

FIRE OF COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.

On the 20th, at about four o'clock in the morning the Theatre at Covent Garden was discovered to be on fire. Before any assistance could be afforded, the flames had broken out in all parts, more than an hour having elapsed before a supply of water could be procured, although the fire engines attended at the first alarm. Even when they could be brought to act, the violence of the flames rendered all their efforts useless. The flames extended to several adjoining streets; but in consequence of the unremitting exertions of the firemen, and volunteers who had assembled at the first alarm, the devastation did not extend so far as might have been feared.

Several lives were lost on this occasion. Among others, a number of firemen and labourers who were serving an engine in the interior of the building, were overwhelmed by part of the roof. Two females also who were viewing the progress

of the conflagration from the roof of a neighbouring house, unconscious that the fire was at that very time raging in the lower parts of it, were destroyed by its sudden fall.

The number of lives lost is not yet ascertained, but is supposed to have been upwards of fifty. The loss is very great; upwards of £150,000 of which not a third part was insured; several of the performers and persons employed about the house have also suffered in their properties.

A subscription has been set on foot for the relief of the families of those who fell victims to their zeal on this melancholy occasion.

The cause of this catastrophe has not been fully ascertained; but it is generally supposed to have originated from the wadding of a gun discharged behind the scenes during the performance of Pizarro, which had been acted the preceding evening.

 MONTHLY AGRICULTURAL REPORT.

Finding it impossible to finish our Reports, if delayed to the last day of the month, we have thought it better, after the example of some other publications, that in future, they should terminate on the 20th of each month.

THE fine weather that set in so seasonably in the latter part of the month of August, was soon succeeded by a good deal of rain accompanied with high winds, which beat down the strong crops of grain and considerably increased the injury they had sustained by the former wet weather; a favourable change has enabled the farmers to cut down their crops in pretty good time, and the harvest is now generally over and the grain secured.

It is now pretty fully ascertained that the wheat has been generally injured by mildew, and is much inferior in quality, as well as quantity, to the average of other years, and in all probability will bring a high price.

The oat crops seldom appeared more abundant when standing in the stook, and yet it is generally believed the produce will prove far short of what might have been expected from so great a bulk. Although the quality is certainly inferior to last year's produce, there seems no reason to apprehend such a deficiency as to occasion the price to be unusually high.

Barley turns out a good average crop in most places.

The potatoe crop is much improved in quality since last report, and as it is likely to be very productive, we trust there will be an abundant supply of that valuable and nutritious root, which forms so considerable a part of the sustenance of the inhabitants of this country.

From the trials that have been made of the flax of this year, there is much reason to fear that there will be a great deficiency of the usual quantity; in many districts it is thought there will not be more than one-half of the produce of other years, and the price has risen considerably in consequence of the apprehended scarcity. The failure of this crop may be principally attributed to its being pulled before it had attained a proper degree of ripeness, and its afterwards remaining too long on the grass for want of dry weather to take it up.

The turnip crops that were not cut off at an early stage of their growth, continue to root well, and will probably furnish a large supply of winter food. It would be a favourable circumstance for the country if they were more generally cultivated; the extensive culture of that valuable root by the English and Scotch farmers, holds out an example highly deserving our imitation.

The sowing of wheat has already commenced in various parts of the country, and if the weather continues favourable, as it now is, no time ought to be lost in putting the work forward; the early sowing generally succeeds best, as it affords time for the plants to be well established in the ground before the frost comes on, which frequently throws the roots out.

We know that the common mode of sowing wheat after the potatoe crop is removed, is against such early sowing as we recommend, and which is very generally practised in England on fallows; but in some districts in Ireland where fallow is made use of, there is nothing to prevent early sowing, but an opinion which prevails among many farmers, that it is time enough if wheat is sown during the dark of the moon before Christmas. This practice we would particularly wish to discourage; and if it is not in the power of the farmer to have his ground in a condition fit for sowing before the middle of November, we have reason to think it would be much better to defer even to the beginning of March, as the seed would then escape the season when little vegetation takes place, and during which it is liable to be injured by wet. Nothing is to be apprehended from this delay, as we can speak confidently from experience, that it does not delay the ripening above ten days or a fortnight, and the farmer stands a great chance of getting the seed sown on dry ground, a matter of more importance than is generally imagined even to succeeding crops.

MONTHLY COMMERCIAL REPORT.

The war against commerce still continues, though the ports of Holland have unexpectedly been permitted to be opened for the exportation of many articles of their produce, while smalts and some other commodities are said to be still continued under prohibition. Some accounts state that the British administration will not permit the trade of exportation to be carried on by the Dutch, unless they will allow the importation of manufactures from this country in return. The occasion of Bonaparte's permitting the Dutch ports to be partially opened for exportation appears not to be known.

The embargo imposed on her shipping by America still continues, and in all probability will continue till after the meeting of Congress in November, and we are not without grounds for apprehension that this measure, which they deem a wise precaution to keep them out of war, may be still farther persisted in. The embargo, if persevered in, though it is likely to injure their foreign commerce, will also probably cause them to become a manufacturing nation, some years earlier than they would otherwise have attempted. Flax and cotton grow in great abundance in America, and it is said that the breed of sheep is rapidly extending. The mutual restrictions on commerce which it is now becoming the short-sighted policy of nations to retaliate on each other, will have a tendency to force trade into new channels, by which some will be gainers while others are losers. Through all, the Philanthropist rests in the pleasing confidence that the powers of annoyance are not so great as the capabilities of doing good. Nations by their foolish policy may destroy some sources of trade; but new ones in spite of all their blunders, will arise to supply their place. The madness of mankind by their wars, may desolate the fair face of a country; but this waste will ere long be supplied by the bountiful hand of nature, and fully restored to its pristine beauty. Let it not be said these remarks are misapplied in a commercial report; they naturally arise out of the subject, and on all occasions it may be allowed to show that the evils which man introduces into the world, are counteracted by the beneficent laws of our nature. Yet the philosophy of commerce to regulate the conduct of nations or of individuals, is more an object for benevolent wishes than present expectation.

But to return, and leaving a further detail of causes, to consider effects.

Trade is in its nature subject to fluctuation; but the uncertainty of it is considerably increased by the interference of hostile governments; and thus speculation is introduced, which though it turn to the gain of some, is attended with many unpleasant effects. There is a danger of trade turning into a species of gambling, and becoming subject to all the varieties and vicissitudes of a lottery speculation. Thus, whether pot-ashes, cotton, and the other articles of American produce, will rise or fall, depends on the decision of Congress, and the new president of America.

The price of wine, barilla, and other Spanish and Portuguese productions, depends on the uncertain events of the war in these countries. The same causes operate in regard to the manufactures of Great Britain and Ireland; if the fortune of war is in favour of British arms, the prices of our various manufactures will probably rise from the demand for them in those countries, which may be subject to our influence. On such