TERRIFIC EXPLOSION OF GUNPOWDER, ON THE MERSEY,

ENORMOUS DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY.

No event has occurred within the memory of any living being, either in the town of Liverpool or on the Cheshire side of the Mersey, which has occasioned such universal alarm as was felt last evening from one extremity of these neighbourhoods to another, in consequence of the explosion of upwards of eleven tons weight of gunpowder on board a vessel lying in the Mersey, off Monks' Ferry. The consternation which prevailed through every part of the town, particularly towards the south end, rendered it extremely difficult to obtain anything like a complete account of the destruction of property which had taken place. The following particulars, however, have been collected from authentic sources, and are therefore reliable; but we fear they fall very far short of the full amount of the casualties in which this unprecedented calamity has resulted.

It appears that yesterday afternoon the barque Lotty Sleigh, Captain Webber, belonging to Messrs. Hatton and Cookson, of Mersey-street, left the west side of the King's Dock, with the tide, in charge of a pilot, and proceeded to her anchorage in the Mersey, off Monk's Ferry. She was bound for the West Coast of Africa with a general cargo, and had also on board 940 quarterkegs of powder, in all about 11½ tons weight of that destructive commodity, which was stowed away in the after hold of the vessel, immediately beneath the cabin and steerage.

Shortly after six o'clock last evening, the steward of the vessel was in the act of filling a lamp from a can of paraffin oil, when by some means at present unexplained that inflammable liquid became ignited. The can was instantly dropped by the steward, who was horror-stricken to see its flaming contents flowing along the cabin floor and instantly igniting the curtains and bedclothes of the captain's sleeping apartment. To arrest its progress was impossible, and shortly afterwards the fiery stream poured through the opening of the hatchway and communicated with the cargo stowed in the after-hold. It was immediately seen that no hope of extinguishing the flames could be entertained.

The Rock Ferry steamer Wasp, Captain Joseph Hughes, left Rock Ferry at six o'clock, and as she steamed up the Mersey, her passengers and crew were excited by a great noise on board the unfortunate ship, which in the first place gave rise to the impression that there was either murder or mutiny on board. On nearing the vessel, however, they were hailed with cries to come alongside and take off the crew, as the vessel was on fire and there was a great quantity of gunpowder on board. The Wasp hove alongside and made fast to the ill-fated ship. The crew immediately jumped on board the steamer, some of them only half dressed, and in such a hurry did they leave that no one even remained to let go the hawser. The steamer was made fast to her, but by a vigorous effort it was "hitched" off from the deck of the steamer. The mate requested them to wait whilst he ran down into the cabin, and in a minute or two he did so, but speedily returned, saying the heat was so great that he could not get down. The Wasp then took away the crew, and landed them at the George's Landing-stages.

Subsequently the Nymph, another Rock Ferry steamer, passing the Lotty Sleigh on her way to Rock Ferry, not being aware of the fire on board the vessel, and seeing that the ship did not display the usual signals of a vessel at anchor, went alongside and hailed her, with the view of ascertaining the reason, but though they called several times they received no answer but the barking of a poor dog which had been left on board. Capt. Hughes, of the Wasp, described the sensation on the water as similar to that experienced during a severe storm.

The report soon became current that a vessel was in flames in the river Mersey, and hundreds flocked down to the water's edge on either side to witness the spectacle, but few anticipated the frightful calamity which was soon to involve the owners and occupiers of houses in the serious loss they have sustained. The spectators were in ignorance of the nature of the cargo, but when it transpired that the ship was abandoned, and so large a quantity of gunpowder was on board, they were pale with terror, yet seemed transfixed to the spot, as though incapable of removing from the spot, as though incapable of removing from the spot, which they every moment expected to see tossed high into the air.

The captain of the barque was at this time on shore in Birkenhead, and knowing nothing of the disaster till about an hour after. The vessel was being loaded with the gunpowder from the magazine boat, but the men on board the boat, as soon as they heard the alarm, ceased to proceed, unshackled from the steamer, and she floated away free from danger.

We have said that the crew and pilot were taken off the burning vessel by the crew of the Rock Ferry boat. A short time before they left, the vessel the persons having charge of the Woodside steamer Liverpool, seeing the barque on fire, went alongside to render assistance, but the Rock Ferry steamer being on the starboard side of the vessel taking the crew off, the men on board shouted to those on the Liverpool to keep a good distance off, for that there was gunpowder in the hold and they could render no help. The Liverpool had at the time a large number of passengers on board, who on hearing that the burning vessel had a combustible cargo on board became excited, and the captain was entreated to get the vessel out of the reach of danger as quickly as possible. This he did when he found no assistance could be rendered, and proceeded to the Woodside landing.

About 20 minutes past seven o'clock the contents of the vessel blew up with a report which it is hardly possible to describe. The simultaneous explosion of 50 barrels of heavy combustible could not have produced so terrible and alarming a shock. Its effects in every part of Liverpool were severely felt and created indescribable terror. At the same moment the roofs and hundreds of warehouses, offices, and private dwellings were shaken to their base—doors, locked and even bolted, were thrown wide open—hundreds, yes, even thousands, of squares of plate-glass were shivered to atoms, the entire line of lamps through the greater portion of the streets were extinguished, rendering it difficult to pass from place to place, and jeopardising the safety of those who rushed forth to ascertain the cause of the consternation. The fear which prevailed was particularly experienced by the poorer inhabitants, who poured forth from court and alley, imagining that some new and unknown danger, and dragging their helpless children at their heels. Crowds ran first this way and then that, inquiring what was the cause of the alarm, some hurried back to their homes and then another, and as some vague rumour was circulated pretending to the disclosure of the origin of the casualty, the crowd rushed to the spot, only to be left in the more bewildered state of amazement and uncertainty.

The spectacle which the burning vessel presented at the moment of the explosion was one of the most frightful yet grand which could have been witnessed. The flames had enwrapped the whole of the lower portion of the vessel, but had not burst forth and ignited the rigging. Suddenly a sound that deafens, and makes the solid earth to heave and reel, burst upon the ear, and the black hull belches forth a hideous volume of flames illuminating the heavens and casting its lurid light on either shore and on the vessels lying at anchor in the Slorne and the river. High in the air the yards, masts, and in fact the whole of the upper portions of the vessel were thrown by the force of the explosion, and fell like fiery hissing serpents into the water all around. Bolts, portions of the hull, and fragments of the lighter parts of the ship were propelled as far as either shore, and we heard of some pieces falling upon the adjacent boats lying near the landing-stages. The hull was literally torn to small pieces, and immediately the smoke had cleared away portions of the burning mass were seen floating down the river with the ebb tide. Of these, at one time, there were not a hundred yards of the vessel visible, and as they floated down the stream presented a very singular appearance. They were traced for a considerable distance, but eventually the lights were extinguished by the water and disappeared, and no mischief was occasioned by the burning pieces. Shortly after the explosion a portion of the hull floated past the Woodside ferry boat, that vessel being compelled to shut off steam to avoid coming in collision with it as it came down the river. A vessel called the Retriever was lying within a few hundred yards of the burning ship, but she sustained no injury from the falling burning pieces.

Soon after the explosion, Captain Sumner, of the steamer Phœnix, left the Prince's Landing-stage and proceeded round the burning vessel, visiting the ships lying in immediate proximity. The one of which, outward bound, had received the shock we referred to, and had had her cabin doors and other portions of furniture completely smashed. Captain Sumner then observed the mate hailed from the river, together with several other persons in the vessel and her cargo.

The Lotty Sleigh was a barque of 220 tons burthen, and we understand was insured. She shipped a full complement of seamen, and the captain had all his effects, and a considerable sum of money on board. Two of the crew, after being landed, went to the Sailors' Home. One of them, before the fire began, was engaged in putting the powder on board from the magazine boat, and although he knew little or nothing of the origin of the fire, he speaks of the terrific rapidity with which it spread over the vessel. Most of the clothing of the crew has been lost, and many of the poor fellows are left in pecuniary distress.

Some surprise has been expressed that the vessel was not scuttled when she was first discovered to be on fire, in order to prevent the explosion; but it is considered that the flames spread with unusual rapidity, and that the cargo was of the most destructive nature, it is not to be wondered that those on board escaped for their lives and did not take those precautions which under other circumstances they probably would have done.

Besides the powder the vessel had a large valuable general cargo, consisting principally for the West Coast trade, and doubtless the loss to the owners or underwriters will be large.

Great praise is due to Captain Hughes, of the Rock Ferry steamer Wasp, for the prompt manner in which they went to the assistance of those on board the burning vessel, and the precautions which they took in getting them safely on board the steamer.

The damage done in the south Castle-street was considerable. The plate-glass front in the shop of Mr. Owens, watch manufacturer, was completely blown out. The shutters of the shop of Mr. Archer, musical instrument maker, though secured by strong iron bars, were blown down. The same thing occurred at the shop of Mr. Gresson, printer and lithographer. At the establishment of Messrs. Allison and Martin, wine and spirit merchants, a large plate of glass was blown out. Inspector Hancox, who was on duty in this neighbourhood, promptly stationed police-officers at the shops referred to, and prevented any attempt at pillage.

In Castle-street and vicinity several of the shops and offices were much damaged, some of their expensive plate-glass fronts being shivered to atoms. At the shop of Mr. Alexander Sampter, hosier and glover, Castle-street, three large plates of glass were destroyed. Three large plates of glass were broken in the shop front of Messrs. Hopkins and Sons, cabinet manufacturers, St. George's-crescent, and some of the upper windows were broken. The plate-glass front of Mr. George Eastee's fancy repository was entirely smashed, and many of the articles in the window damaged.

The plate-glass front of the house of Mrs. Copplestone, licensed victualler, Derby-square, was blown out. A portion of the glass fell upon Mr. Williams, cabinet maker, in Hope-street, and he was severely cut about the head, and bled profusely. He was taken to the landing-stage in a cab, and conveyed home as speedily as possible. One of the frames window in the spirit vault connected with the Cheshire Inn, James-street, was blown out.

The shopkeepers of Lord-street are sufferers to a considerable extent. At the shop of Mr. Gaitt a plate of glass was broken in the shop of Mr. Stout, boot and shoe manufacturer. The shutters covering the doorway of Messrs. Livingston and Stonier's china and glass warehouse were blown in. The plate-glass front of the shop of Messrs. Gillham and Co., hatters, was completely destroyed. At the shop of Messrs. Reis and Co., bullion merchants, a large-sized plate of glass was broken. At the shop of Mr. Cook, Lord-street, druggist, some of the bottles were thrown from the shelves, and the window much damaged. The shop of Mr. Woods, hatter, was greatly injured, the shop front being blown out. Mr. Thomas John Changing, asserts that he dreamt on Thursday night that a fearful explosion took place, one effect of which was that Lord-street was in darkness.

The lower windows and door of the establishment of Messrs. Elkington and Co., Church-street, are covered with iron shutters. These shutters were "bowed in" by the force of the explosion, a similar casualty occurred at the shop of Messrs. Woods and Co., carpet warehouse, Bold-street. At the silk warehouse of Messrs. Shellard and Hodgson, Bold-street, some fine sheets of glass were blown to pieces.

A great amount of damage was done at Compton House, where several large panes of glass were broken.

The waxwork exhibition of Mr. Allsop, Lime-street, did not escape. Several panes of glass were broken, and some trifling damage done to the contents of the hall.

In Dale-street the shock of the explosion was felt with the greatest intensity. The lights in the central police office were extinguished, and the officials were greatly alarmed, as it was rumoured that a gas explosion had occurred in the question house. The fire engines, under the direction of Mr. Superintendent Hewitt and a body of the fire police were quickly turned out. They were driven down Dale-street, but from conflicting rumours as to the nature and locality of the explosion —some stating that it was a gasometer at Vauxhall-road Gasworks that had exploded, others asserting that there was an underground explosion of gas—the firemen were at one loss where to go in order to lend any aid that might be required. After some time they were informed that an explosion had taken place on board a ship in the river, and the engines were driven in that direction, but of course their journey was fruitless.

The force of the explosion was severely felt on the west side of the Exchange Buildings. The keeper of the Building, John Griffiths, had extinguished the gas, and was preparing to leave, when the air, forced with tremendous velocity along the corridor skirting the Exchange Flags, dashed in between 20 and 30 of the immense squares of plate glass which form the windows on that side of the building. Some idea of the power of the explosion may be drawn from the fact that portions of the glass were thrown 20 feet into the centre of the room, and one piece inflicted a severe wound on Griffiths's hand.

Several squares of glass were blown from the windows of the Insurance and Press from the skylight of Sir William Brown's buildings, and the gas was at the same time extinguished.

In Corn Exchange Buildings and Victoria Building, Tithebarn-street, the windows were more or less smashed.

At Preston's public house, the corner of Hackin's-lay and Dale-street, the upper portion of a large plate window, in front of the house, was forced from the framework, and falling into a window filled with bottles of spirits caused a serious loss.

In the neighbourhood of Gallhal-street, several parties suffered from the windows having been broken; and these being chiefly large sheets of plate-glass, the damage has amounted to very many pounds.

In Marybone the doors of the house No. 66 were forced open, several half barrels of ale were lifted from the ground, and the gas was extinguished; the house at the same time shaking so violently that many thought another earthquake had visited Liverpool.

Although the shock was felt perhaps most severely in the lower part of the town, it extended to the upper portions of the town, particularly in St. Mary-street and Great George-street, and in the direction of Falkner-street and Parliament-street, it was experienced to such an extent as to cause considerable alarm, and gave rise to numerous various being the surmises and conjectures in regard to its origin. As if by common consent, people rushed out of their houses in a state of great trepidation, and inquiries were made the impression that the explosion was confined to their particular district. To hint even at the numerous suppositions formed would be an impossibility. They were various in many cases they were vague; whilst not a few of them assumed almost a ludicrous character. A tremulous motion lasting for several seconds had been felt, and a loud report heard in some quarters, and a flash being observed in the streets; but beyond this, individual experience could not extend. The first impression was that a sudden ignition of gas had taken place; a feeling which, at such a moment, leads men anxiously to inquire the precise locality. This was perhaps strengthened by the fact that in many streets the whole of the gas lamps and the lights in the houses were at a stand-still, and extinguished, though their partial extinction in other places seemed, upon a reasonable view of the matter, entirely to negative such supposition. In some quarters, the idea of an earthquake was suggested; in fact, every one appeared to have a different version, according to the peculiar circumstances under which the unexpected shock was experienced. In the zone being that in which most of the residents were either at home or proceeding thither, the natural impulse was to go in quest of the cause of what evidently appeared to be a violent accident. Groups of anxious pedestrians perambulated the streets, though without any apparent certainty of the best locality for commencing their inquiries. Upon making inquiry along the Rodney and Berry streets, in the neighbourhood of Rodney and Berry streets it was gratifying to find that the damage sustained, however general, was of a comparatively slight character. Some shop windows were broken, together with occasional panes of glass in private houses, yet they were the exception, the inconvenience experienced being chiefly confined to the temporary extinction of gas lights. In the tobacco warehouse of Mr. Morris, Berry-street, a portion of the glass front was shattered. The establishment of Mr. Beswick, music seller, in the same street, has sustained similar damage, the shop-windows of Lewis's Bazaar, Great George-street, were materially damaged. Along the streets in a direct line to the north end of the town the damage was of a similar character. In Bootle-street a window into which a huge board was being introduced for the purpose of temporary protection, and here and there a pane of glass in a private house bore evidence of the effect of the explosion. In the neighbourhood of Vauxhall-road and Scotland-road and in the intermediate streets less or more damage was sustained, though in no instance of any special notoriety. A house in Marlborough-street, Scotland-road, is reported as having the windows shattered. At the music hall known by the name of "Dan Lowry's Music Saloon," the windows in the place have been broken, several of the plate-glass being scattered upon the pavement beneath. In Everton and the neighbourhood the shock was severely felt, but the impression was that it was much less than that which was experienced in other portions of the outskirts. The houses generally were violently shaken, occasioning the occupants considerable alarm.

Several of the larger establishments in Dale-street, more especially the spirit vaults having large plate-glass windows, suffered extensively. A spirit vaults, known as Crane's, in Johnson-street, had one of the windows, which is a large sheet of glass in Messrs. Robinson and Preston's vaults, at the corner of Hackin's-hey, was so much damaged that the upper portion of the window had to be boarded for protection. Some of the windows of Mancheter Buildings, Brunswick-road, were also broken. Similar damage was sustained at Manchester Buildings, and at the spirit vaults at the bottom of Chapel-street.

The effects of the explosion were felt in a more or less degree at the north end of the town, extending as far as Bootle and Waterloo. At Bootle many of the shops sustained loss of their houses in consequence of the utmost terror and alarm, being under the apprehension that they were visited by an earthquake. Several windows were broken, but no other damage occurred, so far as our inquiries extended. At the police station, Bootle, the shock was severely felt, the building shaking to the foundation, as if from the effects of some violent convulsion. The occurrence was ascribed to various causes, according to the circumstances under which it was experienced. Many persons imagined that a powder magazine on board some vessel in the river had blown up; whilst others came to the conclusion that the effects were the result of a boiler explosion at some of the large iron works in the neighbourhood.

Along the whole line of docks the shock was felt with great violence, and considerable consternation was caused. The damage, however, was chiefly confined to the breakage of windows, those facing the river having especially suffered from the effects of the concussion. The force of the shock seemed to have acted in an unaccountable manner; at one house, the whole of the windows would be shivered into a thousand fragments, and the very next would perhaps have escaped with some or very slight damage. In the Salthouse corner premises seemed to have suffered most, and these were chiefly public houses, the plate-glass fronts of which were badly mutilated. In Paradise-street, so far as we could learn, was sustained, though there were one or two narrow escapes. The lamps at several of the dock sheds were extinguished, and some panes of glass forced out and were lying about in the docks. At the Salthouse Dock Shed one of the massive doors at the north-east corner trembled so much beneath the force of the concussion that the policeman on duty thought it was about to fall. One of the iron tie-rods which crossed the roof broke at one of the links, which was about six inches in circumference, and the beam swinging down just escaped a man who was standing near.

At the Collingwood Dock, two officers were standing near the door when the explosion took place. The ground underneath them became violently agitated, and one of the men was forcibly driven from the doorway. Many of the lamps along the dock quay were suddenly extinguished, to the great consternation of the pedestrians. A similar result was experienced at the dock office. At the Working Men's Dining Hall, Regent-road, corner of Dublin-street, a large window was smashed to pieces, and the building shaken to the very foundation. Some other establishments in the neighbourhood, but they were of a comparatively trifling character.

At the Custom House a large number of the windows upon the south front were broken, and at the dock opposite the Custom House every pane was smashed in. The Sailors' Home escaped without any damage to the windows; but several of the doors were forced open.

Amongst the sufferers in James-street was Mr. Bradley, a publican, three of whose plate-glass windows were forced out. One sheet had been cut asunder as though with a diamond, while in another a portion had been cleared from the centre in the most regular order. At the shop of Mr. Scott, of the Belgian zinc depôt, 33, James-street, the shutters forming the door were blown out. Mr. Dan Lowry, Music Saloon, had a plate-glass window destroyed. Messrs. Gardner and Co.'s bakery, Canning-place, had a large plate of glass broken. At the Mona Hotel, Mr. Hunter's, a large sheet of glass was destroyed, though no further damage was sustained.

In Wapping considerable damage was done, the following instances being reported:—Messrs. Lemon and Sons, confectioners, bakers, shutters blown down and glass in the windows greatly damaged; Mr. Lemon afterwards missed a gold watch from his waistcoat pocket, and it is supposed that he lost it when he was rushing out into the street on the first alarm, he slipped down in the mud. Messrs. Leatherbarrow, publicans, corner of Runcorn-street, plate-glass window broken. Mr. Ashton, publican, corner of Salthouse-lane, window completely blown out. Mr. Robert Snowden, 77, Kitchen-street, window destroyed. James Christian, publican, 19, Dock-street, window destroyed, and bottles broken. George W. Hewitt, publican, 10, Strand-street, three large plate-glass windows broken. Messrs. H. Gurup and Sons, 17, Drury-lane, window broken. Mr. James Cross, T. Smyth, and Co., corn merchants, 4, Drury-lane; and Messrs. Harris and Co., 6, Drury-lane, stationers, windows broken.

At the iron and steel works of Messrs. Horsfall a massive iron gate was blown down, and a similar accident occurred at Messrs. Fawcett and Preston's works, York-street.

At the Southern Hospital the shock was severely felt, the whole building distinctly vibrating. At the gaslights went out at once. The impression was that an explosion of gas had taken place in the hospital, the gas should be shut off, and lights turned off immediately. Many of the patients rushed into the street in their night dresses—some of broken legs crawling out upon their hands and knees; and, in fact, for the moment the utmost confusion of the house surgeons, backed most ably by the porters and nurses, the consequences might have been dreadful. The poor sufferers were soothed and removed to a place of safety in the adjacent hall, and in about half an hour the hospital resumed its usual quietude. The only damage done was the blowing off of some of the ventilating gratings in the wards, and the smashing of several of the windows.

Toxteth also suffered considerably, and at the shop of Mr. Roberts, at the corner of Warwick-street and Islam-street, a window of plate-glass valued at £15 was destroyed. Many others suffered with comparatively little damage.

At the Northern Hospital much consternation was occasioned to the inmates, but beyond the breakage of a few squares of glass no damage was occasioned, neither has accident of any kind been reported at the hospital.

The streets of Liverpool were literally crowded for hours after the occurrence, and it was near midnight before a feeling of conscious security returned.

Some idea may be formed of the terrific effect of the explosion when it is mentioned that the report was heard at Chester, the authorities at that place having telegraphed to Liverpool to know what was the cause of the tremendous report which they had heard.

BIRKENHEAD AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

The explosion was felt with terrific force at Birkenhead, and a similar alarm was prevalent amongst the inhabitants, numbers thinking that an earthquake had taken place. The public lamps and nearly the whole of the gas lights in the shops and private dwellings were instantly extinguished, and people rushed into the streets exhibiting the utmost terror. The thoroughfares, especially those leading to Woodside Ferry, were soon crowded with persons anxiously inquiring whether any lives had been lost. Some of the falling bolts and the shattered spars from the ill-fated vessel fell upon houses and in the streets, and there were several narrow escapes from serious injury, but very few individuals sustained any particular injury. In some instances, people who were seated comfortably in their houses were thrown down, and one gentleman, with his family at Claremount, states that a chair on which he was seated was lifted a foot or two from the ground. Another gentleman, who lives near the square, was lying on a sofa when the concussion took place, and he was thrown upon the floor on the floor.

Almost simultaneous with the explosion there was a frightful crash of glass throughout the town. Scarcely a window in Hamilton-square or those streets which were most exposed to the effects of the concussion. The lights on the Woodside landing stage were extinguished, and the covered bridge connecting the stage with the ship was greatly rendered a perfect wreck. Nearly every pane of thick plate-glass which covered the bridge was demolished, as was also the glass at the paygates and the offices. The damage done to the Wood side Ferry will probably be not less than £250. The new steamer Cheshire, which was on the river at the time, had also some of her cabin windows broken.

Proceeding from Woodside Ferry into the township, an indescribable state of things presented itself. The footwalks were covered with broken glass, people were hurrying alarmed to the greatest consternation, and police-lighters were busily occupied in re-lighting the public lamps. Some parts of the place were in darkness for a considerable time. The destruction to property in windows in private houses cannot at present be even roughly estimated, but it must be very great. In Gough's Woodside Hotel (both back and front) scores of panes of glass have been broken; the front door was forced in, and the framework smashed. Indeed, this large building was completely riddled. The extensive plate-glass front of Arbridge's public house, in Chester-street, was in fragments, and the bottles of spirits which were in the window were shattered into a thousand pieces. Mr. Arbridge estimates his damage at upwards of £100. Further on in Chester-street, the plate-glass front in Mr. Hallinger's shop was broken to pieces, as also the windows in Outram's chophouse, the Hornet vaults, and other places of business on both sides of the street. The whole front of Mr. Willmer's premises, and the premises adjoining, occupied as offices by the Wirral Waterworks Company, were likewise smashed. The shop of Mr. W. Peck, draper, has a double frontage, and the whole of the plate-glass was blown in. The Royal Hotel, kept by Mr. Glover, presented a complete wreck, the windows being shattered from top to bottom of the building, and the frame work of one or two of the doors being partially carried away. The premises of Mr. Grey, draper (Glasgow House), also suffered, several large valuable plate-glass squares of glass being blown in. The shop of Mr. Gilbertson, flour dealer, and Mr. Jones, wine merchant, in great quantities of glass broken. In Market-street, Mr. Green, auctioneer, Mr. Clarke, hatter, and others had their windows broken. Messrs. Byrd and Co., grocers, Argyle-street, suffered severely by the destruction of glass. The market escaped with a few broken panes.

In Hamilton-street the explosion did great damage. The shop front of Mr. Moore, hatter, with Regent-road, in the corner of Dublin-street, a large window was smashed to pieces, and the building shaken to the very foundation. Some other establishments in the neighbourhood, but they were of a comparatively trifling character.

At the Custom House a large number of the windows upon the south front were broken, and at the dock opposite the Custom House every pane was smashed in. The Sailors' Home escaped without any damage to the windows; but several of the doors were forced open.

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THE PRINCESS OF WALES.

FROGMORE, FRIDAY, ELEVEN A.M.

H.R.H. the Princess of Wales continues to make an uninterrupted recovery. The infant Prince is quite well.

The next bulletin will be issued on the 17th.

ARTHUR FARRE, M.D.

CORRESPONDENCE.

AID FOR POLAND.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE LIVERPOOL MERCURY.

Gentlemen,—It having been represented to the committee who organised the concert given on the 12th instant, at Hengler's Circus, in aid of the distressed, in aid of the Polish fund, that many persons who were either unaware of that event or unable to attend are desirous of contributing to support the sacred cause of Polish independence, they have resolved to open a subscription list to meet the views of all persons so desirous of co-operating in this good work. A deputation of the committee will (where practicable) wait upon persons who are understood to be sympathisers. The committee have also opened a subscription list at the North Pole Inn, 1, Great Oxford-street, to receive subscriptions, &c., and the friends of Poland in Liverpool will be glad if there are respondents solicited to relieve the committee from the necessity of a personal canvass by sending in their contributions immediately.—Yours, &c.,

F. M'PHILLIPS, Hon. Sec.

Liverpool, Jan. 14, 1864.

THE WOODSIDE STEAMERS.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE LIVERPOOL MERCURY.

Gentlemen,—The interesting discussion, yesterday, at the meeting of the pilotage committee, has elicited the fact that the proceedings of the recent public meeting, in which the writer cannot conceal the deep notification which he felt at the unconstitutional course the Berry's proprietors passed upon the arbitrary and illegal proceedings of certain members of the committee.

I will pass over his observations upon Mr. Picton—that gentleman needs no defence from my pen; he is too prominent a public character to be exposed to their utter discomfiture on Tuesday) to require any one to answer for him—and proceed to the last paragraph of the Berry's proprietors' letter, "Upon the strong recommendations (that is, of the committee) will be adopted whenever the proprietors recover their senses and take the trouble to understand their own affairs. Now, I venture to say that a more impertinent—nay, insolent—remark was never penned against 300 ladies and gentlemen.

May I ask, who is this man who has the audacity to utter such an observation—who is the proprietor of the Liverpool Library? Is he by birth, talents, or social position justified in setting himself up in judgment upon such an assertion? Are we never before gathered together within the walls of the library? "Upon what meat doth this Julius feed, that he hath grown so great?" Further, how is he connected with the library, to entitle his recommendations to any weight? Yet this man has the audacity to tell proprietors and gentlemen who have been in the library for years, and others, who have been connected with the library for upwards of a century, that his brewer will be exercised to recover their senses and "recover their senses" and "understand their own affairs."—Yours, &c.,

Druid-court, Jan. 16, 1864. HENRY BREMNER.

THE SAVINGS BANK

TO THE EDITORS OF THE LIVERPOOL MERCURY.

Gentlemen,—The Neston Savings Bank is not a branch of the Liverpool Savings Bank, and its accounts are not incorporated with those of the "trunk institution." The Liverpool establishment is merely the custodian of the funds, and has no control over the Neston or other similar bank think fit from time to time to deposit in its hands, and it is with these funds alone it is held responsible. On these funds it allows the full statutory interest of £2 5s. per cent., merely making a charge of 1s. per cent. for management.

I do not stop to inquire with whom the responsibility of the deplorable occurrence at Neston rests. The cause is very obvious. If the same system prevailed, there would no steps were ever taken to ascertain the correct amount of the indebtedness of the bank and compare the amount with the funds. Had this been done, it would have disclosed the malpractices, for it appears the various sums misappropriated were correctly entered in the pass books, and in the ledger, therefore no mere comparison of the pass books with the ledger would have disclosed it.

A correspondent in to-day's *Mercury* asks—"Is there a general and periodical comparison of the whole of the pass books of the depositors with the accounts in the ledgers; and if not, why not?" A remedy, however desirable, to be of any value, must be practicable. The proposition of the correspondent is to suggest an idea by which all the holders of seventy thousand books can be induced or compelled to bring them to the bank, and, in fact, "the general and periodical comparison of the whole of the pass books" is simply impossible, the next best thing is done. Frequently the bank calls upon the depositors to attend, without notice, and, taking all the books that happen to make their appearance, compares them with the amount by ascertained and duly certified by the public auditor.

This list of balances is always open for inspection, and shows not the aggregate, but only numbers and accounts, it discloses no one's transactions; whilst the number of each day's transactions, duly certified by the auditor of each day's transactions, duly certified by the auditor of each day's transactions, duly certified by the auditor