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SHIPPING.

DOVER, APRIL 9.—Sailed to-day his Majesty's packet Ferret, with the mail and dispatches, for Calais. Arrived to-day his Majesty's packet Crusader, with the public dispatches, from Calais, also the packet Royal Sovereign, with the mail and dispatches, and a Belgian messenger.

CAMBRIDGE PETITION.

The following was addressed to a Morning Contemporary:—

SIR—Though still labouring under the effects of a severe accident, which, for a time, has deprived me of the use of my right arm, I am anxious to lose no time in replying to a "declaration" printed in the *Cambridge Chronicle* of Friday last, and for this purpose have requested the assistance of a friend. Unfortunately, I have not the suggestion of several members of the Senate, who lately signed a petition presented by Lord Grey and Mr. Spring Rice, to the two Houses of Parliament. It is no intention of mine to enter at any length on discussions of the merits of the petition, or its rejection, or the counter-declaration, but to confine my observations, as far as possible, to certain questions of fact.

The aforesaid Petition contained the following paragraph:—"Among the changes which they hoped might be at once effected with advantage and safety, they would suggest to your Honourable House the expediency of abrogating, by legislative enactment, every religious test exacted from members of the University, before they proceed to degrees, whether as Master, or Doctor, or Bachelor, in Arts, Law, and Physic. In praying for the abolition of these restrictions, they rejoice in being able to assure your Honourable House that they are only asking for a restitution of the ancient laws and laudable customs, of the university; inasmuch as the restrictions were imposed on the University in the reign of King James I., most of them in a manner informal and unprecedented, and grievously against the wishes of many of the then members of the Senate."

Upon this passage the counter-declaration contains the following comment:—"We, the undersigned resident members of the Senate, deem it incumbent upon us, without delay, publicly to protest against the disingenuous representation set forth in that Petition. We do not admit that 'the abolition of' the existing 'restrictions' would be, as alleged, 'a restitution of the' ancient 'laws and laudable customs of the university;' inasmuch as the restrictions were imposed 'in a manner informal and unprecedented.'"

If there be any meaning in words, the two passages above quoted are directly opposed to one another. They contain an expression, not of opinions, but of facts; *if* one be true, the other must be false. My first object, then, will be to show that the statement in the petition is literally true. The petitioners, accordingly, say that in praying for the abolition of these restrictions they are asking for a restitution of their "ancient laws and laudable customs," and they then go on to state that the restrictions in question were imposed on the University in the reign of King James I. All they ask for in the petition is the virtual repeal of restrictions imposed—first, by a formal King's letter, dated the 30th of June, 1613, and sanctioned by a grace of the Senate; and secondly, by a formal statute, made by the united aims of a King's letter, and never sanctioned by any regular grace of the Senate) dated December 12, 1616. As far as regards the ancient laws of the University, the only question that can be put is, the academic question (and it is a question of no little importance in the matter in dispute) whether the existence of the two above-mentioned documents is not inferior to the existence of the two above-mentioned documents? We can answer this question by the help of an able pamphlet lately circulated among the resident members of the University, by the Rev. J. Penrose (Senior Fellow of Trinity). It was, we believe, drawn up at the request of the heads of colleges themselves, and we know that it was carefully compiled after a diligent examination of the documents in the registry of the University. It gives a chronological accounting of the different academic oaths exacted by the old statutes of the University, the author has the following words:—"The order of time now requires some notice of subscriptions," p. 35. "But the order of time now requires some notice of subscriptions." p. 35. "But the order of time now requires some notice of subscriptions." p. 35. "But the order of time now requires some notice of subscriptions."