

THE  
**British Packet,**  
AND  
**ARGENTINE NEWS.**

This Paper will be published every SATURDAY. The Subscription for three months 3 dollars. All communications to be addressed to the Editors and left at No. 47, Calle del 25 de Mayo, or at the State Printing Office, where Subscriptions are received.

No. 59.) BUENOS AYRES, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1827. (Vol. 2.)

BUENOS AYRES.

In the midst of the stagnation produced by the blockade, the mercantile spirit, far from being dismayed, acquires every day fresh vigour. As the focus of trade is more concentrated, so is the action that agitates it more intense. All the goods existing in the different warehouses are objects of competition: the ounces appear to have a wish to quit our territory, and to signalize their last moments by a most scandalous price. The bank does not cease to discount; in private transactions the interest of money is increasing hourly—here they are bargaining for privateer shares—there they are drawing up proposals for a new loan:—in short, the streets in the centre of the town are so many Lombard Streets, which, covered by a more transparent sky than that of London, permit the losers to indemnify themselves in the purity of the air for their disappointments in trade. This general inclination for business is a good symptom. The days are past when commerce was, in these countries, a *sinecure* distributed among the fortunate sons of the mother country; who came from their lowly huts in Galicia and Biscay to the counter of the pulperia, passed from thence to that of the linen-draper, and, obtaining the white hand of the daughter or niece of their master, got possession of the rich estancia: converting into obscure *millionaires* those who, when they arrived here, had neither shoe nor stocking. Such were the effects of the blessed metropolitan monopoly, the paternal colonial system, which so long served as a pedestal to the statue of Folly. Times have changed, and the fruits of liberty are perceptible. We have now clerks who lecture on Adam Smith, and discuss financial projects. The government is obliged to follow the march of opinion, and for the first time since we were possessed of a minister of finance, there is emitted from a public office a tirade against the custom-house. This announcement of a happy future ought not to be laid up in the vast archives which contain the broken promises of rulers. The progress of knowledge, the confessions made in the English parliament, the experience we have acquired in the present war—all call for the destruction of those barriers which custom has opposed to the free intercourse of nations. In America, where happily the action of the government is hardly felt, we can without risk venture an experiment which circumstances prohibit from the nations of the Old World. America is the asylum of freemen: let them come here as to their home; and not as to a theatre where they have to pay for their entry: let them come without having to fear an insult from a rude custom-house officer; or to dread an inquisitive eye penetrating into the secrets of their wardrobe: let them come, and not have the pretext of duties on importation, for augmenting extravagantly the price of what they bring.

Economists have said all that can be said on the liberty of commerce; it is now time that their theories should serve for something more than to amuse the leisure hours of a retired philosopher. When the advantage of a thing is evident; it is necessary to make every effort to obtain it. To leave it till *to-morrow*, is to expose yourself to be *to-morrow* of the same mind.

Of man's miraculous mistakes, that bears  
The palm.

A message, under date of 14th instant, has been sent to the Junta, couched in terms of great severity against all the measures of the late administration. It states that in coming into office, the present government found the army disorganized, the navy useless, the bank in discredit, that the public money had been lavished without regard to the laws, and a system of deceit practised towards the company called the Rio de la Plata Mining Association, to such an extent that a claim had been made from London by the last Packet for the sum of 52,520 pounds sterling as part of the loss incurred by false representations. The army on the frontiers of Brasil is stated to be suffering every species of privation: to be in want of pay, clothing, and hoes; that even victory had offered no decisive results. The effective force is given at 4549 men. The nomination of a new general promises to overcome every difficulty. The late ministry will, we should think, answer these charges. In the midst of such a mass of complaints, it is consolatory to read the following:

"It will be the work of an enlightened patriotism to remedy with promptitude a situation so dangerous. It is far from being desperate; and the means which the government have had the honour to propose for the sanction of the representatives will, they believe produce the best effects, increase the value of the circulating medium, and sustain the credit of the bank, whose prosperity is identified with the vital interests of the community."

We did not expect to hear that the army was so numerous as 4549 men; at least from the report circulated lately in this "city of rumours." If the victory of Ituzaingó has not produced decisive results, it has at any rate brought the Brazilians to a stand. The armies of other nations have endured similar disappointments. The battle of Talavera, in Spain, was a great victory followed by a hasty retreat of the victors; and as to the article of clothing, we recollect in 1815, to have seen a crack regiment of British infantry, returned from North America, march through Belgium, with their clothes so ragged and patched, that it was difficult to say which colour predominated.

The military lines of the republican army in front of Monte Video and Colonia have been reinforced; and we believe it is intended to carry on the siege of those fortresses with more strictness than heretofore. A proclamation has appeared from general Lavalleja relative to the above subject; and an address from Colonel Suarez to the troops in front of Colonia.

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The documents recently laid before the Junta on the state of the Republic would be alarming but that a remedy is proposed which, if acted upon, will go far to redeem her financial difficulties, and carry her honourably through the war. The question of doing away with the custom-house by reducing the duties gradually was years ago agitated in Buenos Ayres by those who well knew the consequences of depending upon such a branch of revenue, should a foreign war occur. The idea was then looked upon as somewhat chimerical and almost impracticable. Now, it is put forth as the only means of saving the country, and providing for her security hereafter. But direct taxation must be resorted to: and will the people agree to this? We should think little of their patriotism did they refuse under present emergencies. Extraordinary circumstances require extraordinary exertions, and it is a maxim with skilful surgeons to cut beyond the wound to make the cure complete.

Censures have been past upon the late government for their management of the war. Faults may have occurred; but "men's evil manners live in brass, their virtues we write in water." Almost all agree that sooner or later war with Brazil was inevitable whilst she held the Banda Oriental. Its precipitancy has been blamed by some, but for that there are palliatives. The Chili fleet and vessels from England were expected to be in actual service before any serious evil could accrue from the war; and had that expectation been fulfilled, the blockade would have been raised. A distant hope likewise existed that England would not acknowledge it; her officers, with the presumed sanction of the government, having refused to do so when the Spaniards attempted to enforce it. On the 20th of September 1810 it was a very low tide, the outer roads nearly dry, at which time the following Spanish vessels of war were anchored in the outer roads: corvette *Mercurio*, brig *Belen*, do. *Cisna*, lugger *San Carlos*, three feluccas carrying heavy guns, and about 40 tons each, their names *Fama*, *San Luis*, and *San Martin*. A British brig was detained by them under pretext of blockade; when captain Ramsay, in the British three-masted schooner *Misletoe*, went alongside the corvette, and peremptorily demanded the restitution of the brig, which was complied with.

A monumental inscription relating to the events of that period may now be read in the cemetery of the Recoleta, of which the following is a literal copy.

"El almirante ingles De Courcy fué el primero que vino á visitar nuestro estado despues de hacerse independiente, trató de la libertad de estas aguas, haciendo cesar el bloqueo que los Españoles pusieron en esta, y en 1812, pasando á la Banda Oriental, sacó del general portugues Souza el respeto y seguridad del territorio."

Great Britain has been accused of inconsistency by men who will not allow the great difference (at least as far as it regards the interference of a neutral nation) in a war against the mother country for independence, and that against a foreign state; and it has been roundly asserted that being obliged to provide specie for our army in Spain, at a time when English bank notes would not buy forage for our horses in that country, and at home were at a great depreciation, equivalent to a premium of 50 per cent upon gold, we looked to South America for a supply in exchange for our goods; but now, returned to a metallic currency, and needing not the particular commerce of Buenos Ayres, the blockade is left to take its course.

Such are the arguments resorted to by the opponents of British politics.

The blockading squadron is now viewed with as much apathy as a balandra coming out of the Boca. They go and come, and are scarcely noticed; except when the eye turns vacantly towards the water; and then perhaps the exclamation escapes of: "Ah! here are our old friends the Portuguese!" It was not always thus. In May, 1826, a squadron under Norton sailed from Monte Video, for the avowed purpose of pursuing Brown into the inner roads, should he retire there, destroying his squadron, and burning all the national vessels in the harbour and the Boca. Thus did letters

from Monte Video report: and, considering the great force employed, many of us felt alarm. Norton, Grenfell, and others, confessed that little honour could accrue to them from such a service, they having a force to crush all opposition. Some thought that Brown, seeing the inability of resistance, would make terms for his squadron. Little did they know the undaunted soul of the man. At any rate, all agreed that something serious was about to take place, and that we should see in sad reality conflagrations like that of Blue Beard's castle, or of Lovinski's in Lodoiska, headed by another Kera Khan. At that period we cast many an anxious look towards Brown's little squadron in the outer roads and felt a degree of terror when the Brazilian fleet first came in sight on the 23rd of May 1826. This sentiment was common to those who felt pride in the small but heroic squadron of the Republic: however the events of the 23rd and 25th of May 1826, and other days, have sufficiently explained Brazilian prowess.

This war, and the bold deeds of the Brazilian heroes, will afford us conversation for the rest of our lives. The quantity of ammunition uselessly expended will make an appalling item in the profit and loss account of the Brazilian empire: that is, if the state book-keeper give a faithful account, and carefully copy from the waste-book.

An American schooner has arrived at the Salado: she sailed from Patagonia on the 9th instant with cargo. The national squadron sailed on 11th August. On the 15th the corvette *Chacabuco*, captain George Bysson, put back in a very leaky state, being obliged whilst at sea to keep three pumps in constant use. It is doubtful if she can be repaired at Rio Negro; although it is said the attempt will be made. The vessel is not rotten, but wants to be thoroughly refastened. She sails admirably well, and her return is a great misfortune: her officers and crew are excellent. The battery on shore was under repair, and 4 heavy guns, viz. two 32 pounders and two 24 pounders, about to be remounted. The corvette *Ituzaingo*, captain Masou, and schooner-brig *Patagones*, captain Love, continued their cruise. The privateer brig *Bella Flor* (late *zumaca*), captain Harris, sailed on 9th instant. She has a good crew of 90 men, English and North Americans, and mounts 13 guns. The privateer brig *Oriental Argentino*, Bibois, was about to sail. The ship *Condesa du Ponte*, d'Autant, was on the coast fitting out as a privateer. The British schooner *Bella Josephine* sailed 1st September. The detained British brig *Huskisson* went inside the harbour on the 8th instant, having previously discharged part of her cargo. No news had been received of the schooner of war *Juncal*, captain Coe.

Relative to the escape of the prisoners from Patagonia we have collected some further particulars. We repeat it that a strict investigation ought to take place on the subject. They were all embarked in the brig, and 20 soldiers placed on board; but she got aground. The prisoners were then re-landed, and 16 of the soldiers as guards. The officer, a very young man, was inveigled away: upon which about 80 of the prisoners got on board; the remainder were unable to do so. The brig floated, and they proceeded to sea. On the same day the *Chacabuco*, which had been beating about, stood in, and found the brig had escaped. A vessel, afterwards known to be the brig, was in sight. Chase was given, but it fell to windward, and she was lost sight of.

On the 1st of September, the rest of the prisoners, consisting of about 180 persons, proceeded towards Tandil; the officers on horseback, the men on foot. Amongst the former are captain Watson, lieutenants Brownrigg, Ousely, Tupper, Lewis, Fitz-Cost, and other officers. All their clothing and other effects have been taken away in the brig, leaving them in a manner destitute. The officers who escaped in the brig are captain Eyre, lieutenants Hayden and Carter, and some Brazilians. The men, both in the brig and those sent to Tandil, are all Brazilians of Portuguese. The English, North Americans, and other foreigners, have entered the national service, or on board privateers. Four soldiers were taken away in the brig.



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A zumaca supposed a prize is on shore below the Tuyu. She appeared to be discharging cargo.

The gazettes of this city have stated that admiral Lobo has resumed the command of the blockading squadron. We think it will prove to be commodore Brito; as he left Rio Janeiro in the Paula frigate in August last, for the avowed purpose of commanding the squadron off this port. We have a great respect for Lobo, and think him the very best of the blockading commodores. His successors blustered a great deal, and "nothing done." Brito went to Rio Janeiro in a rage, and accused Lobo of cowardice. Of that charge he was honourably acquitted. The fact was, Lobo never meddled with his enemy unless forced to do so. He knew the qualities of his crews, and declined close combat. He was altogether a kind accommodating enemy.

The following Brazilian vessels of war sailed from off this place lately for Monte Video:

Piranga frigate, admiral Guedez.  
Emperatriz do., commodore Prytz.  
Rio de la Plata brig, captain January.  
Three-masted schooner, captain Rose.  
Rio schooner, another schooner, and lugger boat Hijo de Julio.

It was said that the frigate Emperatriz, Rio schooner, and the Hijo de Julio, were to cruize off the Salado.

The Piranga has 370 men, chiefly Portuguese, and in miserable order. She has 4 English officers, viz.: first captain Hayden, second ditto Clewley; first lieutenant Williams, second ditto Murray, third ditto Lindam, a Dane.

Broom and his companions have arrived at Monte Video. They got on board a Brazilian vessel near Maldonado.

General Zapiola, of the Marine Department, has obtained leave of absence for three months on account of ill health. D. Matias Irigoyen officiates in his stead.

Commodore Norton stated, in reply to a communication from admiral Brown relative to an exchange of prisoners, that he had no instructions on that head; but that he would transmit the admiral's letter to the commander in chief of the Brazilian squadron, and hoped soon to be able to return a satisfactory answer.

By a decree of the 17th inst, the government is empowered to negociate within the province the sum of six million dollars in public funds of six per cent. They cannot do them at less than 50 per cent:

The sums lent to the government in consequence of the law of the 27th July last, are to be repaid from the proceeds of the six million dollars public funds.

The duties imposed, by law of the same date, on the exportation of jerked beef, are taken off.

The brig of war Congress passed point Piedras at 7 o'clock in the morning of 15th instant, and the Swedish ship Hercules point Indio at 8 o'clock on the same morning, standing down the river with a fair wind. The pilots returned to Buenos Ayres on

the 16th instant. The blockading squadron were at anchor off Point Lara (Ensenada); but the two vessels sailed by them without the least impediment. The Congress sails better brig rigged than as a barque.

Sept. 16th. The blockading squadron came in sight, their barometers we suppose denoting fair weather. They must have excellent instruments of that description on board, as on the approach of bad weather they always retreat; unless indeed they possess the qualities ascribed to a certain animal, of seeing the wind.

Sept 17th. Arrived No. 13 gun-boat from Martin Garcia. The custom-house boat was despatched to the blockading squadron as a flag of truce, with a letter to Norton relative to an exchange of prisoners. Such an affair will probably be referred to Monte Video.

Sept. 18th. Arrived schooner brig Flor del Puerto, from the Banda Oriental, having conveyed thither part of the 17th regiment of cavalry.

Arrived a national zumaca from do. Several sail of vessels have arrived and sailed from and to the Banda Oriental, Parana, Uruguay, and Martin Garcia. Arrived No. 6 gun-boat from Martin Garcia.

Sept. 19th; arrived No. 11 gun-boat, Castelli, from Martin Garcia. Upon her coming in sight, three Brazilian schooners proceeded to reconnoitre, chased a balandra, and protected one of their own boats coming in from a cruise. According to their usual custom, they began to fire at 2 leagues distance. The gun-boats No. 6 and 13 left the inner roads. The Brazilian schooners then politely withdrew: fighting was not their object. A German officer (or non-commissioned officer) came passenger in No. 11 gun-boat. He lately formed one of the Brazilian army in Rio Grande, which he represents to consist of about 5000 men, in a deplorable state.

Sept. 20th; a gun was fired at 12 o'clock by ship 25th of May, and the felucca boat despatched with a flag of truce to the blockading squadron, to obtain an answer to the proposition relative to an exchange of prisoners.

Sept. 21st. At day-break this morning four schooners were seen close to Point Quilmes; three of them Brazilians, and the other the detained American schooner Hazard, captured by the Brazilians in coming from Ensenada. The privateer boat that detained the Hazard came into the inner roads from the same place.

The American schooner which arrived some days ago at Ensenada, consigned to W. P. Ford and Co., came to the inner roads this morning. She made a stretch to the northward, and came in without obstruction: the blockading squadron all under weigh.

Arrived schooner of war 11th of June from Martin Garcia.

At 5 in the afternoon, the national schooner of war 11th June, with admiral Brown on board, fired a gun, got under weigh, and immediately sailed for Martin Garcia, in company with schooner of war 30th of July and No. 13 gun boat, with a convoy.

### Scientific Institution.

In pursuance of the resolutions entered into on the 10th instant, readings from Brown on the Mind have been given, both in English and in Spanish, on the 14th and 17th inst., at the house of J. P. Robertson, Esq., to a numerous assemblage. We subjoin

an extract from our correspondent A. B., relative to the above institution.—

“ To ensure ultimate success nothing more is requisite than a continuance of the present harmony of views, and spirit of cordial co-operation. The happy results to be anticipated surpass the most sanguine calculation. Besides the more general relish for literary pursuits, and the more correct habits of reasoning, and consequently of acting, that it is certain to produce, who knows but that it may serve to stimulate into activity the slumbering energies of some mighty mind, destined, in this or some subsequent age, to impart a new feature to the science, literature or industry of the commonwealth ?

“ Come, bright Improvement! on the car of Time,  
And rule the spacious world from clime to clime;  
Thy handmaid arts shall every wild explore,  
Trace every wave, and culture every shore.  
Yes! there are hearts, prophetic Hope may trust,  
That slumber yet in uncreated dust,  
Ordned to fire the adoring sons of earth,  
With every charm of wisdom and of worth;  
Ordned to light, with intellectual ray,  
The mazy wheels of Nature as they play;  
Or, warm with Fancy's energy, to glow,  
And rival all but Shakspeare's name below.”

We are happy to hear that the provinces are employed in getting together the contingencies for the approaching campaign. From dispatches received by the government it appears that Santa Fé is about to send 300 cavalry, 50 seamen, a launch, a whale-boat, &c. The good disposition of the provinces of Entre Rios and Corrientes can likewise be counted on; and even Cordova, it is said, promises to send a thousand men. We hope these offers will be realized. The best, perhaps the only mode of obtaining peace, is to employ all our resources for carrying on the war with vigour. It is impossible to employ persuasion with an enemy like D. Pedro: coercive measures, the *argumentum baculum*, will alone have effect on him.

In No. 124 of Blackwood's Magazine (for April 1827), is an article upon steam navigation, in which it is confidently asserted that the future naval warfare of Great Britain must from necessity be carried on by the means of steam vessels, and that,

“ No longer can the British first-rate man-of-war be considered as the monarch of the ocean, or the gallant admiral and commander-in-chief of the British fleet pace the quarter-deck of such a ship even in security from the attack of a little steam-ship with only one gun. For if the steam vessel is made effectually proof against the battery of her opponent at the distance of 600 yards, and can maintain that distance, which are facts now beyond a doubt, it matters little whether the sailing ship has one gun or one hundred, since they cannot produce any serious consequences to the assailants, who, on the contrary fire in security red-hot shot and missiles of all descriptions, every one of which must tell on their opponents, and eventually sink or oblige the ship, which may verily be called defenceless, to strike her colours.

“ The Regent, Britannia, Howe, Nelson, and Vincent, each of 120 guns, have been built at an enormous expense about the close and since the conclusion, of the late war; and none of these magnificent ships have ever been at sea. It is a lamentable truth, but it is indeed too true, that the best, nay, the only use, they can be put to, when the nation is again plunged into war, is to carry coals for the steam vessels, which will then most assuredly form the national bulwark, and the protection of our commerce. Alas! instead of inhabiting a *palace* like the spacious and superb accommodations of a first-rate ship of war, our gallant admirals must condescend to live in one small cabin, like that of a sloop of war, and the blast of the sulphurous steam pipe must supply the place of the band of music. Yes; there is another use they can be put to: they will make good transports, if protected by steam vessels.”

The article states that steam vessels are safer and more manageable in bad weather than sailing vessels, they can be made proof against shot, that even the paddles can be fully protected, and that therefore the objection that a shot in the boiler, or in any other part of the machinery, would disable them, is completely done away. The security of England from foreign invasion was owing to the superiority of her harbours for large vessels over those on the opposite coast; but as harbours fit for any number of steam vessels are to be found every where on the French coast, that advantage will be at an end, as will also the blockade system. Any little harbour is as good for steam vessels as the great harbour of Plymouth Sound. Falmouth and Dartmouth will hereafter have the advantage, and Shoreham will probably be the principal harbour in Great Britain. The crew of a first-rate would man 40 steam ships, and the nation could be defended by steam, at half the expense of any other mode.

## THEATRE.

The opera of the Barber of Seville was performed on 17th instant, for the benefit of Vacani, to a very full house. Most of the boxes were occupied by ladies, the beauty and elegant costume of whom presented a charming *coup-d'œil*. The governor of the province was seated in the government box, attended by General Rondeau, Coronel Ramirez, Lieutenant Colonel Castañon, Majors Alvarez and Fentuso.

The opera, although so often repeated, lost none of its attractions. Da. Angela, (as usual) sung divinely, Rosquellas and Vacani gave the highest satisfaction, and the applause during the evening evinced how much the audience felt delighted.

On the 18th instant, a play in three acts was performed, founded on the travelling adventures of the Czar Peter of Russia. Vera, as the pragmatical “head man of the village,” displayed some comic acting, particularly in the humble and servile *obeissances* which followed the mention of the sacred name of Emperor.

The opera of Otello is to be performed this evening. We enjoy even in anticipation the beautiful finale to the second act.

## PRICE OF SPECIE.

Doublons, 70 dollars each.  
Spanish Dollars, 290 per cent premium.  
Gold in bars 23 rs. per quilate.  
Silver in bars, 21 rs. per dinero.  
Exchange on England, 12d per dollar.  
Ditto on Rio Janeiro, 333 rees currency per pollar (nominal).  
Ditto on Monte Video, 210 do. do.

Dry goods have declined in price lately. Bramantes, not long since at 13 rials, have fallen to 6 and a half and 7 rials per yard. The depression is variously accounted for. Decreased consumption, the arrival of several cargoes, scarcity of money, (5 per cent per month having been paid,) and rumours of peace. There is considerable speculation in the doubloon market. The Bulls playing upon some presumed Bear accounts, are, in Capel Court language, “puffing the market.” the result will probably be, as in other countries, the “little men” will become the sufferers.

## To Correspondents.

We appeal to the candour of our correspondent, who writes to us on behalf of many of our readers, whether he really thinks the admirable essay alluded to is a fit subject for a newspaper; at least for one so very limited as ours.

Any subscriber not receiving his numbers regularly is most particularly requested to make it known to the editors, who will immediately rectify it.