













## PUBLIC MEETING AT SHEFFIELD.

(From the Iris.)

On Monday evening, at six o'clock, a public meeting was held in Paradise Square, for the purpose of petitioning Parliament to take into consideration the propriety of repealing those corrupt laws by which persons imprisoned for minor political offences are suffering the most degrading and oppressive treatment, and those who are not transported, and to release or alleviate the sufferings of those who are confined for political offences, or other offences of a similar character.

Mr. JOHN TAYLOR was called to preside, and after Mr. TAYLOR had read the advertisement calling the meeting, the Chairman called upon

Mr. W. GILL, who came forward to move the first resolution, and in the course of an energetic address, he spoke at some length on the amount of suffering borne by the political prisoners; he also impressed upon the meeting the principle that the interests of the middle and lower classes were indivisible.

Mr. JOHN TAYLOR seconded the resolution, which was carried by acclamation.

Mr. R. O'CONNOR moved the second resolution, and in the course of his address made some excellent remarks on the Corn Laws, describing them as the most base and iniquitous ever passed by any country, and concluded by observing that there was no chance whatever of obtaining a repeal of those laws without an extension of the Suffrage.

Mr. GREEN seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Mr. O'CONNOR then read the petition, which was adopted by the meeting.

Mr. JOHN DEGAN, of Stalybridge, was introduced to the meeting, and in the course of a very sensible and temperate speech, supported the objects of the resolutions, and also made some excellent remarks on the Corn Laws, which were warmly received. He described in the most affecting manner the heart-rending sufferings and privations of the poor artists of both this country and the sister kingdom. He then made an earnest appeal to the meeting, that they should unanimously, temperately, and vigorously, for the purpose of gaining their rights and liberties, which would drive oppression from its seat in this country, and, through its influence, from the face of the earth. He made some remarks on the necessity of temperance and sobriety on the part of the working classes, and concluded a long speech by addressing the meeting on the absurdity of a State Church, and called on the people to support the voluntary principle. The speaker was loudly cheered at the conclusion of his address.

Mr. GILL then made some observations on the necessity of the working men building a hall for themselves to meet in, after which, three cheers were given for Feargus O'Connor and the imprisoned Chartists, three for Mr. Deegan, and the meeting then quietly separated.

## TRIAL OF OXFORD.

(Continued from our last.)

After the able address of Mr. Sidney Taylor, the prisoner's counsel, the Court adjourned till Friday, when a number of witnesses, including the prisoner's grandmother and mother, Dr. Conolly, of the Haswell Asylum, &c. &c., were called, all supporting the allegations of the prisoner's counsel as to his unsoundness of mind. The Solicitor-General, Mr. Sturges, in reply to the evidence adduced by the prisoner, directing his principal effort to show that Oxford was sane.

Lord Denham summed up the evidence with his usual perspicacity.

The jury retired at a quarter past five o'clock, and returned into Court at a quarter past six o'clock; their names were called over, and the prisoner was placed at the bar. He did not appear at all disturbed.

Mr. Clark then asked whether the jury had agreed upon their verdict.

Foreman—We find the prisoner, Edward Oxford, guilty of discharging two pistols at her Majesty, but whether they were loaded with ball is not satisfactorily or sufficiently proved, he being at the time in an unsound state of mind.

This verdict was so inclusive as immediately to cause a considerable discussion between the Judges, the Counsel, and the jury, the latter party not appearing to know, although the question was distinctly put to them from the Bench, whether the intention of their verdict was "guilty or not guilty."

The Attorney-General submitted, on the part of the Crown, that as the jury had returned a verdict of guilty of firing at her Majesty, the Court would make an order that he be detained in custody during her Majesty's pleasure.

Messrs. Bodkin and S. Taylor contended that the verdict was virtually one of acquittal, as the offence of firing pistols loaded with ball was not proved, and that the Attorney-General referred to the 4th Geo. III., and contended that the verdict was not an acquittal under the statute, inasmuch as it required that the jury should find specially whether the person charged was acquitted of the offence of firing, or whether at the time he committed the act with which he was charged.

After some further discussion, in which nothing was arrived at, or, indeed, could have been, on such a matter.

Lord Denham—Do you find that the pistols were charged with bullets, or not?

The Foreman—That, my Lord, we consider that we have not evidence sufficiently satisfactory to make us decide.

Lord Denham—It is possible that, having found the prisoner insane, you have not applied your minds to the particular point as to whether the pistols were loaded with ball.

The Foreman—We have, my Lord.

Lord Denham—When you say that you do not find the prisoner fired a pistol loaded with ball, do you mean to say that the prisoner is not guilty?

The Foreman—That is not our intention, my Lord.

Lord Denham—You had better refer to your room to reconsider that point.

The jury again retired at twenty minutes to seven, and having been absent until twenty-five minutes to eight, returned, when the Foreman gave in the verdict as follows:

"We find the prisoner guilty, but that he was of unsound mind at the time."

The Attorney-General—Then, my Lord, I again submit to the Court that the Crown prove that the prisoner, Edward Oxford, having now been found guilty of the crime with which he was charged, be detained in custody during her Majesty's pleasure, and that the Court will make an order to that effect.

Lord Denham—That is the matter of course. The proceedings here terminated, and the prisoner was removed.

The trial lasted till about eight o'clock.

## BRADFORD.

**CHARTIST CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY.**—The members of this society held their weekly meeting on Monday evening last, at the house of Mr. Hopper, Hope-street, Mr. Fletcher in the chair. After the members of the Co-operative Provision Store had paid in their weekly contributions, the following resolution was moved by Mr. Bradley, seconded by Mr. Crowther, and carried:—"That the Members of this Association do hold their weekly meetings at the house of Mr. Waddell, lately occupied by Mr. Bussey, Goodmans-land, and that we meet on Saturday, the 18th inst., at seven o'clock, in the evening, and that members are desired to attend, as there is business of importance to be brought before them, and it is our monthly night of meeting.—*Correspondent.*"

**FUSION SOCIETY.**—On Monday last a match, between the cricket of the worthy ladies and the worthy gentlemen, was played on the cricket ground, where the ladies took place at Huddersfield, near Bradford, twenty subscribers, at £3 each. The prizes were for the best shot, £50; for the second best, £15; for the third, £10; and for the fourth, £5. The head prize was won by Johnson, a Lancashire man. Day, of Lancashire, Whitehead, of Haworth, Parratt, of Bradford, and Taylor, of Bowling, killed equal birds; and the further shooting was postponed to the following day, as the weather was so bad that the birds were equal shots, and divided the second and third prizes. Taylor came in for the fourth, whilst Day was left in the back ground.

**ASSAULT.**—On Tuesday evening last, as Mr. H. Thornton was returning home, from St. John's Brow-back, he was most violently assaulted by a number of blackguards, some of whom style themselves gentlemen, and who, it is supposed, were returning from the shooting match. They commenced by firing their guns in the direction of Mr. T., but whether to injure him or to frighten the horse remains yet to be proved. Mr. Thornton, in endeavouring to make out the individuals, was again attacked, and most dreadfully beaten with the butt-end of their guns. Some persons came to his assistance, and he was conveyed to a house on the road side, where he now lies in a most dangerous state. We understand that the names of the parties have been found out; and will, we hope, shortly be brought to justice.

**ANNIVERSARY OF THE DUTCH.**—The Victoria Lodge of the above Order held its third anniversary at the house of Mr. James Taylor, the Griffin Inn, on Monday last, where a sumptuous dinner was provided, which reflected great credit on the worthy host. Every member present brought himself a true knight of the trencher; the cloth being drawn, songs, toasts, and recitations were the order of the evening, and the greatest harmony and conviviality prevailed till a late hour. A vote of thanks was then given to the worthy host and ladies for the able manner in which they had provided the entertainment; they then separated at rather a late hour highly delighted with the proceedings of the day.

## DUNDEE.

**A PUBLIC MEETING OF THE INHABITANTS OF DUNDEE** was held on the Magdalen Yard Green, on Monday evening, July 15th, to consider the propriety of petitioning the House of Commons, to present an Address to her Majesty praying for the dismissal of Ministers, the release of all political prisoners from political offences, and the restoration of Egypt, William, and Jones.

## HEIGHLEY.

This place is growing so wretchedly poor, and systems that it is almost a miracle the paper keeps up as well as it does. A week or two back, a pious Methodist, within a few yards of heaven, and at the head of a large manufacturing firm in this place, issued out general orders to all his workmen, that if he knew any of them take, or countenance the Star paper, he would turn them from his employment immediately. Tyranny of this description is becoming quite common here amongst the manufacturing tribe, who are taking advantage of the badness of the times, and I am sorry to say, are in some measure effecting their object.

## BIRMINGHAM.

**LOVELL FUND.**—Received from the silver-plate bracers, of Birmingham, per Mr. Barlow, the sum of 18s. 9d., for the Lovell Fund.

J. WATSON, Treasurer.

## THE NORTHERN STAR.

SATURDAY, JULY 18, 1840.

## THE THEORY OF RIOTS.

During the period of war, when all is confusion, excitement, and action, men seldom look beyond the fact that there is war, and they only provide the best means of meeting it; but in the days of peace, men find leisure and inclination to speculate on the causes, the nature and effect of that devastating monster, which before had hardly allowed them breathing time, and they lay down certain regulations which, however disregarded they may be in the moment of action, yet produce a sure, though silent influence, and, in course of time, effect great changes. Thus GRIFFITH and PUFFENDORF, by their secluded studies and deep meditations, effected vast changes in the conduct of nations towards each other, and extended their beneficial discoveries and reflections into the actions of men, even when engaged in the very heat and din of battle. So we—though but humble disciples of these great writers, and though treading in a less extensive path—may be allowed to offer a few facts and reflections on the theory of riots at the present period, when, thank Heaven! they do not exist in practice. We have adopted the subject, after mature consideration, and we possess a firm conviction, that it is a theme of vital importance to every community. We trace the source of storms, which change the smooth surface of the deep into vast and angry billows; we search for the cause of earthquakes, which shake the earth to its foundation; we look anxiously for the materials, whence spring volcanoes, which hurl their flames aloft, as if they returned the lightning in defiance to the Heavens, and yet how far more useful, how far more interesting should be the consideration of those storms, which ruffle and disturb the surface of society, those convulsions which shake governments and nations, those eruptions which break forth in the very bosom of a people. The storm will excite the waves of the ocean, whatever we may find to be the cause, and whatever we may think concerning its qualities; but the conflicts of society are subject to human control, and to human influence.

"The proper study of mankind is man," and we cannot do better than to study well those wonder-working powers, that effect such extensive changes in the framework of states.

Some may object that we should have treated of the theory of revolutions and rebellions; we confess the title and the subject would have been grander, but we prefer the solid metal of utility to the tinkling gewgaws of grandeur, and as riots are more common, and form a kind of preface to rebellions, and as, in fact, a rebellion is nothing more than a general riot, we prefer taking them first in order, and, perhaps, hereafter we may ascend in the scale, and inspect the nature of more extensive movements.

What is a riot? BLACKSTONE (v. iv. p. 146) says it is "Where three or more actually do an unlawful act of violence, or even do a lawful act in a violent and tumultuous manner." So a riotous assembly is said to take place where "twelve persons or more are unlawfully assembled to the disturbance of the peace." It is, in fact, one of those *threes* of the political parent, which she is doomed to feed, before she gives birth to those alterations which are so frequently being produced.

Riots spring from discontent, and discontent arises from grievances, which are either imaginary or real.

We shall usually find that they have too solid a foundation, for it is not in the nature of things that men who are well fed, well clad, and well housed, with their interests sufficiently well cared for, should be anxious to risk those benefits without cause, or should be capable of rising against those by whom they are kindly and generously treated. And yet there have been some riots that arose from a mistaken notion, and without any sound motive. We shall find on the page of history, that in 1780, when the penal laws against the Catholics were happily repealed, riots broke out in Scotland, and in England—in the latter place, headed by Lord GEORGE GORDON, because it was thought that by this justice to a portion of our fellow beings, the Protestant religion was endangered! This, however, was bigotry, and then reason is totally hounded. Perhaps, with the exception of the above solitary instance, we shall not find one outbreak, that had not some substantial grievance for its basis. The principal well founded causes of complaint seem to be four in number—1. Injustice. 2. Oppression. 3. Extortion. 4. Distress.

The last named is the chief and prime cause in most cases of riots, for it drives men to desperation; but as it is generally a consequence of the three preceding evils, either singly or unitedly, we have placed it last. Sometimes all the above four are combined, and then, of course, the attempted remedy is the more violent and intense. It should be observed also that each of the above hardships may be general or local—the injustice may proceed from the rulers of a nation, or from the magistrate of a county, or the employer in a town; or its ravages may be felt throughout the country, or its wrongs may be confined to merely a section.

1. The riots which have sprung from injustice may be ranged under the heads of—

**FIRST. MAL-ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAWS, PARTICULARLY OF THE POOR LAWS.**—When starving men, with starving wives and families, have not only been refused relief, but have been exposed to the insults of overseers, and parish officers, what could be expected? Why, just what we have seen happen—outbreaks from one end of the country to the other. We are not, however, going to rely on general statements, or surmises, but intend to give extracts from a work, which will certainly have a bias against the people, rather than from them, and, therefore, may be regarded as a good authority, whenever it is forced to speak in their favour; we allude to the report of the Poor Law Commissioners for 1834. The supplement certainly contains some very important and useful evidence, and to the question, "Can you give the Commissioners any information respecting the causes and consequences of the agricultural riots and burnings of 1830 and 1831?" about 172 parishes returned answers. From these answers, which, however, were generally given by overseers, or by clerical men, we shall avail ourselves.

These answers were returned under the old Poor Law, but they will be found to apply to the new system, and very recent experience shows the Poor Laws of the present day to be a more fruitful source of discontent than ever. We are told at page eleven of the above-mentioned work, that of twelve parishes in Bedfordshire, which returned answers, seven attribute the riots to the Poor Law administration of twenty-three in Berkshire, eight to the same cause, and six out of seven in Bucks; two out of nineteen in Cambridge! Then we come to the particular parishes, and find these answers to the above-cited question:—"By the antipathy of the pauper to the overseer."—"Disatisfaction with

It would be too tedious to give the name of every parish, when it occurs; we, therefore, give exact words of the answer alone. The supplement extends from page 1 to 108, so that any one can test our veracity by reference.

parish employment made them hostile to overseers and members of vestries."—"From wretchedness, which was the natural consequence of the mal-administration of the Poor Laws."—"By the Poor Laws, they create a hostile and malignant spirit between the workmen and their employers; they depress wages, cause idleness and discontent, and destroy all feelings of reciprocal dependence and good will between the richer and the poorer classes."—"Out of revenge by unemployed labourers against overseers, who perhaps may have treated them rather harshly (1) when they have applied for labour or money."—"From hatred on the part of the poor man, brought on by the present Poor Laws, the poor look on the former as their oppressor and the magistrate as their benefactor."—"Disatisfaction at the decreased parish allowance."

2. **GAMES LAWS**—which are put into execution with so much rigour by sporting magistrates, which so widely mark the distinction between the privileges of wealth and the punishments of poverty, and which create numberless dissensions between the poor and the rich. Thus in the report we find as answers:—

"The Game Laws appear to have been very odious to the unemployed labourers and the frequent commitments to crowded prisons led to evil communications and to rancorous feelings. As the peasant has lost his attachment to the farmer through the Poor Laws, so he has lost his respect for the landlords and aristocracy through the administration of the Game Laws."

3. **ABUSE OF MACHINERY**—whereby inanimate matter is forced and trespassed, though it is destroying the means of subsistence, which are due to animate and living beings; whereby human labour is rendered almost worthless, and there is no employment for the famishing millions, however industriously they may be inclined. Thus from the report again—"By the prejudice against thrashing machines."—"A prejudice against machinery." "The idea that thrashing machines kept them out of employment and lowered wages." "The poverty which compelled the farmer to use the thrashing machine bore down the labourer to unprecedented distress, and drove him to desperation." With regard to machinery in general, and in large towns, we can remember instances of the distressed mechanics rising against it. It is not the use, but the abuse, of machinery of which we complain, and until it is placed within judicious limits and bears a proportion of taxation for the relief of the poor, we feel assured that artisans, who are ready to work, but cannot obtain employment, will not cease to murmur at this robbery committed on their property—that is, labour.

Secondly, oppression takes in a wide range, but we shall briefly touch on the principal heads:—

1. **TYRANNY.**—Wherever men are slaves, they will feel dissatisfied, for it is the nature of man to be free. They will endeavour, whenever it is possible, to throw off the yoke that oppresses, and to take revenge on their cruel oppressors; they do not desire a continuance of such a state of things, and are eager for any change. We well know that the riots of 1830 and 1831, were the fruits of oppression, though nourished by all the incidents we have enumerated above. Give men their rights, allow them a proper interest in the management of affairs, a voice in the administration of national policy, and they will cease to murmur and rise against the authorities. Respect their liberties, their lives, their properties, and they will hold those of others sacred.

2. **WANT OF SYMPATHY AND KINDNESS FROM EMPLOYERS AND THE RICH.**—When the employed are treated with justice, gratitude will cement a chain not easily to be broken; ties will be created that must be productive of benefits to all classes; but neglect, coldness, and indifference, destroy the dependence of man on man, and inflict wounds that rankle within the breast, and never cease to remind the injured of the means whereby such cruelty is lavished upon them. Thus, in support of the first part of our proposition, the vicar of one parish says—"In this place there was no riot or burning, which I attribute to the kindness with which the poor are treated by the farmers in general."

So again—"We had not the least disposition to riot, but every one came forward to preserve the peace, should it be broken. We attribute this good feeling to the wants of the poor being well attended to by the subscriptions of benevolent individuals; and in the distribution of this relief the higher and trading classes have much greater intercourse with the poor than generally happens."

With regard to the second part it is evident that a callousness to the sufferings of the poor, who God knows! suffer enough, cannot be the mode of fostering great reconciliation and affection. Thus we learn, as the cause of the riots in one parish—"Distress on the part of the labourers occasioned by want of sympathy on the part of the magistrates and farmers." And in Colehill, Berks,—"the low rate of wages; the harsh treatment of the labourers; the desire to depress them; the general feeling of distrust and animosity existing between the agricultural labourers and their employers."

3. **EXTORTION, WHETHER ECCLESIASTICAL OR CIVIL.** WILL RAISE UP A HOST OF OPPONENTS.—Men will not be robbed and then thank the thief for the trouble he has taken, or be animated by the most kindly feelings towards him. Where unequal and burdensome taxes are laid on the labouring classes, they will grow, and who can expect that any will be satisfied, when they have to pay large sums for the support of a religion they dislike. The peaceful Church has been guilty of much violence. The tithes have indeed split much blood, and caused many a struggle both in Ireland and England.

In reference to this last cause, our Report gives one or two instances, which are all we can expect, considering that the informant was a clergyman or overseer. "In this parish some of the farmers accompanied the labourers, when they surrounded me in the village, and demanded higher pay; on their making this demand the farmers exclaimed against the pressure of rent and tithes." Thus alleging it as an excuse for bad wages. "I should suppose that want of employment and extreme low rate of wages occasioned by the pressure of the tithes system, must have influenced those unhappy proceedings." "Agricultural labourers would all be apporportioned among the farmers, except in parishes where tithes are taken in kind; for the quiet of the country a commutation should, at all hazards, be immediately entered into by Act of Parliament."

In Cornwall we had no burnings and but a few riots, which were directed against thrashing machines and tithes."

4. **DISTRESS.**—Here, in sad truth, a wide and deplorable scene opens before us; we see human and rational beings starving in the midst of plenty, and driven into a state bordering on desperation. The lowness of wages—the want of employment—the refusal or insufficiency of relief—the sudden fluctuations of values, together with a hundred other causes, among which we must enumerate the frequent voice of the sufferers themselves, such as intemperance, &c., plunge the working classes often, and deeply, into lamentable destitution. On this head, every parish speaks and gives some affecting details. We extract the chief:—

"Restore that feeling among the labourers, that their well-doing depends on their good conduct, which can only be done by enabling the farmers to employ them."

"The distress of the times, and want of proper employment."

"They were too ill-paid before the riots."

"The distressed and wretched state of the poor."

"Want of employment, lowness of wages, a general discontent."

"Actual distress in labourers and mechanics."

"Low wages and real distress."

"Insufficiency of wages, and consequent deterioration of character."

"Want of employment at a remunerating price."

"Primary cause was low wages."

"In almost every parish in Cambridgeshire, wherein riots or fires have taken place, I think the cause was chiefly the cruel policy of paying the single men much below the fair rate of wages."

"Keep up the price of labour, or there will always be cause to fear."

"By the sudden transition from low to high wages."

"Want of food and clothing."

"We have had no inconvivialism in Cornwall. The reason is plain; we have had good crops for the last three years, with abundance of fish and potatoes, which last form a great proportion of labourers' food during winter. Hence there has been no want of employment or food."

"A callous and embarrassed administration of public affairs, added to the still wretched internal feelings of the agricultural affairs, producing real want and suffering to the friendless and unemployed labourers, is generally considered as the cause of such un-English proceedings."

In Steeple Claydon, Bucks, the pay of an unmarried man was three shillings and sixpence weekly."

"In the West of England the whole income of a man and his wife, with three children, was but eight shillings per week, and in many instances only seven shillings, which drove them to desperation!"

"The riotous proceedings of 1830 and 1831, were the acts of a peasantry bowed down to the lowest possible amount of wages on which they could exist, enjoying few comforts, and lacking some things essential (by common consent) to the necessities of life."

Is it not wonderful that men are so tranquil, rather than astonishing that outbreaks should take place?

One of the most extraordinary incidents to riots is the fact that they are contagious, and that their course may be traced with geographical precision. The consequences have been generally a removal of the grievance for the moment; but this is but transitory relief, while the wound sinks deeper into the interests of all. We need hardly say that we are wholly opposed to these physical outbreaks, which give our foes a good pretext for arming against us, which throw our best friends into prison and leave their wives and families certainly in misery, perhaps in destitution. We hold that moral force, properly combined and properly directed, can effect all desirable changes. The remedy may be already gathered from the causes and nature of riots. Injustice, oppression, and extortion, must give way as much as possible. Every means must be adopted for the prevention of distress, and when it does come, all due and necessary relief should be cheerfully awarded to the sufferers. The employer must display kindness and sympathy towards the poor and the employed; but let us never forget, the people at large must be satisfied in every reasonable desire; their interests must be cared for; it is necessary they should have a stake in the country, and then they will be the first to repel their invaders, and the last to violate the established laws or the sacred rights of property.

## THE DELEGATE MEETING AT MANCHESTER.

The one great and primary object of the delegates who may be appointed from all parts of the country to meet in Manchester, on Monday, must be the adoption of some plan of general organisation, whereby the energies of the people may be rallied, concentrated, and directed.

We have been for years aiming at the establishment of something like an universal medium of operation and co-operation among the people. We have, during the whole of our political life, been pointing the attention of the people to the evils of disunion—the ill effects of mere sectional agitation—one party crying out for one thing, another for another, and another for another; and we have still to reiterate the same cuckoo note—the same cry of "Union, Union, Union!"

Let us do one thing at once, and let us all do it together. It needs but this for the accomplishment of every righteous purpose that the people can desire; without this, every plan must fail. Wisdom, and energy, and patriotism, are bootless in their leaders, when the people are a rope of sand.

The salutary, though bitter lessons of experience in the school of agonised endurance which the people have been ever learning, have made them very generally to see and feel the justice of our proposals. Hence, though there is yet far from such a universal manifestation of devotedness to one object as we desire to see among the people, there is yet enough of it to strike terror to the hearts of their oppressors, and to make them watch, with anxious vigilance, each movement of the mighty mass. This is the true reason why the present persecutions of political offenders are more vindictive, more cruel, more inconsistent with the spirit of our law, than was ever known at any previous period of our history. The people's voice, instead of being, as in former times, divided into separate faint cries for the establishment of sundry necessary rights, or the amendment of sundry evil laws, or the redress of sundry pressing grievances, has been concentrated from all quarters of the land: East, West, North, South, and all have lifted up one shout of "UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE," the foundation of all right—the means whereby all evil laws may be remedied, and all political and social grievances redressed. This is now all but universally understood amongst the people; they laugh to scorn the clap-traps of the enemy in which they were wont to be taken most easily. No single-measure agitation could now be got up, of which the utter and contemptible failure of the Corn Law Repeal Humbly affords sufficient evidence.

This is entirely owing to that intercourse with each other by which the people are enabled to interchange their sentiments, to ascertain from each, how all are suffering, and to observe in the condition of the several parts the working of the whole system of society; and that intercourse has been carried on mainly through the medium of the Northern Star, which, as an official organ for the whole people—a mirror in which each man might see his neighbour's mind—has collected into one view the wants, sufferings, and wishes of the whole, and shown that they all tend eventually to one point. An universality of opinion has thus been generated; such as was never before in this country. An object, a definite point to aim at, is now placed before the people towards which their whole attention is directed. The Charter is the thing looked for; the thing wished for; and desired by all.

But this is not enough. If the people would emerge from their condition of bond-slavery, they must not be merely of one mind in the selection of an object, but they must be equally of one mind in the adoption of means for its attainment; else may their several exertions serve only to frustrate their universal purpose. This, too, has been perceived by all, and hence the almost universal eagerness that some mode of general action should be instantly adopted; hence the plans and projects of organisation which have poured upon us from all quarters with a rapidity which, while it perhaps detracted somewhat from that closeness of attention to which the author of each one, no doubt, would deem his own entitled, affords gratifying proof that the organ was not only universally but actively desired; that the people were in earnest about it. We hail this as one of the most heart-cheering symptoms of the people's readiness for, and devotedness to, liberty.

We have had letters from all parts, requiring us to produce our plan for the attainment of the Charter. We have ever chosen that the Northern Star should be the reflector of the people, and their aims, and circumstances, and opinions—the organ of their sentiments—the gazette of their movements. We have never taken the position of a dictator; nor shall we ever do so; nor shall the Northern Star while under our control. We hold that all power

centres in the people; that the power of the people is in their unanimity; and that unanimity is the result of deliberation. Hence, therefore, while we offer a vehicle for deliberation, we claim only the common right of citizens to give our advice and opinion on the matters of discussion.

Nothing can be more plain than that some one plan must be adopted for the concentration of our power. The several plans that have been proposed are all good; they have each something to recommend it. It is for the delegates, the representatives of the people's wisdom, to say which of them shall be put in general operation, or whether, from the whole, some one may not be formed, uniting the best parts of each, and leaving out what might be most objectionable from them all.

This seems to us to be the first and most important duty of the delegates. May, we doubt if, to this subject the minds of the assembled delegates should be applied with all carefulness and prudence, since much of their ultimate success depends on the efficiency and practicability of the means they adopt. They must not forget the circumstances amidst which the people have to struggle against the united power of wealth, cunning, and cruelty. They must not forget that the monopoly of legislation, so long usurped by the factious, has enabled them to fence the people round with disadvantages, with pains and penalties, and legal disabilities, which render a national organisation a thing to be well and anxiously considered. Most of the plans which have been put forward for the purpose of organising the people to procure the Charter, are, in the face of some one or other of the unrighteous decrees that are made by the oppressors, to bear the name and assume the operation of the law; and hence, were they or any one of them carried out precisely as laid down by their respective authors, Government would nurse them till their operation reached a convenient crisis, then prosecute them in vast numbers, and cause them to be executed with merciless cruelty.

To aid the delegates in their deliberations on this matter, it may be useful to put them in possession of the exact provisions of the law, with respect to the existence and organisation of political societies.

The Acts which apply to Associations of the people, are the 38th Geo. III. c. 79, and the 57th Geo. III. c. 19; and though malice and lawyer-craft have been unable to prevent the formation of Political Associations, they have succeeded in enveloping them with considerable difficulties, all of which may, however, be steered clear of, if the people mind.

The Act 39th Geo. III. prohibited all sorts of correspondence and intercourse between Societies whose proceedings were secret; and it also prohibited the appointment of delegates or other officers in all such Societies; and it further declared that every such Society was an illegal combination and confederacy, and that every member of such Society, and every person, not a member, who held intercourse with such Society, was amenable to the punishments mentioned in the Act.

It did the same in respect to every Political Society which had any divisions or branches. It did not prohibit Societies which had no secret proceedings, divisions, or branches, from holding correspondence with other such Societies.

It did not prohibit the appointment of delegates, nor meetings of such delegates.

It was therefore lawful for any Society, which had no secret proceedings, to correspond in any way it pleased with other Societies; and to appoint delegates to meet and transact business with the delegates of other Societies.

But during the administration of Lord CASTLE-REAGH, the liberties of the people, which had been much abridged during the administration of Mr. PITT, were thought to be still too great, and it was concluded that the more the intelligence and consequent good conduct of the people increased, the greater was the necessity to destroy their "rights and liberties," and an act was therefore passed with this intention, subjecting all political societies to the penalties of the Act 39 Geo. III.

No political society can therefore hold correspondence or intercourse with any other such society, nor appoint delegates to confer with one another on any matter relating to the society.

These acts, disgraceful as they are to the legislature and to the nation, do not, however, prohibit any society from recommending the establishment of other Societies. They do not prohibit any society from sending instructions to any body of persons for the formation of other societies.

They do not prohibit any Society from appointing delegates to meet persons desirous of forming Societies, and assisting to conduct their proceedings to the moment the Society is formed, but all such interference must cease before such Society is declared to be in existence.

They do not prohibit any one from being a member of as many Societies as he pleases.

As they do not prohibit any one from being a member of the councils of as many Societies as he pleases.

They do not prohibit any one from saying in any Society, or in the council of any Society, anything he pleases,







TO THE FUSTIAN JACKETS.

The vessel went to pieces very shortly after struck, but owing to the prompt assistance of officer and men on this station, the crew, four number, were saved, with the exception of a little boy, who was left in the cabin for securi-

if met while excitement was fresh and feverish, a defence and refutation might have been set up. Thus the great benefit of a Radical daily paper, independent of its positive merit, would be its check upon, or contradiction of, slander from the enemy.

There is a great deal of good sound sense in Richardson's plan, which must of necessity be bro in as a part of the details to work out any plan; Richardson thinks every man as honest as him Now, it is good to think a man honest; but we

not all discharged ! May it not be suspected Mr. Roberts's originally Tory predilections, and relationship to an eminent Tory judge, might had an influence in his favour. Surely the Government would do wisely to set open the prison-door to all the Chartists now suffering imprisonment.

that does not belong exclusively to Lord John Russell and his my Lord, in the qualities which mark our state have now as patriots, he is over rich and can spare some grace. Your Irish policy, coupled with the overnors of John's invitation, sounded the tocsin for another —The ter of popular strength to make another and a

My Lord, before I go farther, allow me to pay a  
of gratitude to your Attorney-General. He bestowed  
the courtesy with which he had treated me. I told him  
in the Court of Queen's Bench, that his courtesy

*(Continued in our seventh page.)*







