

RAYMOND TERRACE.

Our subscribers at Raymond Terrace are informed that Mr. William Hutchinson, schoolmaster, has been appointed agent for the "Mercury" in that neighbourhood, Mr. Wort having resigned.

THE MAITLAND MERCURY.

SATURDAY, MAY 27, 1843.

In returning once more to the consideration of the tenant system in this country, we acknowledge ourselves astonished at the apathy of the public and the silence of the press upon a subject so intimately connected with the future welfare and happiness of the colony. Except in a letter signed "Aristides" addressed to the Australasian Chronicle, and a brief allusion in the Herald to the liberality of certain proprietors of land in the neighbourhood of Port Macquarie, we have been unable to trace the smallest indication of any interest being felt upon the subject among those who have assumed the highly arduous and responsible duties which devolve upon the directors of public opinion.

We are not less grieved than astonished at this indifference, for the subject is one in which the interference of the press is required in order to assist the public mind to a correct judgment. In the bustle of life and eager pursuit of wealth and distinction, the interests of the poor and humble are ever liable to be disregarded. The attention of the giddy and unthinking, as well as of the selfish and aspiring, is easily attracted by the ostentation of riches; the man of taste and acquirements naturally prefers the society of those who, having been delicately nurtured and carefully educated, have the advantage of polished manners and agreeable conversation to recommend them; distinguished talents, as they usually elevate the possessor and, however humble his origin may have been, introduce him into the narrow circle of the aristocracy, thus shed upon that minority of the people their own lustre, and increase its influence: in short, whatever is eminent catches the eye which overlooks what is common. And the effect of these natural errors in our estimate of things is heightened by those mistaken ideas which are derived from the habits and feelings of modern society. From the earliest period of our lives we have been taught that what is common is vulgar, and what is vulgar is despicable; while a wiser and more benevolent philosophy should teach us that what is common is connected with nine-tenths of the population, and that distinction is the lot only of the favored few.

It is not our present purpose to follow out this principle in its Benthamite application—we merely wish to show that the interference of the press is required to fix the attention of the public upon the interests of the humbler and most numerous classes. Even men who assume the title of "patriots," and "friends of the poor," are little conversant with such topics as this; occupied as they are in a contest about principles, and lured on by the vision of political advantages, they seldom stoop to such petty considerations as those which are connected with the home comforts of the peasantry. And the ablest statesmen who, whether by the authority of the Sovereign or by election of their countrymen, are placed at the helm of public business, have little leisure or inclination for such reflections. Engrossed by the high affairs of state; engaged with disputed and intricate questions of law and politics; attentive to those great comprehensive principles which involve our rights and liberties; investigating with studious eye the complicated machine of commerce; looking into far distant lands for some new object which may possibly affect the future prosperity of the country; and tracing the remote consequences of legislative enactments—they are apt to overlook

"The common, the quite common" influences which are obvious to the discernment of many who are greatly their inferiors in power and intellect.

Amidst the illusions of past years we supposed that we were rearing up a noble edifice of colonial welfare; but, careful only of the ornamental parts of the building, we neglected to provide for its stability or foundations. These must lie among the interests of the most numerous classes of the people, among

"The common, the quite common" things of life; and the formation of a colonial peasantry is a subject which deserves the attention of every true and far sighted patriot. It will be little considered by those who are impatient in the pursuit of present enjoyment, or intent on rapidly accumulating wealth—it will not obtain a hearing from those whose pressing engagements leave scarce a moment's breathing time, and who venture not to look into that future which presents to them an aspect of dreadful uncertainty—it will be estimated at low value by that very numerous class of politicians who deal in petty expedients that produce only temporary effects and leave no lasting impressions

upon the character and condition of the country. But to all who can appreciate such measures of improvement as are slow indeed in their operations, but extended in their influences, permanent in their consequences, and suited to infuse perennial vigour and health into the body politic, it will be evident that this is a subject which touches all the secret springs of a nation's prosperity—that commerce cannot revive while the land remains imperfectly cultivated—that religion cannot extend while the physical and moral condition of the peasantry is neglected—that the law cannot attain its due supremacy over the minds of a people who have no interest in the soil—that settled, honest, and industrious habits cannot take root among hordes of wanderers who are continually changing their place of residence—that the domestic virtues are rarely known among those who have no home—that a proper sense of liberty, as distinguished from anarchy and license, and an attachment to the country where they live, are plants of too noble a nature to grow up and flourish under such blighting influences—and that a young generation which springs up in ignorance, filth, gloom, and sullenness, is likely to be more immoral than their fathers. Such reflections should enlist the sympathies of every truly benevolent man in this cause, and he will perceive that it possesses an importance which extends far beyond the present generation, or the mere commercial prosperity of the colony. Suppose us once more as affluent as we ever were, or ever imagined ourselves to be, yet

"Ill fares the land to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay."

THE ELECTION.

We perceive from the Sydney papers that it is probable the writs will be issued in the course of next week, and that the elections will take place somewhere between the 15th and the 30th June.

Every thing seems particularly quiet just now between the two parties in these boroughs, though they are doubtless exerting themselves to the utmost, as committee meetings of both the candidates are frequently held. Each party appears confident of success, and from such information as we can collect it promises to be a very close contest; it is at present extremely difficult to say in whose favor the chances are. Major Wentworth's friends are anxiously looking out for his arrival, but no account has been received since the letter announcing that he had taken his passage in the Brankenmoor; we perceive, however, by the Australasian Chronicle of Thursday last that the Socrates, which left Launceston on the 19th instant, reported the Brankenmoor to leave the same port for Sydney on or about the 23rd; if she did leave on that day, the Major may be expected in the course of next week.

The election for the county of Northumberland appears likely to go off without any one coming forward against Mr. Foster.

The representation for Durham, on the contrary, is being warmly contested; the friends of each candidate exerting themselves greatly.

The contest in the district of Hunter, Brisbane, and Bligh is equally warm; the reports from that district vary a great deal, but from their general tenor the struggle will be between Captain Dumaresq and Mr. Dangar.

In the district of the counties of Gloucester, Macquarie, and Stanley neither candidate seems to have made much exertion to secure his return. The electors in the neighbourhood of Port Macquarie seem somewhat dissatisfied with them both, neither having as yet personally visited that place. On the Lower Hunter the electors generally appear to favor Mr. Windeyer.

INSOLVENCY PROCEEDINGS.

PROOF OF CLAIMS.
(Before the Chief Commissioner, Sydney.)
Thursday, May 18.

In the estate of William Hough and David Logan, Maitland, a third meeting:—The estate of Duke and Co, £80; L. Foreman, £20 0s 2d; William Hutchinson, £71 5s.

Friday, May 19.
In the estate of John William Penn Blick, of Belmont, Hunter River, a single meeting:—Joseph Vickery, £10 0s 6d; N. Bushby, £16 15s 0d; James Tegg, £3 13s 0d; Kemp and Fairfax, £8 2s 3d; James Melville, £401 14s 11d; S. A. Bryant, £183 14s 9d; E. Salamon, £21 13s.

Monday, May 22.
(Before E. D. Day, Esq., Commissioner.)
In the estate of John Richards, West Maitland, blacksmith, H. I. Pilcher (rent), £22 10s.—In this estate Mr. James Solomon was appointed trustee.
(Before the Chief Commissioner, Sydney.)

In the estate of William Crawford, Dungog, storekeeper:—Thomas Perkins, £201 0s 6d (not allowed); J. T. Hughes, £1 5s 0d; J. J. Mouritz, £3 11s.

NEW INSOLVENTS.
MAY 23.—Frederick William Platt, Morpeth: debts, £324; assets, landed property £40, personal property £40, outstanding debts £7 10s; balance deficiency, £220 11s 8d.
23.—Catherine Hamilton Harpur, widow, Harpur's Hill, Maitland: debts, £1098 10s; assets, personal property, £605, outstanding debts £200; balance deficiency, £1193 10s.

MEETING OF CREDITORS.

In the estate of John Richards, West Maitland, blacksmith, before E. D. Day, Esq., Commissioner, at the court house, East Maitland, this day, at eleven o'clock, a.m.

MAITLAND RACES.—These races, which will come off on Tuesday, the 6th June, are expected to be particularly good this year. Notwithstanding the depressed state of the times, the subscription towards the race fund this year is better than it has usually been in previous years. There are now ten good horses in training in and near Maitland, and several are expected to arrive by the steamer from Sydney either tomorrow or Tuesday morning. Amongst them we have heard particularly of old Jorrocks, Benedict, the Marchioness, and Peri, a two-year-old filly. Should these horses arrive, there is strong promise of very superior racing. Jorrocks was the winner of the Metropolitan Stakes and the Cumberland Cup at the recent meeting at Homebush, and the Marchioness took the St. Leger Stakes, and the Publican's Purse at the same races whilst the Maitland horse Harry Lorrequer carried off the Ladies' Purse at Page's River, and the Patrick's Plains Purse and Hunter River Stakes at Patrick's Plains races, the week before last.

THE ANTIQUITIES.—Monday last being the day fixed upon for the distribution of blankets among the aboriginal natives of this district, a large number of them assembled about the court house, East Maitland, pretty early in the day. There were but thirty-six blankets to be distributed among them. The authorities at Sydney have heretofore sent up to Maitland seventy-two blankets for this purpose, three or four of which have been usually sent to Mr. Hobler, and a few to Mr. Wyndham's, and besides these a quantity have been always before this year sent from Sydney to the Wollombi. This year, however, instead of any having been sent to the Wollombi, an order was sent from Sydney to the police magistrate there stating that he was to receive thirty-six of the blankets which had been forwarded to Maitland; these he accordingly received; so that there were thirty-six blankets less to be distributed amongst the natives in this district than on former occasions. In consequence of this, the chief constable, in distributing the blankets, supplied first the old men and women, afterwards children, and then such men as had guns, as far as the blankets would go; consequently several of the single men received no blanket; four blankets were as usual forwarded to Mr. Hobler's place; but none have been sent to Mr. Wyndham's, nor are there any to send. Why the number of blankets usually sent to the Wollombi has not been sent this year it is impossible to say, but it appears to us that the authorities in Sydney ought to look into the circumstance, and if it has arisen from an oversight, a fresh supply should be immediately sent up to Maitland for those blacks who have not yet received any, and also for those who are usually supplied at Mr. Wyndham's.

MORPETH, MAY 24.—THE QUEEN'S BIRTH DAY.—Loyalty is the characteristic of a Briton, and place him where you will his loyalty must be made manifest. Surrounded as we are on all sides by the gloomy and depressing circumstances attendant upon the present disorganised state of both the social and commercial condition of the colony, it is gratifying to find that the name of our young and virtuous Queen is still cherished by us, her antipodean subjects of New South Wales; and that the thousand kindly feelings with which we were wont to invest the name of our beloved monarch have not been obliterated by the winds and the waves which have wafted us so many thousand miles from the homes of our fathers, and the seat of her empire. During a ride on the banks of the Hunter this morning, and whilst indulging in a reverie inspired by the natal day, our ears were saluted by the discharge of ordnance at half-minute intervals: from whence could the sounds proceed? possibly a signal of distress from some unfortunate bark, foundering on the dreary world of waters—no, our distance from Newcastle was too great, and the calmness and serenity of the morning were also at variance with the conjecture. We pursued our journey, and at length reached the highly cultivated and improved estate of that enterprising individual, Mr. Eales, and shortly after descended from among the stately trees of the surrounding forest the masts of a vessel; we approached still nearer, and found it to be the splendid steamer Shamrock, not indeed "walking the waters like a thing of life," but safely lying in the dry dock recently constructed by that gentleman—with her streamers and colors flying in the broad sunshine she looked like

"Some dark beautiful bird, whose plumage
Is sparkling with unnumbered dyes."
The scene was exciting. Peel after peel awakened the echoes of the woods, but lately redeemed from the occupancy of the wombat and guano, or the prouder predominance of the kangaroo and emu; and while on the one hand we had before us an imperishable monument of British skill and ingenuity in the first-class steamer, we were surrounded on the other hand with no less convincing proofs of indomitable energy and industry in the splendid estate. "And what" we were led involuntarily to exclaim, "cannot these two mighty agents effect?" Yes, mighty indeed are the achievements of human skill and industry; but mightier far are the achievements of that man who has made the conquest of himself, and has learned to rule his own spirit. Both our reverie and journey were shortly at an end, and we returned to Morpeth in time to witness the continued proofs of loyalty and attachment to the throne, as set forth in the destruction of tar barrels and other combustibles, and the repeated discharges of firearms, &c.—[Note: Although the above mentioned dry dock was constructed for the repairs of the Hunter River Steam Company's steamers, it is capable of receiving vessels of 400 tons burthen, which by means of barrels could be floated over the flats of the river; and as it offers accommodation which does not exist even in Sydney, we have no doubt that eventually the great outlay (upwards of £2000) of the spirited owner will turn to good account.]—Communicated.

DRUNKENNESS.—On Monday last a man named John Pattison was brought before the police bench, charged with being found in a state of the most helpless drunkenness, near Nicholson's steam flour mills, between three and four o'clock on Sunday afternoon last; this being his second conviction he was sentenced to pay a fine of twenty shillings, or be exposed in the stocks for four hours.

CATTLE.—On Wednesday morning about a hundred head of cattle, most of them large and in very superior condition, the property of Mr. H. Dangar, passed through Maitland on their way to Newcastle, we understand for the purpose of being slaughtered and salted there.

QUEEN'S BIRTH DAY.—Wednesday last being the anniversary of Her Majesty's birthday it was not allowed to pass without some manifestations of loyalty by the inhabitants of Maitland. Several large bonfires were lighted in various parts of the town, and the youngsters amused themselves with squibs, crackers and other hand fireworks; a good deal of gunpowder was expended in shooting, and there was a partial illumination. Mr. R. P. Cummins, of the Sportman's Arms, exhibited a very tasteful symbol consisting of a large transparent star, with a beautiful and well executed crown in the centre; this device was very much admired, both for its brilliant and various colours as well as for its splendid effect. It was the workmanship of Mr. Random, painter, and the neat and elegant manner in which this and several other transparencies which were exhibited were got up by him reflects great credit upon the taste and judgment of that artist. At Mr. Random's own house were exhibited two smaller but no less brilliant transparencies, the one consisting of the shield of the royal arms, surrounded by a white star, and the other a well executed portrait of her Majesty in the centre of a star of green and gold. Mr. Clarke, boot and shoemaker, had his window illuminated with candles, and over the door a very neat transparent star and garter, with a V in the centre, and the window of Mr. Belcher, shoemaker, was also well lighted with candles. Several houses were illuminated at East Maitland; and a good deal of gunpowder was fired away during the course of the night, in manifestation of the loyalty of the inhabitants.

DESERTING A CHILD.—On Monday last Richard Bowers appeared at the police office, on summons, to answer a charge preferred against him by Mr. W. Lipscomb for deserting his child. Mr. Lipscomb stated that about two months ago, the defendant's wife became insane, and was wandering in that state about the streets, the defendant having left her and her two children some days previously. The woman was removed by the police into the lockup, from whence she was sent to Newcastle gaol, and had subsequently been forwarded to the lunatic asylum. The youngest child, now about three months old, had been taken in by Mr. Lipscomb, who had put it to nurse, and for the last eight weeks had been paying ten shillings a week for it. Previous to taking in the child, Mrs. Lipscomb had furnished the mother and the other child with food, as there was none in the house. Mr. Lipscomb further stated that he had spoken to the defendant requesting him to provide for the child, and he had promised that he would take it away in a few days, but he had never offered to do so. Mr. Lipscomb said he wished for no remuneration for what he had already done, but that the bench would order the defendant to provide for the child himself. In answer to the charge the defendant said he had not deserted his wife and children, he had only gone away for three or four days on business, and had left money in the house. During his absence his wife became lunatic, and he was greatly obliged to Mr. Lipscomb for all he had done both for the woman and children, and as soon as it was in his power he would remunerate him, but at present he was not in employment. The bench said they had reason to know that the defendant was not without the means of obtaining money, and they would therefore order that he should pay ten shillings to Mr. Lipscomb every Saturday morning until a further order was made by the bench, and that if he failed, on the complaint of Mr. Lipscomb the bench would issue a warrant for his apprehension, and commit him to Newcastle gaol.

COLONIAL ALE.—We yesterday tasted some of the best colonial ale that we have drank since our arrival in the colony; this ale, which has been brought into the Maitland market by Mr. Cummins, was brewed at Mr. Underwood's brewery, Parramatta, from malt manufactured from barley grown in this district. The ale itself has a much pleasanter flavour than Tooth's, and whilst it contains a good body is a much lighter drink than the English ales of the same quality. If it prove on trial that this ale will bear a little age, we should think that it will be very likely to supersede English ale in the course of time.

ASSIGNED SERVANTS.—It has been suggested to us, with reference to a paragraph which appeared in our last publication, in which it was stated that an assigned servant of Mr. A. M'Dougall's had made some false charges against that gentleman in a petition to the Governor, that according to our report of the case it might appear that the bench had decided that Mr. M'Dougall did right in refusing to allow his servant to apply to the bench for a ticket of leave. It appears to us that the paragraph will scarcely bear such a construction, but least it should be so construed, we now state that the bench merely decided that Mr. M'Dougall had done right in refusing to recommend his servant for the indulgence, as he was not entitled to it. The servant has a right to apply to the bench, and though the master may refuse to second his application by his own recommendation, he has no right to refuse his servant the privilege of coming to the bench to make his application.

NEW ENGLAND AND DARLING DOWNS DISTRICTS.—His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to appoint George James M'Donald, Esq., of New England district, and Christopher Rolleston, Esq., of Darling Downs district, Commissioners of Crown Lands beyond the limits of location.

ANOTHER MAN SUPPOSED TO BE DROWNED.—On Wednesday last a man named Fox, in the employ of Mr. P. J. Cohen, and who resided at Mr. Cohen's farm, on the opposite side of the river, was engaged in bringing some green stuff from the farm to the Rose Inn, in a small boat, with a pair of paddles: the man and boat did not arrive at the inn, nor has he or the boat been heard of since; the paddles were found by the river side. It is therefore supposed that the man is drowned and the boat sunk to the bottom. It is generally said that the man was in a state of intoxication at the time. Search has been made for the body, and on Thursday several black fellows were engaged in diving, in order if possible to recover it, but up to last evening it had not been found.

RETURNING OFFICERS.—His Excellency the Governor has appointed the following gentlemen returning officers at the ensuing elections:—Cumberland, Patrick Hill, Esq.; Bathurst, Thomas Jarman Hawkins, Esq.; Hunter, Brisbane, and Bligh, Joseph Docker, Esq.

TICKET OF LEAVE CANCELLED.—On Thursday morning a woman named Susan Jordan, a ticket of leave holder, was brought before the police bench on a charge of theft, and though the evidence was not such as to legally convict her of the offence with which she was charged, there was sufficient to justify the bench in ordering her ticket be cancelled.

THE CROPS.—The crops in this neighbourhood are still in a healthy and promising condition, the fine weather we have lately experienced having materially assisted in bringing the maize to perfection, and though the nights have lately been excessively cold, the frosts having kept off, no injury has been sustained by the corn. The young wheat and barley are also very promising. The potatoe crops are now being generally got in, though the new potatoes which have at present come into the market are not of the best quality.

MR. PICKWICK IN MAITLAND.—One day last week a gentleman bearing the above illustrious cognomen made his appearance in the court-house, East Maitland; he was not, however, attended by the ever faithful Samivel Veller, but by constable Kerr, who handed him with but little ceremony to that part of the court commonly called the prisoner's bar, where he made his obeisance to their worships with a very rueful countenance. The court was then informed by the aforesaid constable Kerr that on the previous night, while making his nocturnal perambulations around the good town of Maitland, he took a peep into a certain domicile, near Joe the Plemman's, kept by a good lady of the name of Shaw, who was in the habit of very kindly "taking strangers in," to enquire whether she had more than her own in the house; that he was answered in the negative by a damsel who resides in the establishment, but being doubtful of her veracity he lighted a candle in order to satisfy himself by ocular demonstration, and proceeding to an inner room he found the gentleman before the court snugly ensconced in bed, and being of course unacquainted with the illustrious name the stranger bore, he unceremoniously roused him, and enquired if he was free. The stranger, being somewhat startled at this intrusion upon his slumbers, answered of course he was, but unfortunately he did not happen to have his certificate about him. The constable having some doubts questioned him a little more closely, when he acknowledged that his name was Levi Pickwick, assigned to a Mr. Creighton, of the Paterson; that he had come a long distance down the country, with a pass from his superintendent, to go to Port Macquarie to deliver himself up to government, and was then on his way to the Paterson to see his master: upon this the constable took him into custody. When called upon for his defence Mr. Pickwick stated that he arrived in the colony in the year 1825, that he once held a ticket of leave, which he had lost, and had been for the last four years assigned to Mr. Creighton, in whose service he had been living at a station on Beady Plains, 350 miles from Maitland; that a month ago the superintendent gave him a letter and a pass for fourteen days to go to Port Macquarie and deliver himself up to government, but he thought it necessary to go and see his master first. The bench informed him that in coming to Maitland he had gone a long way out of his road, and his being found in a disorderly house was nothing in his favour, added to which he had attempted to pass himself off upon the constable as a free man; they must therefore sentence him to a punishment of fifty lashes, and forward him to the Paterson bench, to be dealt with as a runaway. Upon this sentence being pronounced Mr. Pickwick retired from the court, evidently much chagrined.

TOTAL ABSTINENCE SOCIETY.—The members of the St. John's Total Abstinence Society held their usual periodical meeting on Monday evening last, in the Catholic school room, West Maitland. The meeting was more numerous attended than it had been for some time past, there being upwards of two hundred persons present. The Rev. Mr. Lynch was in the chair, who, after having addressed the meeting for some time, read several very interesting anecdotes connected with the temperance movement, &c. After the business was concluded several persons took the pledge of the society. This society has gained a rapid accession to its members lately; no less than twenty persons received the pledge from the rev. president on Sunday and Monday last; during the last fortnight between forty and fifty persons have joined the society, and the number of its members now amounts to nearly four hundred in and about West Maitland, exclusive of those who belong to the society at East Maitland. The number of the members belonging to the society at Patrick's Plains is about two hundred; and of the other societies in this district, all of which have been established by the Rev. Mr. Lynch, that at Wollombi numbers fifty members, at Black Creek fifty, at the Paterson twenty; besides numerous individuals who have taken the pledge at the various stations visited by the Rev. Mr. Lynch. As nothing of a political or sectarian nature is admitted into the society, persons of every religious communion are found enrolled amongst its members; and if it continues to increase as rapidly during the next few months as it has during the last, we may reasonably hope that the debasing vice of drunkenness will be almost banished from this district.

POLICE BUSINESS.—The business at the police office yesterday was rather heavier than usual, there being no less than nine summonses on the list; the whole of them were however postponed, on account of there being no second magistrate in attendance, Captain Day being, we regret to say, indisposed.

COMMITTEES.—Yesterday a woman named Mary Minton was committed to Newcastle gaol for trial on a charge of robbery; and on the previous day a man named Black, who was in partnership with Jocelyn, was committed for stealing two horses, the property of Mr. Chapman, but was allowed bail. Jocelyn was committed on Friday last for the same offence, and was allowed bail, himself in £80, and two sureties in £40 each.

SCONE AND MURRURUNDI.—We perceive by a communication in the Australasian Chronicle of Tuesday last, that the court for the revision of the electoral list closed its labours at Murrurundi on the 10th instant. The court sat at Scone on Monday the 8th, when out of 91 claimants 18 were allowed, and 2 remanded to Murrurundi, which were subsequently allowed there. Only 2 objections were made and they were both admitted. At Murrurundi there were 15 claimants, 10 of whom were allowed. The real list of voters for Scone and Murrurundi is about 70. The court was held at Scone before J. A. Robertson, Esq., P.M., John How, Esq., J.P., and Joseph Docker, Esq., J.P.; at Murrurundi before J. A. Robertson, Esq., P.M., Edward White and Peter Brodie, Esqrs. There appears to have given general satisfaction, and to have acted with great impartiality.

MUSWELLBROOK POUND.—The following is the increased rate of sustenance to be charged daily for the following descriptions of cattle whilst impounded at Muswellbrook, in the county of Durham:—For every horse, mare, colt, filly, ass, mule, &c., 6d.—Government Gazette.