

arrange for the progress of public business during the pre-Easter sitting of Parliament. One of the first procedures will be what is called the "Sheriffs' Dinner," given by the Lord President, at which the arrangement of the list of High Sheriffs will be settled by the members of the Cabinet, and the great officers of the Queen's household previous to its being submitted to Her Majesty in Council for "pricking," the said arrangement consisting in consulting the preference or convenience of any personal or political friend whose name is down on the list as to what year he would like to serve the office; theoretically the choice of the Sovereign among the three names submitted to Her Majesty is decided by chance, but it is a chance which can always be foretold by Her Majesty's Ministers with perfect accuracy.—*Court Journal*.

THE SAILORS AND THE BLOCKADE.—In consequence of the numerous captures made by the Federal cruisers, and the loss of time sustained by sailors when caught in the act of attempting to run the blockade, a clause has been inserted in ships' articles of late, where the ships are expected to run the blockade, to the effect that the sailors ship for a voyage to unblockaded ports only; hence, when they are taken to blockaded ports against their will and are captured, they are entitled to compensation from the owner or owners of the vessel in which they sail. Several cases arising out of "running the blockade" have recently been tried in Liverpool, and in each instance the sailors have maintained their claims. If sailors know for a fact that a vessel is going to run the blockade after they have shipped on the understanding that she was not to do so,

WHEN AT THE colliery was set on fire by the firing of a shot, and it was found impossible to check the destruction of property till a few weeks ago. Coal getting has not been commenced more than a fortnight, and the pit was just getting into working order when another accident, one not likely to check the labours of the men employed for very long, but one which will cause considerable loss to the proprietor, has occurred. On Thursday morning the usual number of hands, between fifty and sixty, accompanied by several labourers, making the total number about sixty, descended as usual to commence work in the five-foot mine. They had not been at work long when one of the joints at the crank end of the piston gave way, when the engine was winding. Fortunately neither men nor coal were in the cages at the time, and thus, though the rope was immediately uncoiled from the drum and the descending cage precipitated to the bottom, no serious injury was done. A new casting was, of course, requisite, and this was obtained in the course of the day, a small windlass being fitted up and the men supplied with provisions. All preparations having been made to bring the men out of the shaft, an attempt was made to start the engine, when it was discovered that the first fracture had caused a second and much more serious one, the piston being broken and a new one rendered necessary. Immediate orders were given for the making of this, and the men were informed they would have to bear their imprisonment a little longer. The piston was expected at the collier last night (Friday), when the wives and children of the men, who, as may be supposed,

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THE ANDAMANS.—The *Englishman* states that Colonel Tytler, who governs the Andaman Islands, is about to be supplied, at his own request, with crows and frogs, the former to act as scavengers, the latter to clean the tanks in the convict settlement.

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Mr EDWARD COHEN, a Jew, has been elected Mayor of Melbourne.

The Herald counts ten net Conservative gains since 1859, equivalent to twenty on a division.

Mr W. F. WINDHAM.—Mr Windham has secured an annuity of £3000 per annum out of the surplus derived from the sale of the Felbridge estate, which has been purchased by Mr J. Kelton, of Norwich, for £135,000.

THE MINISTRY.—Most of the Ministers will arrive in town in the course of next week, to arrange for the progress of public business during the pre-Easter sitting of Parliament.

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ALLEGED FRAUDS BY A RAILWAY CONTRACTOR.—William Buckwell, a railway contractor and manufacturer of artificial stone, of Phoenix Wharf, East Greenwich, of 86 King William Street, city, and of Cass Croft, Borgomanero, Italy, was placed at the bar of the Guild Hall Police Court, before Alderman Humphrey, on Saturday, for final examination relative to a variety of charges. The bankrupt was the contractor for the formation of a line of railway from Movers to Lake Orta.

AULD HANDELS MONDAY.—The "London Dufferin Association" met at dinner in the Green Dragon Hotel, Bishopsgate Street, on the 19th instant, to celebrate "Auld Handels Monday." This is the festival with which the people of the county (kingdom) of Fife begin the new year.

LORD DUNDREARY.—The report that Mr Sothorn receives a weekly salary of £120 is an error. He gets a clear half of the profits, viz., about £450 per week.

SIXTY MEN AND BOYS IMPRISONED IN FA COAL PIT.—Messrs Mercer & Evan's High Brook Colliery, situated in Park Lane, Ashton, near Wigan, seems fated to cause its proprietors very serious loss. It is only a short time ago since the coal in one of the seams worked at the colliery was set on fire by the firing of a shot, and it was found impossible to check the destruction of property till a few weeks ago.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST MR JOHN REA.—THE TROUBLESOME MEMBER OF THE BELFAST TOWN COUNCIL.—We have reason to believe that the Mayor of Belfast has taken preliminary steps to vindicate his character from the accusation preferred against him by Mr Rea at a recent meeting of the Town Council.

Foreign.

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL CAMERON is likely to return soon from New Zealand, which command will in future be that of a Major-General.

A CHARGE of cheating has been preferred against an officer of the 69th Regiment stationed in India, and he has been committed for trial.

The New York Times states that eighteen Federal steam ships of war are either actually in pursuit of the Alabama, or are about to proceed upon that mission.

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A LITTLE Yankee girl in Northampton, Mass., a few days since, went into a grocery store and procured some article, in payment for which she produced postage stamps. The man of trade took the stamps, and while examining one of them more minutely than the rest, the little girl spoke up promptly and said—"That's good, for we have washed all the black off."—New York Paper.

THE pearl fisheries of Ceylon are in a flourishing state. If present anticipations be fulfilled, a contribution of £100,000 to the revenue, from that source, may be expected during this year; and even making allowance for disappointments, the Colombo Observer is confident that, at the very lowest estimate, £50,000 will be realised from this source during 1863, with a fair prospect of the pearl banks yielding a net return of from £100,000 to £150,000 in the next three years.

A ROYAL EDITOR.—Catalari, one of the Maori kings in New Zealand, has just published the first number of his new Gazette. He says:—"The press which has arrived at Ngaruwhia, from it proceeds the newspapers, exceedingly powerful to settle matters! When it comes to you, the price is threepence: pay it if you approve. The good of this press is to carry our intentions to the tribes of the world; because steadfastly fixed are the words of the beginning—Faith, love, law."

MEDICAL SCHOOL IN MELBOURNE.—The first important step towards establishing a medical school in Victoria has been taken in the foundation of a lectureship of medicine at the Melbourne University. It is to be hoped that this will be followed up in the foundation of other lectureships of surgery, &c., so that the youth and young men of the colony may have an opportunity of qualifying themselves here for the practice of the various branches of the medical profession, without being compelled to go to England for a qualification.

THE NEW COIN FOR INDIA.—The new rupee has at last been issued, and nothing more ugly and more contemptible has ever been seen in this country. The design is one of which the pettiest scoundrel would have been ashamed, as a combination of baldness and tawdriness painful to witness. On the one hand, we do not perceive the slightest emblem of the sovereignty of Great Britain, and the Royal arms are altogether wanting. On the other hand, Her Majesty is represented, not in her robes of State, but absolutely in native costume. Such a coinage is not only contemptible, but an insult to Royalty, and is worse than the most abject submission to native superstitions in the old days of the Company.

Appropos of Prussian royalty, I have been told a pleasant anecdote of the Princes-Royal. She was playfully scooted, a few days ago, by her father-in-law, who complained that she did not choose any more to talk politics to him. "I dare not," replied the Princess (in the story) "nowadays that your royal subjects are suspect when they utter their opinions. I am very loyal, and do not want to get in a scrape." The Berliners have a rooted notion that the Prince and Princess-Royal are thoroughly constitutional, and that they silently disapprove the political attitude of Papa.—London Correspondent of Manchester Guardian.

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THE GOLD FIELDS OF LUCKNOW.—In the siege we have heard how the crown treasures, brought out of the Kaiserbagh for safety (as a material guarantee we suppose) and placed on hacteries near to the residency, were robbed by the sentries who ought to have protected them, and that some of the boxes in which the jewels were contained were so old and rotten, that it required but a slight tap with a bayonet to bring out pearls and diamonds in handfuls. We remember how gems of surpassing beauty were hawked about by the soldiers, and offered for sale for bottles of spirits, and even a few cigars. Out of the house in which the missionaries now reside, treasure, both in jewels and specie, to a fabulous extent, was taken from the walls by the pirates of the 23d, and afterwards by the 90th, when they relieved them. A happy accident first discovered to a soldier the gold field in which he was picketed, and he was not slow to improve the opportunity. Walking with some iron instrument in his hand, in a careless way, he struck the wall, which sounded hollow, and part of which came out more easily than it ought to have done; hitting it again, he discovered silver plate to a considerable extent, and before long the whole company were engaged, with any implements they could lay their hands on, in opening the walls and digging up the floors. The treasure found was enormous, and had been buried for long years, this being the only way in which property was secured in those days. Allured by this success, diggings have been going on in all parts of the city, with various success, till at length Lucknow has got the name of a gold-field, and not a little of that feverish excitement approaching to a mania, of which we have read in the early days of Australia and California, has been felt here. Sober, sensible men, in various ranks of life, excepting the very highest, have thrown away for the time their usual good sense and prudence, become indifferent to any work, and occupied themselves in hunting up information, preparatory to hunting up treasure.—Oudh Gazette.

INSIDERS.

At the last sitting of the Belfast Town Council two members quarrelled and rolled up their sleeves, with the intention of having a pugilistic set-to, but were prevented.

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