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The Standard.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1869.

OUR FRONTIERS.

We call attention to the following documents, which prove that at last our public men and our estancieros friends are determined to adopt proper measures for the frontier defence.

Gov. Castro's note is to the point, and we hope will receive immediate attention at the War Office, whilst the petition of the frontier estancieros at Nueve de Julio, Bragado, and other neighboring partidos, is a plaintive wail which comes to us from the ruined homestead of our unfortunate fellow-countrymen.

We are pleased to see that the people in the country parts have at last taken the proper course. An Indian invasion in March is announced on a gigantic scale. The Government has received timely notice, and we trust to the honor of the President, which is already pledged to us all to defend the frontiers.

To Colonel Don Martin Gaiña, Minister of War and Marine. The necessity that exists for directing our attention to the defence of our rural interests constantly menaced by the frequent invasions of the Indians, induces me to address Y.E., not with the object of calling your attention to a subject with which I am aware you are already occupied, but to offer you, as in duty bound, the willing help of my Government, not only in endeavoring to place on our frontiers a greater body of troops, but to eradicate the causes which in my opinion have up to the present rendered sterile and useless the ceaseless efforts of this Province, in furtherance of its chief desire, and principal aspiration, viz:—to afford some guarantee for the interests and property of the inhabitants of our rural districts.

Amongst these causes Y.E. will allow me to lay before you those which I consider the principal ones, confining myself to enumerating them simply and truly as they exist. Y.E. is already aware of them, and in bringing them under your notice, I can assure you that it is far from my intention to impute blame to any one, for they are the result of other and former events, the effects of which both Y.E. and my Government are anxious to remove.

The forces at present engaged in defending the frontiers require to be thoroughly and at the same time economically reorganized in order to fit them for the duty imposed on them. No matter how much we may increase their numbers, without organization the result will be the same as that already obtained.

The demoralization apparent amongst these troops is in my opinion due to the want of punctuality displayed in fulfilling the engagements entered into with the National Guard, the troops principally engaged in this service. Their pay, clothing, and rations have never been served out to them with that regularity and punctuality which justice and right demand, and the indolence and want of forethought of the commanders has often even left them unarmed. It is more than probable that public opinion is right in saying that the National Guards on the frontiers find for themselves occupation differing widely from the military duties they have been sent to perform.

These causes which I confine myself to enumerating without commenting upon, are sufficient to demoralize not only the National Guard, but the best troops of the line. I should not omit to mention the in no ways creditable

Latest from Asuncion.

The heat, the flies, and the blessed state of ignorance everybody here seems to be in as to the sailing of steamers for Buenos Ayres, are my excuses for not having written again since the few lines I sent by the Proveedor on Sunday last.

To-day, fortunately, the sky being clouded, the heat is not so great. One of Matti's steamers is bound to leave to-morrow. Trusting to the well known regularity of the steamers of this company, by far the best arrangement of all that undertake the strange communication on our rivers, and as I have made up my mind to prolong my stay here for a few days, I will, as far as I can, endeavour to give an account of the real state of things.

Nobody who has followed with some attention the march of events in this country can wonder that it should rivet upon itself the concentrated and anxious gaze of the world, and the history of the Paraguayan war, which in its slow and relentless course has been pregnant with consequences so disastrous and appalling, must ever form one of the most curious and instructive pages in the annals of mankind.

Far from me to attempt such an arduous task, I can only confine myself to jot down what I hear or see and the impressions I receive. If the horrors that have come to light in so authentic a manner in connection with the rule of Lopez and the political and social condition of this country, have fully established in the eyes of the civilized world the justice of the Allied cause, and vindicated triumphantly the alliance from the unfounded charges brought against it, the manner in which the war has been conducted gives room for some severe criticism.

During the late sanguinary engagements at the Lomas de Cumburita, had the Marquis de Caxias before the final attack allowed the Argentines to occupy the Potrero Marmol, or sent a force of 1,000 cavalry to occupy that position, Lopez's retreat was inevitably cut off, and by his falling into the hands of the Allies, the war would have had a glorious termination; but if the dilatoriness of the Brazilians in following up their advantages has ever been inexplicable, their actual inactivity is calculated to raise a feeling of indignation in every honest mind when thinking that the fate of so many innocent families is jeopardised, and that such conduct is almost certain to add to the long list of victims who have been sacrificed to Lopez's unexampled and bloodthirsty ferocity.

The blame falls exclusively on the Brazilians there seems to be but little doubt, and the hour may not be far distant when they will be called to account by other civilized nations for having turned a deaf ear to all feelings of humanity, and thrown away the chance of sparing the further effusion of innocent blood.

The new Brazilian Commander-in-Chief, commonly called General Guillermo, but whose full title and denomination is Marshal Guillermo Xavier da Souza, replies to all applications, that Marquis de Caxias has left him no instructions, and that he can undertake no operation unless in case of an emergency.

This answer he has given to Captain Fawkes, commanding H.M.S. Cracker, when the latter went to reconnoitre with him as to the necessity of doing something in behalf of the Englishmen still in Lopez's power.

The same answer he gave to General Mitre, who, when he heard of the success that had attended the expedition sent out by him to scour the country, urged the Brazilian General to send out a combined force of cavalry, or to lend him horses to send his own men, as their own horses were worn out, and at present unfit for service.

About eight days ago two priests from Concepcion, the Juez de Paz, and two or three other neighbors of that district, arrived here by a small steamer that was sent up the river on her return voyage. They went as a deputation to General Guillermo, and stated that about 1,200 people, men, women, and children, were collected together at about 12 leagues from the coast, in the district of Concepcion; that among them were the families of wealthy estancieros, who would willingly pay the expenses of the journey to Concepcion; that all the force Lopez has to guard 50 leagues of the coast does not exceed 250 men, and that what they begged was that an ironclad and a small force should be sent up to protect them. The only reply they could obtain was 'no tenho instrucciones.'

From Colonel Baez himself, whom I had the pleasure of seeing to-day, I have learned some interesting details about the expedition under his command, which came back three days ago. The force consisted of the Argentine cavalry regiment San Martin, and the cavalry of the Paraguayan Legion, in all about 600 men. They

Latest from Asuncion.

weren't out ten days, and went in all about 45 leagues. On the third day after their march they came upon a large caravan of women, children, and old men, who were on their march to Lopez's camp, accompanied by a few of his emissaries, whose orders were to cut the throats of all, both women and children, who should lag behind from sheer fatigue; the order was carried out 'au pied de la lettre,' as proved by numbers of corpses found on the road, most of which were women and children from one to four or five years old. When these unfortunate wretches were overtaken, Colonel Baez sent an officer to address them, and pointing to the road that led to Lopez's camp, leave them to choose whether they would continue that road or come under the protection of the Allied force to Asuncion. There was no hesitation in their choice, and all accepted Colonel Baez's protection, although the great majority of these people were in the last stage of destitution, and by far the greater number perfectly naked.

There were also a few well-to-do families, with carretas drawn by bullocks. The Allied force succeeded also in securing 800 head of very fat cattle. All along the road the abundance of pasture was so great as to be an impediment to the march. The crops of maize, mandioca, beans, &c., were also very abundant on the road, and the farm houses abounded with hens and chickens, which, however, had grown so wild that on the approach of the soldiers they took long flights and got away into the Monte.

Two of Lopez's men fell into the hands of the expeditionary force, and would have been made short work of by the poor creatures who had suffered so much at their hands, but Colonel Baez refused to give them up to their just revenge. It is the Colonel's opinion that the whole country is now raised against Lopez, and all who can, leave him and betake themselves to the road, and organize themselves into montoneros. The Colonel had received intelligence of another batch of families that were attempting to make their escape to the allied camps, and with General Mitre's leave despatched last night a small force of 30 men to protect them.

Lopez is supposed to be on the other side of the mountains from Peiribebuy. He is said to have with him four battalions and eighteen or twenty pieces of artillery. Of General McMahon nothing positive is known, save that by the latest intelligence at hand he was at Peiribebuy. According to the most reliable calculation, Lopez can still dispose of a force of from five to six thousand men, all told.

The allied forces are divided more or less as follows:—Asuncion, 12,000 Brazilians and one battalion of Argentines. At Trinidad, four Liles from here, on the line of railway, about five thousand Argentines. At Laque, from two to three thousand Brazilian cavalry. Here they have been constructing strong entrenchments and have their outposts about six leagues further out. The rest of the Brazilian cavalry was sent to Matto Grosso with the six ironclads, and the Brazilians are busy raising fortifications at a place about fifty leagues above Concepcion.

If the Brazilians are justly censured for the total paralysis of war operations, they have been as unjustly accused in the matter of the sacking of the town. That some excesses may have been committed at the beginning by the soldiery, there can be no doubt; but it is also a matter beyond a doubt that the authorities and the principal officers are doing and have done all in their power to prevent and correct abuses; and the orderly state of the city, under present circumstances, shows an amount of administrative ability that does them great credit. In any case in which a just claim for house or other property has been satisfactorily established, there has been, and is no delay in the delivering it up to the proper owner. The fact of the matter is, that not only there is a great difficulty in ascertaining the truth about property, owing to the absence of all documentary evidence, but there are not wanting people who seek to take advantage of the state of confusion to benefit themselves; and when they find their manoeuvres unsuccessful, revenge themselves by accusing the Brazilians unreasonably of robbing. Most of the furniture has been left in the houses, and all that has been done in some cases is to move some pieces of furniture from one house to another.

Colonel Ferreira, a Brazilian officer, is the Chief of Police, and Coman' dante Fernandez, an Argentine officer, the Captain of the Port. They are the only two authorities existing, and both these gentlemen deserve much praise for the satisfactory way in which they perform their arduous tasks.

The question of the hides is likely to lead to considerable difficulties, both from the number of claimants, the absence of documentary evidence, and the confusion that has arisen from their having been all gathered together from various deposits. An order has been issued that no hides are allowed to be embarked now; but, notwithstanding this order, the Count de Bismark, a small steamer, escaped from

port a few nights ago with a cargo of hides, tobacco, and yerba. Orders have been sent to embargo her and stop her at Corrientes, but nothing further has been heard of her. The Kansas, I regret to say, seems hopelessly lost, and it is expected she will have to be sold, as nothing can possibly take her off save another great rise of the river, which may not occur for a twelvemonth.

The Yaguareti is also a complete wreck. About sixty leagues up river from here she struck on a sunken rock and went to pieces almost immediately. She had on board about 250 tons of coal for the Brazilian squadron operating in Matto Grosso.

Notwithstanding the great heat, this climate is decidedly very healthy, and all the reports of cholera having broken out here with a malignant character have no foundation save in the imagination of evil-disposed individuals. The sanitary state of the garrison, the crews of ships, and the inhabitants in general is excellent, although our friend Dr. Newkirk drives a most prosperous trade with his 'botica' besides his medical practice.

Commercial operations are at a complete standstill. The place is overstocked with goods to an extent that cannot be imagined. Hotel-keepers seem to be the only people doing a good business; they, too, abound; there are over twenty of these establishments opened. What was Mr. Washburn's house is an hotel called 'De-Cristo.'

The harbor is crowded with shipping, and the number of vessels cannot be far short of 300, among which are about 50 steamers, small and big, including the men-of-war.

EDITOR'S TABLE. On Saturday afternoon, Mr. Coaker, one of the Montevidean Eleven, who in company with the other members were in quarantine off Montevideo, in the steamer 'Rosario,' was bathing, and unfortunately got into a very strong current, which overpowered all his efforts to regain the ship. He held himself enough left to call for help, which was first heard by two of his companions, who happened to be on the stern of the vessel: they raised the alarm, when Mr. Marshall, formerly of this city, rushed from the cabin, and without divesting himself of any clothing, save his coat, courageously swam to the spot and succeeded, with great difficulty, in reaching Mr. Coaker just in time. The other members had, meantime, got the boat, which luckily was rifled, towards the spot, and succeeded, with the aid of the Rev. T. E. Ash and Mr. Elliott, who had also followed Mr. Marshall, in getting Mr. Coaker into the boat, quite insensible. He, however, gradually recovered, and is now, we are happy to say, in the best of health.

Yesterday we had two steamers from Montevideo. The letters sent by the Amis to Montevideo have never been received. We suppose the mail bag from the Post Office arrived too late, but it should have been sent by the Villeta on Sunday night.

Now that quarantine has been relaxed, we trust we shall have more regularity in our communications with Montevideo. Last night two steamers left for that port: the charge, including the quarantine days on board, is twelve patacones, which is moderate enough.

Some copies of her Majesty Queen Victoria's book in Spanish have arrived in Montevideo, and attract much notice. As yet we have not seen the translation. The rather sudden death of Mr. Ponson has caused widespread regret in English circles in Montevideo. Mr. Ponson held the post of engineer of the Central Uruguay Railway Company, and was much esteemed by all who knew him. He was about 28 years of age, and had for some time been engaged on the Great Southern Railway of Buenos Ayres.

We are glad to see that the Government has ordered the publication of the Board of Health Returns, as it relieves the public from the necessity of swallowing exaggerated stories respecting the hospital, &c. During the fruit season there is always more or less cholera, or choleric, in the city; but the doctors agree that the weather is healthy.

Yesterday the Provincial Senate was summoned to discuss several bills of importance before the house. As usual, the hitch is a quorum. Our legislators, as a rule, residing in the suburbs, care little about attending.

The steamer City of Limerick leaves to-day for Europe, she takes a full cargo and also a mail.

The Flamstead, with dates from England to the 20th January, is expected in Montevideo to-day.

The Poiton beat the Panama coming out, but was detained for want of coal at San Vicente. She sails on Saturday, having her cargo all engaged.

The Poiton took out from Marseilles about 450 emigrants and 450 tons of cargo for Buenos Ayres. She also takes a mail bag home.

The first number of the 'Argos' appeared yesterday; it is neatly printed, well got up, and looks business-like; it already has 1,000 subscribers. We wish it every success.

Dr. Moreno, the Professor in the Uruguay College, has sent in his re-

signation, which has not been accepted. As yet his successor has not been nominated.

It appears that on Sunday a slight collision on the Western Railway occurred. The train came up on a cart-luckily, no lives were lost, but the cart was knocked to pieces.

The Chief of Police of Montevideo last week arrested two Englishmen as they were about to proceed to the Cerro to fight a duel. Both parties were bound over to keep the peace. We hear the seconds were an American navy officer and an English tutor.

Mr. Craufurd, who has been so long sojourning in Asuncion; may be expected in town this day. His letter that we publish to-day will be found most interesting.

Circulars have been sent to the different Parish Committees of the city, requesting the most scrupulous attention as to the condition of hotels, cafes, and houses where various families live. This is a very excellent move, and doubtless will result in much good.

Sir Henry Fynn is the great water man in Montevideo. He has sent two engineers to survey the country with a view to making a canal to bring the Santa Lucia waters into Montevideo. We hear that property holders ask very high figures for their land.

The Central Uruguay Railway is now beginning to be felt a convenience for the travelling public of the Banda Oriental. The diligences all for the most part now start from the railway station at Piedras.

For the last few days it has been currently rumoured that some Blanco officers in Entre Rios are preparing to invade the Banda Oriental, and have held various meetings for that purpose at Concordia. We believe there is nothing in it.

The Orientals are determined to be ahead of us in the way of tramways. We hear that next week the new tramway to the Paso Molino will be commenced.

The weather continues very threatening, and according to our barometer we must expect rain. Farmers state that rain is much wanted in the North, where the majority of the camps are in very poor condition.

Some estancieros in the West have received positive information of an intended Indian invasion early in March. The documents which we publish today show that the estancieros and Provincial Government are determined to fully acquaint the National Government in time. We heard yesterday that the War Minister is about to despatch troops at once out to the Nueve de Julio. This shows that Colonel Gainza is the right man in the right place, notwithstanding all the abuse which the opposition party indulges in.

There are now no less than four proposals before the public for supplying lighthouses at the mouth of the River Plate—one at Cape St. Mary, and the other at Lobos Island. As yet, none have been accepted. All parties ask in payment the right to collect tonnage dues on ships entering the river.

The Peruvian Admiral Tucker has just published a most interesting paper on his explorations of the Amazon. He found large towns of Indians on many of the banks, and in some places encountered such clouds of mosquitos that nearly all hands perished. At one point such is the immense waste of waters that he counted no less than 250 islands, but all uninhabited. The most dangerous spot in this majestic river he called 'El vuelco del diablo.' We hope to receive this interesting paper in our next trans-Andino exchanges.

We have received a very interesting paper from an English gentleman who last year made an excursion to Matto Grosso. Owing to press of copy we are obliged to hold it over until to-morrow.

The Arno and Poiton have brought heavy consignments of copper coin to the Montevidean Government. It comes very apropos, and will replace the disreputable shin plasters at present used for small change in that city.

It was currently rumoured yesterday that the Oriental Government had appointed Adolfo Rodriguez special commissioner to Asuncion, with Sr. J. C. Blanco as secretary.

The other day some burglars broke into a Custom House deposit in Montevideo, and abstracted various articles of much value. As yet the burglars have not been detected.

We call the attention of parties interested in the material progress of this country, with which the spread of agriculture is universally acknowledged to be so intimately connected, to the sale of two fertile acres in the watery waste of the Carapachy, by Don Mariano Billinghurst, on Sunday the 28th inst. The work of the day will commence with a grand fête champagne at 10 a.m., everyone wishing to partake of which should take the train at 6:50 a.m.

Don Ramirez, editor of the 'Siglo' of Montevideo has been named Chairman of the new Bank Committee. A National Bank, it is believed, will be the upshot.

Rather an amusing incident occurred during the Carnival in Montevi-

deo many houses were fired for throwing water, amongst others, the house of the President himself. This certainly speaks for the police of that city.

The Provincial Government is so determined to push on the Chivilcoy and Valparaiso Railway, that it has applied to the National Government for support. The scheme is, indeed, grand, but we doubt if the present generation will see it completed.

On Sunday night a very fierce row occurred in the French Theatre during the masked ball. It was difficult to discover the origin of the disorder; but, as far as we could gather, some parties tried to remove a lady's mask. This, of course, caused a great noise. The police tried to keep order, but failed; then came the soldiers with fixed bayonets. The squeeze was terrific; but the most amusing part of the business is that the only party wounded by the fixed bayonets was the unfortunate comisario. We confess that the presence of heavily-armed soldiery in a public or private room is not the thing, and ought to be done away with.

Our colleague the 'Tribuna' publishes some remarks upon a very serious question which has arisen in the wool market respecting the liability of a broker. The question is in a nutshell. Is the broker who sells wool to a barraguer to be regarded as the owner of the wool? or can a previous indebtedness of the broker to the purchaser be claimed in part or in whole payment for the wool sold? It is to be regretted that the tribunals of this country are in such a deplorable condition that people must argue their case in a newspaper. We want a civil and criminal judicial reform. As to the case in question, the broker is the agent of the owner, nothing more—and the liabilities of the broker can in no way affect the goods. If the barraguer had paid the purchase-money to the broker for the goods, then it would be a different matter; but here no payment is alleged, and the old debt of the broker can form no lien whatever on the property.

Another fine English steamer is shortly expected out for the Uruguay—the Saturno; she was built in Glasgow, and sailed for the Plate on the 12th January.

Marshal Caxias is due in Rio to-day, having left Montevideo some days back. Great preparations were going on in Rio to give the Wellington of S. America—as his friends style him—a royal reception. The Brazilian Admiral Ignacio has also left for Rio, and retired for good from the squadron, owing to ill health.

There is a very important project now before the Montevidean Government for the purpose of improving the port. The plans have been carefully drawn up and printed, and it is thought, will succeed.

We have received Sir John Cozhan's general water supply notice. Parties wishing to supply their houses with water should at once call at Sir John's office. Queen Victoria made John Gray, the Editor of the 'Freeman,' a Knight for supplying Dublin with waterworks; the least Governor Castro can do is to follow Her Majesty's example and Knight Mr. Cozhan.

GOSSIP FROM HOME. Dublin, New Year's Day, '69. In sending you my first letter from home, I am suffering from a regular 'embaras de richesses.' I must gossip about something, the question is where to begin. Well, I know that in your cosmopolitan city, where I have passed so many pleasant days of a somewhat chequered life, the truth of the maxim that 'it is impossible to please everybody,' is more apparent than, perhaps, in any part of the world. I know that amongst you are to be found Tories, Liberals, Whigs, Adullamites, Conservatives (proper), Radicals, Fenians, and specimens of each and every one of the various political species of which this land is so prolific. I can't write to please them all, nor have I any intention of trying to do so; the best way, perhaps, is, while telling 'a plain, unvarnished tale,' to please myself—a thing I am rather fond of doing, selfish and egotistical as it may appear, and utterly inconsistent as it is, with the recognised idea of a newspaper correspondent of the period.

Well, let us take it 'au sérieux.' The great topic of the day is, I need not tell you, the Irish Church and the new Ministry. The mass of the people both here and in England, as in every other country, are easily led, yet it requires some management on the part of whoever holds the reins to effect the operation with anything like comfort. For once, however, leader and led are of the same opinion—and the mass of English and Irish Liberals follow cheerfully the Fox, Chatham, or Peel of the day, along the road of Irish Church Abolition. If any enthusiastic Liberal can find any other great historical name wherewith to compare the present Prime Minister of England, I am willing to jot it down for use on some future occasion.

You know I am not what is in some quarters at present understood in England as a true Liberal. I have but a faint appreciation of universal suffrage and vote by ballot; I have an

