioned ought not to be reconsidered; for instance, the Corn Laws.— Why should corn, more than wine, or cloth, or any other article, be subject to such regulations? On the question of the currency, perhaps, it would be as well to let the Bank go on selling bullion until they were bound to pay at the Mint price. This would be to break the fall, and go gradually & without abruptness to the beneficial end. The only modification he should think wise to adopt, would be to permit the Bank to go on paying in bullion, and not in coin. Why was the expensive medium of coin to be adopted, while paper, under a proper system, might be devised to answer the same end; while the Public might have a paper, secured at a regulated value, and convertible at will into metallic property. The Bank would then have the profit arising out of the interest of their paper, so long as their real capital commanded its circulation; and the Public, with the same security for the real value of the circulating medium, would be saved the expense of coin. The Hon. Member (Mr. Irving) had expressed his opinion, that it would be desirable to adopt two circulating mediums. To this opinion he could not give his assent—so far from thinking it desirable to adopt such a proposition, he would

say, that if carried into effect, its operation would be to bring back the Country from a state of civilization to one of comparative barbarism. The great object of a currency was, that it should be as invariable as possible. If there were but one circulating medium, it would be of course open only to one variation. If there were two, there would be the liability of a double variation, and the option of selecting one of two legal tenders; so that there would be a double operation, exposed to a compound variation, as well as uncertainty. It was impossible to have any standard, whether of gold or silver, without a variation. His opinion was decidedly in favour of having but one metal. The Committee should have his cordial support. It might lead to good, and, as he thought, to no possible injury.

Mr. GREENFELL, in explanation, rose to disclaim the slightest intention of personal disrespect towards any of the Gentlemen who had signed this Petition. If he had said any thing having such a tendency, of which he was not at all aware, he was extremely sorry for it. Until within the last ten minutes, he had not seen the Petition, nor the very respectable names subscribed to it. The observations he had made merely referred to the sudden manner in which the Petition had been got up, and carried about for signatures.

Lord CASTLEREAGH regretted that, on a subject justly described to be so comprehensive as this, so many abstract and speculative views should have been pressed upon the attention of Government in one accumulated shape. He meant to say nothing but what was respectful of the persons who had signed this Petition, and whose recommendation, of course, it only purported to be. The time would, perhaps, hereafter come when it would be more regular to enter upon many of the arguments that were urged in the course of the evening; but he wished now merely to state, that Government had not lost sight of the important interests which had been despatched upon, and that Ministers were now, as he knew his Right Hon. Friend (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had always been, most ready to receive and consider any communications which were calculated to ameliorate the state of the commercial relations of the Country. It was most difficult upon the mere statement of abstract principles to do more than see how far they could be applied to the general commerce of the Country; they may be in themselves abstractedly very good, and yet inapplicable or incapable of practical effect from a variety of causes. Nothing was therefore more difficult than hastily to disturb large interests and large capitals embarked in commercial transactions; such attempts, so far from realising good, would only augment distress and shake public confidence. If any practical view were submitted, it should have immediate attention. He could not concur in the necessity of embarking in a wide and general field of inquiry, like that now suggested by the Petitioners, on the mere statement of existing distress. If Parliament, on such a ground, which at any time might be urged in one degree or another, adopted such a comprehensive manner of framing the labours of a Committee, their application would be as interminably called for, as he feared their labours would be general, and, in reality, impracticable towards meeting the distresses that led to their formation. The Noble Lord added, that, respecting the bullion question, whatever were his opinions at the time of its discussion, there was nothing he should now so much deprecate as any reference to it; for the purpose of reconsideration. Parliament had decided upon it, and to their decision they were bound to adhere—any other decision through which the business of the Country was conducted. (Hear!)

Mr. ELLICE said, that the signatures were most respectable, but he thought that it would not be prudent or useful to embark upon a sea of inquiry. He expressed astonishment that Ministers declined to propose any plan, and left such an essential part of their duty to be performed by others.

The Petition was then laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.

The House, at a Quarter past Seven, adjourned to Thursday next.

The Waterford Chronicle.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30.

No Mail having arrived since our last publication, we have embraced the opportunity of presenting to our readers a large extent of proceedings in the House of Commons, deeply interesting and important.

An Inquest, which had been sitting in this City for some days, terminated on Tuesday with the following verdict:—

"We find that the deceased, Edward Whelan, came by his death in consequence of a blow of a shovel, received on the 6th, from James Barron, of Georgetown, in the County of Waterford, Esq. together with, and in consequence of, not having received timely medical aid, which was particularly necessary, and was not resorted to."—He died on the 23d at Waterford.

WATERFORD MARKETS.

The supply of Butter at Market yesterday was tolerably large for the season, and there was a sensible improvement in the price; first quality rated steadily at 80s. generally, and one prime lot of Carlow obtained 84s.; the inferior qualities, also, as usual on an advancing market, were considerably better than in the course of last week. There has been no material change in

Fig; a few good lots of Singed were sold yesterday at 42s. which still appears to be the best price for that description, except in very rare instances—and some of inferior quality, have been bought at 40s.; Scalded continue generally at from 25s. to 41s.—the 42s. was paid yesterday only to one variation. If there were two, there would be the liability of a double variation, and the option of selecting one of two legal tenders; so that there would be a double operation, exposed to a compound variation, as well as uncertainty. It was impossible to have any standard, whether of gold or silver, without a variation. His opinion was decidedly in favour of having but one metal. The Committee should have his cordial support. It might lead to good, and, as he thought, to no possible injury.

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PORT NEWS—PASSAGE, DEC. 27.

ARRIVED.

24th—Dutroel, Ship of War, Captain Gore, from a cruise; Pike, Ship of War, Lieutenant Hopton, from a cruise.

25th—Seahorse, Armstrong, Cork, ballast; Flora, McLean, St. Andrews, timber and deals, for Liverpool; Lion-Linn, Longair, Ayr, coals, a market; Liberty, Evans, Swansea, coals; Nancy, Evans, Ayr, &c.

26th—Surprise, Nelson, Bristol, no goods; Juno, Brown, Limerick, oats and butter, for Glasgow; Commerce, Griffin, wheat and oats, for Bristol.

SAILED.

28th—Rose, Lynch, Cork, coals, flour, &c. &c. Three Sisters, Kelly, from Dangarsan, Chester, &c. wheat, oats, &c.; Triton, Geiman, Bristol, wheat and oats; Avon, Jones, Bristol, wheat, flour, barley, &c.

29th—Union, Handell, London, wine, coal, bacon, &c. &c.; Victor, Ellis, Bristol, wheat, flour, &c.; Rose, Triplett, Penzance, oats; Lark, Lamswood, Portsmouth and Southampton, butter, bacon, &c.; Sassy, Wilson, Liverpool, wheat and flour; Mally, Horn, Liverpool, flour; Margaret, McGan, Glasgow, Irish marble; Bou-tr, Young, Belfast, barley.

29th—Put back, Margaret, McGan—Sarah, Williams, Mally, Horn—and Buntly, Young.

Wind E. N. E. at 8 morning.

WANTED.

A COOK,

Who has a thorough knowledge of Cookery, BAKING, &c.

None need apply who cannot produce the most unimpeachable Recommendations for Ability, Honesty, and Sobriety. Applications to be made to Mrs. Egan, Commercial Hotel, Waterford, Dec. 30, 1819.

CHANCERY.

ROBERT SHAPLAND CARPENTER, PURSUANT to the Decree, bearing date the 18th day of June, 1814, and the Order of the 6th day of December last, made in this Cause, I will, on TUESDAY, the 24th February next, at the Hour of One o'Clock, at my Office, in the City of Dublin, set up and sell by Public Auction, the Town and Lands of BALLYQUIN and CRUSHEA, in the County of Waterford, containing about Four Hundred Acres.

Dated this 24th day of December, 1819.

WILLIAM HENN, Solicitor.

These Lands are beautifully situated on the Sea Coast, about four Miles from Youghal, are of good Quality, and the present Lease will expire in about a Year.

For further Particulars inquire of Messrs. IRVING and MONTAGU, Solicitors, No. 1, Palace-street, Dublin, or Henrietta-street, Waterford.

NEW YEAR'S LOTTERY.

J & J. SIVEWRIGHT respectfully announce, that they have contracted with Government for the NEW YEAR'S LOTTERY.

TO BE DRAWN IN TWO DAYS, On the 12th and 29th of January, 1820.

FOUR OF £20,000!
And no Prize less than £10.

5000 TICKETS EACH DAY.

Two First Drawn Prizes, £20,000
Tenth Drawn Prize above £20 0 0 £20,000 IN EACH CLASS.

TICKETS AND SHARES,
Are now on Sale in variety at the following Offices:

RICHARD FARRELL,
STEPHEN PHELAN,
IGNATIUS FLEMING,
JOHN BULL,
At THE CHRONICLE-OFFICE,
And by the Agents in all the principal Cities and Towns in the Kingdom.

PLANETS which might create a Soul
"Under the Ribb of Death,"—MILTON.

LIFE PILLS, entirely Vegetable, discovered by the Rev. C. CARRINGTON, Vicar of Berkeley, one of his Majesty's Deputy Lieutenants, &c. for the County of Gloucester.—By increasing the energy of the brain, and pouring new life and vigour into the constitution, they enable nature to make incredible efforts for the expulsion of disease before organic destruction. In Catarrhs, Rheumatism, Anemic Gout—in Female Complaints—in Flatulence, Sickness and Pains of the Stomach—in Nervous Affections, the bursting agony of sudden Grief, or the deep Heart Ache of settled Melancholy—in every Spasmodic Pain, from the slightest Cramp to the most retreating Cholera, their stupendous success obviates all former remedies. Even in the most aggravated cases of Gout in the Stomach, they often arrest the progress of Death, and tend to a recovery—they restore to the dignity of man and parent the enfeebled and unwary votaries of pleasure.

A single trial will, in the short space of 24 hours, establish their efficacy to the Patient's complete satisfaction. Sold in Boxes, at 1s. 10s. & 4s. 6d. each, by BARRY & SOX, Bristol, without whose Name on the Stamp they cannot be genuine; sold also by W. SUTTON & Co., Bankers, EDWARDS, and BUTLER, London; JOHN BULL, Bookseller, Waterford; HOLYMAN, Cork; KRUSE, Dublin; HENDRICKSON, Kilkenny; and by all Medicine Vendors.

WATERFORD:
Printed and Published by BENJAMIN PERRIN, Chronicle-Office, Quay.
AGENTS for England—Messrs. NEWTON and Co. Warwick-square, London.
AGENTS for Ireland—J. K. JENNISON and Co. No. 1, Lower Sackville-street, Dublin.

sent; never had the press been so pure, so discreet, so virtuous as at present. As to the other part, which had been openly recommending murder and treason, and the least crime of which was its excitement to resolution, its offences did not deserve the name of political libels; its crimes were not equalled by the press of France, under the horrid reign of Louis and his associates. Separating the press, then, into these two divisions (he was sorry to use the same name for such different purposes), there never was any thing more praiseworthy than the one, or more black and horrid than the other. His object was, to confine the new law to the new evil, and leave the occasional indications of the respectable press to the old law. Whatever was nothing more impressive than to define the crime of political libel, shifting its properties as it did, and changing its contingencies in every case, it showed the utmost ignorance of legislation to attempt it. That it would be easy to define as libel, did not seem to be the worst crime of human nature. It was remarkable, that in the anxiety to push forward the present Bill, not only were many cases comprised which did not belong to the new evil, but many also were omitted which did belong to it. He would defy the Hon. and Learned Gentlemen opposite, to point out any clause which punished excitement to assassination; neither was there any provision against an offence which had been actually practised—a proposal for an extensive plan of forgery, for the purpose of raising public credit, and for bringing thereby, as it must, every man in the Kingdom to beggary and ruin. His amendments would meet these cases. The plan of the Bill, as it stood, confounded blasphemous and seditious libels with all others which could be committed in one scale of crime and punishment. This more than any thing would tend to weaken the horror of crime, and to confound all moral feeling—it would have the effect of imparting credit to bold and adventurous writers, who would resolve to defy its penalties.—On the other hand, nothing could be more unjust to writers of principle than to make them liable to the same penalties with the basest pack of scribblers ever known. The evil was again greatly aggravated by confounding the publisher with the author. A bookseller would stand within the same degree of penalty, for the sale of a work which he might even have enjoined his shopman not to sell, with him who should for years be employed in exciting the People to the commission of the basest crimes. This was to confound moral feeling, not to strengthen it. It would be said, that such was the fault of the law as it had stood before. He admitted it, and on that account he begged the House to again to enact the confounding and inconvenient principles of the old law. It would be a reasonable objection to urge against swerving from the ancient laws of a wise and flourishing Republic, but it was not argument for the support of mere political bigotry in such cases. A woman receiving an annuity from a newspaper at 500 miles distance, would be as punishable as the most turbulent and seditious author. If the Bill had defined the offence of a seditious libel, convictions would have been easy attainments; but if every possible offence which could be committed by man, woman, or child, were to be confounded, juries, witnesses, and prosecutors, would be anxious to avoid proceedings against a writer. As proof of the trepidation, the astonishment, and terror, into which the public mind had been thrown by the announcement of the Bill, he need only refer to the petitions of the booksellers, and persons connected with newspapers. Several petitions had been already received, and throughout the Kingdom many others were preparing or forwarding. No one could pretend that these persons were used to the commission of the crimes complained of, any more than the Members of that House. For some time past all political subjects had been chiefly discussed in the periodical press. This revolution in literature had been going on for thirty years past. Some politicians had from time to time raised an outcry upon it, and had wished to destroy it. A worse principle could not be offered to a Statesman on such an occasion. Let the House remember the language of Burke, when remarking on the distinction between a system of coercion and one of conciliation, and apply it to the case of the periodical press. Its power and importance had gradually increased; it had by degrees acquired the alliance and support of great and able men. These things could not be undone. The House might make that press its enemy, but could never make it absolutely powerless; it had gathered about itself many honourable and able men. He had witnessed all the changes which had taken place in it during the last thirty years, and he could testify that its morals, virtues, and regard for the laws, had been preserved in the midst of the most spirited party discussions. What would the House say to one man whom he knew, who had conducted one of the chief daily journals for forty years—who had in that time enjoyed the confidence of one of the chief parties in that House—who had thereby information and opportunities—who had the talents of his assistants at his disposal, and with no obstacle existing to his publishing the grossest and most offensive matter but his own character; and yet this man had never been presented for a seditious or blasphemous libel—had never been cited in an action for slander by private individuals, nor ever been convicted of political libel. He believed there were few men in Europe who could make such a boast. This was, however, with the difference of periods, which was in favour of the par-

ticular instance he had alluded to (which instance was that of Mr. Perry, of *The Morning Chronicle*), the general character of the Opposition Press.—Of the Ministerial he need say nothing—but he had something else to say for that press. In the evils which had lately sprung up, and which ought to be the only object of the present Bill, there had been a splendour and vigour of talent exerted by that press in repelling it, which was not known before. Abstaining some disputes, which had taken place in consequence of late melancholy transactions, the character of the press had been dignified and honourable, and now the House was about to confound it with that evil which it had done more to prevent than all the restrictions ever attempted by that House. Some absurd bewailings had taken place in allusion to the spread of knowledge, and especially political knowledge.—The circumstances and changes of society could not be thwarted or altered by that House; the order of the moral world was no more to be changed by them than the course of the planets. They could not call back the power which society had bestowed in the periodical press; they might make it address, but they could not make it impotent. The Bill would have the effect of driving away men of character and talents from newspapers, who were at present attracted to such speculations by their excitement and responsibility. This was not arranged by that House; by any former one nor could it be so brought about; it had been formed by circumstances—it could not be made, but it might be thrown away. Persons of intelligence, of education, and integrity, had attached themselves to such establishments; having directed those away, fools and fanatics would be let in; ignorance and stupidity would return—impudence and turbulence would succeed. He repeated it once more, never was a measure more calculated to confound good and had principle than that Bill. He spoke of it for deterring the House, and proposed his first Amendment.

Mr. CANNING said, that no apology could be necessary from the Hon. and Learned Gentlemen, as he never spoke without giving pleasure or information. He was sorry that his speech, excellent in many particulars, had prevented him (Mr. Canning) from feeling so impartially with respect to the Amendment. The generalities with which he had embellished his speech had caused him to take in wide a ground of argument, that he (Mr. Canning) found himself bound to dispute it with him instantly. The Hon. Gentleman had resolved the situation of the House, on the particular question before it, into the alternative of surrendering reason and the Constitution, or extinguishing the daily press; as it was, therefore, in spite of outbursts, which he knew he must expect, he must speak out. Let the House take the definition of the power of the press, as described by the Honourable Gentleman; let them remark in what situation of clouds and darkness was its dwelling, yet with how sure a bolt it smote its victims; let them consider, if any concession should be made to this power, what then would be the power of Parliament. This would be the despotism of the press, and not freedom. Against despotism of every kind (and he enumerated various, with their corresponding evils) he had the greatest abhorrence; but he had never yet heard, among all the imagined forms of possible potency, of any thing equal to that described by the Hon. Gentleman, which was to add to the greatest power enjoyed by any recognized authority, the certainty, in its punishments, of a Venetian tribunal, and the secrecy of the Holy Inquisition. And the House was now to be called on to allure that press to the defence of the Constitution, out of the bosom of which its own liberty had grown! He was certain that if such a thing had been proposed to the Honourable Gentleman by any acknowledged polity in the world, he would have been the first to shrink from receiving it. He (Mr. C.) admitted what had been said respecting Mr. Perry, having had several occasions for knowing how well he deserved it. But was the rest of the press so pure? He thought not. He could show an instance in which one Journalist had quoted a passage inciting assassination, and that, too, though accompanied by a comment, without condemnation, thus—“Observe, the assassination is conditional.” He was as ready as any man to admit the general tone of decency which characterized the conduct of the better part of the daily press, and to admit the respect to which it was fairly entitled; but in legislating to meet the great evil which now impeded, he could not look to the right or to the left—he must meet the danger, come from what quarter it may. Would it, he asked, be considered sound philosophy, when they knew that a volcano was ready to burst beneath them, to remain calmly in the silence of despair, awaiting its explosion, instead of promptly and wisely adopting those precautions which may take from the phenomenon much of its terrors? (*Heur, heur!*) Were they to be told that now the hour of public freedom was gone, and that Parliament was willing to withstand public opinion, and able for some time to resist it, come with what force it may? To this he would say, that never at any former time did public opinion bear so intensely in its operation upon public measures as it did at this moment, and through channels so adapted to give it all the force of which it was so susceptible. His Hon. Friend had complained of the length of the definition of the offence in this Bill, but his substitute was one still longer. He was ready, however, to add his Hon. Friend's to the definition already in the Bill, but he could never consent to abandon that which it contained already. It was

impossible to leave out those words which he found in the Bill to any thing tending to bring into question and contempt His Majesty, his successors, the Prince Regent, the Government, or either House of Parliament, without sacrificing the real object of the Bill. And for what was this to be done? To prostrate the formidable power of the press, which alone they were told, was competent to beat down the evil? Was Parliament to abdicate its functions, conferred for the preservation of the institutions of the State, and consign them over to the public press? For his part, he never could resign to such an ordeal the guardianship of the public liberty—that sacred trust which he was sworn to maintain. The power of Parliament was known; their faculties were measured; their acts were public; the eyes of the People were on them; and, in a few hours after their deliberations were concluded, they were known in remote corners of the Country; there was no cloud thrown around their proceedings. He knew the power of the public press; he knew that whatever little reputation he might be supposed to have lay at its mercy in what he now said; but, nevertheless, to that press he would never yield the supreme functions of Parliament. What belonged to Parliament they should themselves still exercise, in legislating for that Country the liberties of which they were bound to preserve.—(*Heur!*) He repeated his willingness to accept from his Hon. and Learned Friend his additional definition of the crimes to which it applied, and was happy to share with him the honour of assisting in framing the enactments of this Bill, and thereby conferring so much good upon his Country. No man he knew better valued temporary liberty than his Hon. and Learned Friend—no man he knew more anxious to defend it, or more capable of teaching its true principles to others. But again, he would state, that though he was willing to avail himself of his Hon. and Learned Friend's proposed definition, he would not consent to abandon another for it, and still less under the influence of what was to be expected from the public press in the event of a refusal. (*Heur!*)

Sir JAMES MACKINTOSH grounded the attention of the Committee to the grounds on which he had made his motion, and from the considerations of which they had been directed by the eloquence of his Right Hon. Friend (Mr. Canning), and the skill he had displayed in dexterously wanting off the real points to which (Sir James) was anxious to direct their attention. His Hon. Friend had created an imaginary person to combat, and who, as it seemed to him, came down to the House armed with the threat of the Public Press in the event of Parliament not attending to his warning voice. To struggle with this imaginary being, and depend thereon, which it never entered into any body's mind to be so foolish or absurd as to make, his Right Hon. Friend had directed the whole battery of the day's reasonings, while he had carefully evaded the dry reasonings of the arguments with which (Sir James) took the liberty to trespass on the attention of the Committee. That evasion was necessary to put down seditious and blasphemous, was a principle on which they were agreed; but what he contended for was, that the offence should be so defined, as while it answered every purpose of the Government in repressing the infamous publications through which it was committed, it should at the same time not involve the other and really useful class of publications which were the supporters of religion and liberty. Sir James then entered with considerable eloquence the necessity of making a distinction between the really respectable and useful conductors of the Public Press, and the ruffians who abused it by their blasphemous and seditious writings. This distinction had not been touched upon by his Right Hon. Friend, while he appealed with all his ardour and fascinating eloquence in the pride of that Committee, in the soothing and prepossessing strain of impressing upon them the necessity of supporting their own privileges from being overawed by the imaginary being that he conjured up to assail them. He (Sir James) would yield to no man in an ardent wish to maintain to the last moment of his life their rights and privileges; but that defence had nothing to do with the necessity of comprehending two different classes of persons under the head of one offence—one class of the first respectability, who were the defenders of religion and liberty—and the other the most infamous libellers of both. The Hon. and Learned Gentleman again implored His Majesty's Government to make this distinction in the Bill, and asserted, that when he had referred to the character and important station of the daily press, he had done so to enforce and illustrate his argument, and not with the remotest idea of using any weapon of threat, which he knew Parliament would despise, and which he was the last man in the empire who would presume to tender. To threats he would never himself for one instant yield, and that which he would not do in his own case, it never should be said he would recommend in another. He was an enemy to all sorts of fear, but of none, to use the expressive language of an Hon. and esteemed Friend (Sir Wm. Grant), more than that worst of all fears of being thought afraid.

Mr. CANNING lamented much that he had misunderstood his Hon. and Learned Friend, but he did think, when he had introduced the topic of the powerful weapon of the public press, it was never, within the memory of man, that there was so much more foul and more abominable slander written more every page of that infamous publication which it commanded—he did think, who such a description had been applied to it, that it could only have been introduced to create the impression he had attributed in his argument to it, for what it was the effect of that oracle of opinion so eloquently alluded to. His Hon. Friend could not blame him for falling into this error, for thinking justly he meant to impress them with the same awe for its character, that King Eadmer described the natives felt when they surveyed the Tappian rock.

Religious journals (except *the Spectator*), which were not to operate, he had only to say, that they were not to legislate for the person, but the crime, and that though he trusted in God for part of the respectable press would fall into the error against which this Bill provided, yet, if they did, upon their own heads must be the consequence. His Hon. Friend, in describing the qualities of fear, had forgotten to enumerate one fear, which was the worst of the whole. It was that fear of the fascination of fancied security which laid the victim in the jaws of the monster in waiting to devour him. (*Heur, heur!*)

Mr. BROUGHAM complimented his Hon. Friend and the Right Hon. Gentleman opposite on the torrent of eloquence they had poured upon this question, no small share of which was directed in Manichaean strains in praise of each other's great abilities. The Hon. and Learned Gentleman then, with great energy, justified the distinction for which his Hon. Friend had contended, and urged the necessity of its adoption to prevent the mingling together under one head offences so different in their nature, and applicable to persons of so distinct a character. The state of Europe, he said, leaves a discretion to the Noble Lord or his successor, with respect to the punishment of banishment, which might be abused to a frightful extent. He believed he was correct in saying that it was the practice of the Government of Germany not to admit any person into that country which he had lived—so that the unhappy and banished exile might seek in vain for an asylum; but under this Act the Government might banish the offender to any part of the world they thought fit to name; the effect of the law gave Government the power to banish him to Siberia if they thought proper—and he entreated the House to recollect who the objects of that punishment would be; not the affluent, but persons of humble condition and of dependent circumstances—the author who depended on his literary labours, and who, after committing one offence, would feel it necessary for his bread to run the risk of committing another. The boon of the Noble Lord was, he thought, of a trivial nature, when he changed the punishment from transportation to banishment, for he did think that transportation itself was preferable to banishment, where the poor and humble and unprovided was driven from his native Country, without means, to seek a precarious existence in another. He would entreat the House to consider the consequence of sending that description of persons to reside among those who were, and might hereafter be, the enemies of this Country. He spoke from experience. Who, he asked, were among the most interested, the most able, and the most active of their enemies in America?—The Irish exiles, who were banished from their native Country in 1798. Who were among their worst enemies in Paris? Who conducted newspapers there? Who joined the same time not involve the other and really useful class of publications which were the supporters of religion and liberty. Sir James then entered with considerable eloquence the necessity of making a distinction between the really respectable and useful conductors of the Public Press, and the ruffians who abused it by their blasphemous and seditious writings. This distinction had not been touched upon by his Right Hon. Friend, while he appealed with all his ardour and fascinating eloquence in the pride of that Committee, in the soothing and prepossessing strain of impressing upon them the necessity of supporting their own privileges from being overawed by the imaginary being that he conjured up to assail them. He (Sir James) would yield to no man in an ardent wish to maintain to the last moment of his life their rights and privileges; but that defence had nothing to do with the necessity of comprehending two different classes of persons under the head of one offence—one class of the first respectability, who were the defenders of religion and liberty—and the other the most infamous libellers of both. The Hon. and Learned Gentleman again implored His Majesty's Government to make this distinction in the Bill, and asserted, that when he had referred to the character and important station of the daily press, he had done so to enforce and illustrate his argument, and not with the remotest idea of using any weapon of threat, which he knew Parliament would despise, and which he was the last man in the empire who would presume to tender. To threats he would never himself for one instant yield, and that which he would not do in his own case, it never should be said he would recommend in another. He was an enemy to all sorts of fear, but of none, to use the expressive language of an Hon. and esteemed Friend (Sir Wm. Grant), more than that worst of all fears of being thought afraid.

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That sly work addressed itself not merely to those who could read, but to the eyes of those who could not. The particular libel to which he alluded in that work, purported to be the secret history of what took place in the bed-chamber of a married family—of a Nobleman who was justly held the ornament of the Peerage. That false and indecent description was illustrated by abominable prints, to make it more clearly intelligible to the more ignorant reader. The Editor of that Paper lent, it seemed, his respectable support to the Government, and he basely slandered those against it, of his own life as he was. The Editor of that Paper was thought worthy of promotion; he was not banished, but he was sent out by the Noble Lord to represent the British Government, as Consul, in New England, a Country justly esteemed for the purity of its character. He was, he said, sorry to hear the speech of an Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Wiltshire), because it seemed to him, to stink that object of which, until that hour, every one considered that Honourable Gentleman as a nobleman, the merit of the education of the People. For his own part, so highly did he value education, that he would sooner see even the freedom of the Constitution perished, than the mind of man retrograde. He would prefer education to what was called liberty reigning over dark, unutilized, and barbarous times. But liberty and learning were not incompatible; on the contrary, they were co-existent; they were not strangers, but the nearest and dearest kindred; and as freedom was the parent of learning, it was unnatural to suppose that that parent could only be preserved by the destruction of its most valued and most favoured offspring.

Lord CASTLEREAGH said, that he never had a conception that the individual in question (the Editor of the *Narrator*) was connected with the publication, until a question on the subject had been put to him by the Hon. and Learned Gentleman, some time after the appointment of that individual. Before that time he had never heard it suggested that the individual was the writer of that improper publication, and he certainly had been recommended to him as a person qualified for the situation. He could not help observing that the Honourable and Learned Gentleman seemed to direct himself to him (Lord Castlereagh); and he had the more to complain of, because he (Mr. Brougham) must have known that he (Lord Castlereagh) was, at the time the individual was nominated to the office, in total ignorance of his having been connected with the publication alluded to in such strong terms of condemnation. He had an inquiry made into the circumstances at the time, but he did not feel himself warranted in recommending the Royal Highness the Prince Regent to cancel the appointment of the individual. It appeared to him that the Hon. and Learned Gentleman went out of his way, and certainly his attack on the Government was not warranted.

Mr. BROUGHAM denied that he had made any unwarrantable attack on the Government.—The Noble Lord declared that he did not know of the individual being Editor of the publication in question previous to his appointment—but he had made inquiry, and he must have ascertained the fact of his having been in that situation; he must have ascertained too, if any inquiry was made on that head, that the character of the publication was very infamous—but the Noble Lord persisted in confirming the appointment after he had made the inquiry.

Lord CASTLEREAGH said, “The appointment of the individual had been previously gazetted.”

Mr. BROUGHAM said, “But he had not sailed for America.”

Lord CASTLEREAGH said, that after he had been gazetted, and about to sail for his destination, he could not recommend his dismissal as a fit measure.

Mr. SCARLETT said, that the provisions of the Bill would subject any writer who might condemn any particular proceeding in that House to the punishment, if convicted a second time, of perpetual banishment. And yet he would ask the House, was there any public writer who, in the fair latitude of discussion, might not allude, in terms, too, of disapprobation, to a particular proceeding in that House? He would put one case: the vote on the *Waltham* expedition. The People felt a universal indignation at that vote. The House depended much on public opinion—the more so, because it did not contain a perfect representation of the People. He objected to the readers of indecency, not only were not punished, but they often found lavish and liberal patrons in the higher walks of life. He mentioned this to show the inconsistency of those who talked of the licentiousness of the press, but who dealt out punishment but patronage. The crime of composing was a new one in the law; he would ask the Attorney-General, when was there a conviction for composing? The offence of composing was unknown to the law of England, and was only practised in the disgraceful trial of *Algeron* *Solway*. He considered the words “of Malignant and seditious” were wanting, and he would therefore propose for the Amendment.

Sir J. MACKINTOSH said, without troubling the House, he would only refer to the words of the fifth of the King, and he would ask, why it was that the example of that Act should be departed from?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL objected to the words as unnecessary, and as only leading to confusion. The Bill was not defining a new crime; it was only regulating a new punishment; there was not a malicious intention, otherwise no conviction could take place.

Mr. SCARLETT said, he recollected when the word “false” was considered necessary to be stated in the indictment; that was, however, set aside by the decision of a single Judge. He thought he should not live to see it maintained that a malicious intention would be necessary.

Sir JAMES MACKINTOSH said, that what the Attorney-General considered due to public feeling in 1793, the Attorney-General of the present day refused to grant—a proof of the progress of doctrines in favour of the rigour of authority, and against the severity of public freedom.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL strongly reprobated what he considered an insinuation against Ministers.

Colonel ELLISTON spoke against the amendment.

Sir J. MACKINTOSH reminded the Attorney-General that the 36th of the King created no new offence; the law of libel was as old as the common law.

The gallery was then cleared for admission, but we understood that the amendment was negatived without a division.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said, that the clause enacting the penalty of banishment on the commission of a second offence, as it now stood, was capable of being construed retrospectively; to obviate which, he should propose, as an amendment, to introduce the words, “after the passing of this Act.”

The amendment was agreed to, without any discussion.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL then said, that in order to avoid the legal consequences attending banishment for life, a penalty included within the latter words of the same clause, he should propose the introduction of words to this effect: “For every term of years as might seem proper in the discretion of the Court.”

Mr. J. P. GRANT was desirous to know on what authority his Hon. and Learned Friend stated, that banishment for life and for years were not attended with the same consequences.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said, “On that of *Lord Coke*.”

Mr. J. P. GRANT expressed his doubt of the accuracy of his Hon. and Learned Friend's recollection.

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL said, that *Lord Coke* laid down in terms this distinction, that the one was a civil death, and the other not.

The Amendment was then agreed to.

Mr. BROUGHAM wished no term should be limited to seven years.

Mr. W. SMITH said, that this amendment did not, by any means, obviate his previous objection to the measure on the score of severity disproportionate to the offence.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said, that it had not been proposed for that, but other purposes.

Lord CASTLEREAGH thought that there were cases of libel of so very heinous a nature, that on a second conviction the delinquent should not be suffered to remain in the City.

After some observations from Sir J. Mackintosh, Mr. W. Smith, and Mr. G. Lamb, the House divided on retaining the amended clause. The numbers were—

For the clause.....	109
Against.....	50

Majority for the clause..... 59

The remaining parts of the Bill were then read and agreed to, the Speaker resumed the Chair, and the Report was brought up and agreed to.

Mr. Alderman HEYGATE then proposed the following clause—“That this Act should remain in force for three years from and after the passing of the same, and to the end of the then next Session of Parliament.”

Mr. DENMAN seconded the bringing up of the clause.

Lord CASTLEREAGH opposed it.

The motion was then negatived without a division.

The Bill was then ordered to be read a third time this day, and the House adjourned at HALF-PAST TWO O'CLOCK.

FRIDAY, DEC. 24.

ADJOURNMENT.

On the motion of Lord CASTLEREAGH, it was ordered, that the House, at its rising, do adjourn to Thursday.

THE MERCHANTS' PETITION.

Mr. IRVING said he held in his hand a Petition signed by some of the most respectable Merchants in the City of London, in which they begged to solicit the attention of Ministers and of the House to the distress under which they, as well as the Manufacturers of the Country, were labouring. They prayed that the House would adopt an immediate inquiry into those distresses, which, they had no doubt, would succeed in bringing to light the causes of that distress. The Petition originated in no factious or party motives, but it proceeded from a body of men who did not wish to interrupt or embarrass the proceedings of the House; yet were anxious that the case which they represented to the consideration of the House should meet with its serious attention. They expressed their approbation of the measures which had just passed through the House; but they thought, that that class of persons, who had been suffering under a great extent of distress, had a right to expect an inquiry into the causes of it, on the part of Government. He had no instruction or suggestion from the Petitioners to point out any specific causes of distress; but he hoped, that, during an

investigation, if such were undertaken, Government and the House would contemplate the system of restriction which operated against our trade, and which, however expedient in time of war, was wholly incompatible with a state of peace. There were also other means of facilitating the removal of commercial distress, to which he begged to call the attention of Ministers. It might be possible, perhaps, to take away the monopoly of the China trade, which was confined on the East India Company by their Charter, and from which they derived so very little advantage, as the trade was chiefly carried on under American flags. The trade, if opened to English merchants, would prove of the utmost advantage. Another cause of distress was the proposed change in the currency. The House was already in possession of the opinions which he entertained upon this subject. He did not then intend to renew any discussion upon it, but he conceived, that some modification might take place in the laws lately enacted, in order to relieve the minds of many persons, who apprehended great evils as the result of their operation. The modification he wished to see offered regarded the mode of halting payments. He thought it would be highly expedient to extend the last price of the bullion over all the period included in the plan. By these means, the opportunity and facilities of acquiring and expending their resources would be given to the Bank. He thought, also, that the same object, which was allowed to the holder of notes, as to gold bullion, should be extended also to silver bullion. These modifications, while they insured great advantages to the Public, could not possibly interfere upon the principle of the plan. For his part, he had no hesitation in declaring it to be his conviction, that bullion in the shape of gold would not be applied for by the Public at the Bank. But although he was convinced of this, he knew that a great cloud and gloom had been cast on the commercial world by the plan for Cash Payments. He would now advert to the topic of a speech made by an Honourable Friend of his (Mr. Ricardo). His Hon. Friend proposed, as a remedy for the distress of the Country, the gradual removal of the Corn Laws. Such a measure, he believed, would have the effect of placing the agricultural class on a level with the commercial interests, as to distress. A good deal of advantage might be gained from a consideration of the state of the Poor Laws. His Hon. Friend had submitted a plan for the limitation of the National Debt. The plan was not original, and he would pledge himself, that if the archives of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were searched, it would be found that a similar plan had been proposed 100 years ago. He begged again to assure the House, that the opinions which he had now expressed were not suggested to him by any person, but that they were entirely the result of his own deliberations. He thought that there were strong reasons in the case of the Petitioners for inducing Government to give it their most serious attention, and he trusted that they would have some measure or other to propose by the next meeting of Parliament, with a view to remedy the apprehensions of the commercial world; or in case that Government refused to bring forward any such measure, that they would then suffer an inquiry to go forward.

The Petition was then brought up and read. It stated, in substance—That the Petitioners were deeply impressed with a sense of the great distresses which at present prevailed throughout the Country, and they lamented, more especially, those which oppressed the commercial classes. They did not pretend to say what were the causes of this state, but they assured that Honourable House, that they saw, with regret, that the House was on the eve of adjournment, without some step having been taken by it to inquire into the causes of the distress they complained of, which they felt persuaded, if the House were to do, a remedy would easily be found, when once the cause, or causes, of it were ascertained. The Petition concluded with expressing a hope, that the House would take this matter into their most earnest consideration, in order that the lamentable distresses which existed in the Country might be likely to meet with an early termination. The Petition also alluded to the other points mentioned by the Honourable Gentlemen in his speech.

Mr. GRENELL thought, that the House had some right to complain, not of the Hon. Member who presented the Petition, for he was only discharging his duty, but of the Gentlemen who originated the Petition, because they stated that they were in possession of the causes of the distress, as well as of the means of remedying it; yet they allowed Parliament to proceed in its sittings for one whole month, and now, on the very day of adjournment, they came forward to tantalize the House with useless and unpleasant topics. It was only at a late hour yesterday that he heard, and heard with great surprize, that a Petition was to be presented that evening to the House, from the Merchants of the City of London. He was the more surprized, because having been in the City the most part of Wednesday, amongst various Bankers and Merchants, and having spent a great part of yesterday also there, he had not been apprized that such a thing was in existence, or heard that any application of the measures which had just passed through the House; but they thought, that that class of persons, who had been suffering under a great extent of distress, had a right to expect an inquiry into the causes of it, on the part of Government. He had no instruction or suggestion from the Petitioners to point out any specific causes of distress; but he hoped, that, during an

investigation, if such were undertaken, Government and the House would contemplate the system of restriction which operated against our trade, and which, however expedient in time of war, was wholly incompatible with a state of peace. There were also other means of facilitating the removal of commercial distress, to which he begged to call the attention of Ministers. It might be possible, perhaps, to take away the monopoly of the China trade, which was confined on the East India Company by their Charter, and from which they derived so very little advantage, as the trade was chiefly carried on under American flags. The trade, if opened to English merchants, would prove of the utmost advantage. Another cause of distress was the proposed change in the currency. The House was already in possession of the opinions which he entertained upon this subject. He did not then intend to renew any discussion upon it, but he conceived, that some modification might take place in the laws lately enacted, in order to relieve the minds of many persons, who apprehended great evils as the result of their operation. The modification he wished to see offered regarded the mode of halting payments. He thought it would be highly expedient to extend the last price of the bullion over all the period included in the plan. By these means, the opportunity and facilities of acquiring and expending their resources would be given to the Bank. He thought, also, that the same object, which was allowed to the holder of notes, as to gold bullion, should be extended also to silver bullion. These modifications, while they insured great advantages to the Public, could not possibly interfere upon the principle of the plan. For his part, he had no hesitation in declaring it to be his conviction, that bullion in the shape of gold would not be applied for by the Public at the Bank. But although he was convinced of this, he knew that a great cloud and gloom had been cast on the commercial world by the plan for Cash Payments. He would now advert to the topic of a speech made by an Honourable Friend of his (Mr. Ricardo). His Hon. Friend proposed, as a remedy for the distress of the Country, the gradual removal of the Corn Laws. Such a measure, he believed, would have the effect of placing the agricultural class on a level with the commercial interests, as to distress. A good deal of advantage might be gained from a consideration of the state of the Poor Laws. His Hon. Friend had submitted a plan for the limitation of the National Debt. The plan was not original, and he would pledge himself, that if the archives of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were searched, it would be found that a similar plan had been proposed 100 years ago. He begged again to assure the House, that the opinions which he had now expressed were not suggested to him by any person, but that they were entirely the result of his own deliberations. He thought that there were strong reasons in the case of the Petitioners for inducing Government to give it their most serious attention, and he trusted that they would have some measure or other to propose by the next meeting of Parliament, with a view to remedy the apprehensions of the commercial world; or in case that Government refused to bring forward any such measure, that they would then suffer an inquiry to go forward.

The Petition was then brought up and read. It stated, in substance—That the Petitioners were deeply impressed with a sense of the great distresses which at present prevailed throughout the Country, and they lamented, more especially, those which oppressed the commercial classes. They did not pretend to say what were the causes of this state, but they assured that Honourable House, that they saw, with regret, that the House was on the eve of adjournment, without some step having been taken by it to inquire into the causes of the distress they complained of, which they felt persuaded, if the House were to do, a remedy would easily be found, when once the cause, or causes, of it were ascertained. The Petition concluded with expressing a hope, that the House would take this matter into their most earnest consideration, in order that the lamentable distresses which existed in the Country might be likely to meet with an early termination. The Petition also alluded to the other points mentioned by the Honourable Gentlemen in his speech.

Mr. GRENELL thought, that the House had some right to complain, not of the Hon. Member who presented the Petition, for he was only discharging his duty, but of the Gentlemen who originated the Petition, because they stated that they were in possession of the causes of the distress, as well as of the means of remedying it; yet they allowed Parliament to proceed in its sittings for one whole month, and now, on the very day of adjournment, they came forward to tantalize the House with useless and unpleasant topics. It was only at a late hour yesterday that he heard, and heard with great surprize, that a Petition was to be presented that evening to the House, from the Merchants of the City of London. He was the more surprized, because having been in the City the most part of Wednesday, amongst various Bankers and Merchants, and having spent a great part of yesterday also there, he had not been apprized that such a thing was in existence, or heard that any application of the measures which had just passed through the House; but they thought, that that class of persons, who had been suffering under a great extent of distress, had a right to expect an inquiry into the causes of it, on the part of Government. He had no instruction or suggestion from the Petitioners to point out any specific causes of distress; but he hoped, that, during an

investigation, if such were undertaken, Government and the House would contemplate the system of restriction which operated against our trade, and which, however expedient in time of war, was wholly incompatible with a state of peace. There were also other means of facilitating the removal of commercial distress, to which he begged to call the attention of Ministers. It might be possible, perhaps, to take away the monopoly of the China trade, which was confined on the East India Company by their Charter, and from which they derived so very little advantage, as the trade was chiefly carried on under American flags. The trade, if opened to English merchants, would prove of the utmost advantage. Another cause of distress was the proposed change in the currency. The House was already in possession of the opinions which he entertained upon this subject. He did not then intend to renew any discussion upon it, but he conceived, that some modification might take place in the laws lately enacted, in order to relieve the minds of many persons, who apprehended great evils as the result of their operation. The modification he wished to see offered regarded the mode of halting payments. He thought it would be highly expedient to extend the last price of the bullion over all the period included in the plan. By these means, the opportunity and facilities of acquiring and expending their resources would be given to the Bank. He thought, also, that the same object, which was allowed to the holder of notes, as to gold bullion, should be extended also to silver bullion. These modifications, while they insured great advantages to the Public, could not possibly interfere upon the principle of the plan. For his part, he had no hesitation in declaring it to be his conviction, that bullion in the shape of gold would not be applied for by the Public at the Bank. But although he was convinced of this, he knew that a great cloud and gloom had been cast on the commercial world by the plan for Cash Payments by the Bank. The currency was the real object of the Petitioners' anxiety. It might be true, that the Petition did not proceed from factious persons; but he had no hesitation in saying, that it came from a party who, having been checked and crippled in their speculations, wished now to create an alarm with a view to alter the currency of the Country.

Mr. IRVING said, the little intercourse which he had with the class of men to whom the Petitioners belonged, did not afford him the opportunity of making such detailed inquiries as the Honourable Gentleman who spoke last had in his power to make; but whatever might be said or thought of the Petition, he would confidently assure the House, that the majority of the names attached to it belonged to the first individuals in this great City. The Honourable Gentleman opposite had stated in detail his communications with Gentlemen in the City, with a view to throw disgrace upon the Petition, and in order that his reflections might go forth to the Country; for in that House he was sure they would make but very little impression. It was intimated, that the signatures to the Petition were of very small extent; but they were neither small in extent nor influence, and belonged to a body of great importance, which claimed the attention of the House. It was rather surprising, indeed, considering the hurried manner in which the Petition was got up, that there had been so many names collected to it. But the Honourable Member said, that this was another attempt to subvert the legislative measures of Parliament. He (Mr. Irving) had already stated, that he received another instruction or suggestion to make any specific representation—or that he said nothing emanated from himself. (*Heur!*) He had no hesitation in stating, that however much he differed with the Honourable Member as to the means employed to effectuate the plans of the Legislature with respect to Cash Payments, he was as unwilling as any one to disturb the enactment of last Session, because the Country had been already put to the inconveniences of the measure. He would say, that it was his decided opinion, that a great proportion of the distresses now afflicting the commercial part of the Country was owing to that measure. Although it had not been much his business to employ his thoughts upon the subject of that measure; still, if he ever came again to be discussed in Parliament, he would be able to show that his arguments had as many adherents in the Country as those of the disciples of the Right Honourable Gentleman who brought in the Bill originally. With respect to the attack made on