

THE
British Packet,
AND
ARGENTINE NEWS.

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BUENOS AYRES, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1827.

[Vol. 2.]

BUENOS AYRES.

THE war now carrying on between the periodicals of Buenos Ayres, appears to be directed against individuals, rather than against principles. Notwithstanding, we see that some writers have particularly fixed their attention on one of the most difficult questions contained in the vast circle of politics, viz. : THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS. We cannot approve of their choice ; for, besides the complication and difficulty of the subject, which can only be profoundly treated after ages of experience in the career of liberty, it is of so delicate and fragile a nature that it can hardly be touched without injuring it. Thus, during the late troubles in Europe, whenever the discussion has been brought forth, it has always been to give some fatal blow to that precious and noble prerogative. When the authorities provoke the public examination of its constituting principles, it is with a natural propensity to diminish it ; and consequently it never appears to us so free from danger, as when not spoken of. It is like the air we breathe, which only excites our observation when we discover in it some quality offensive to health or to the senses.

The principle of the liberty of the Press, has been pointed out with an equal degree of conciseness, but in different forms, by two great writers of the last century,—Bishop Berkeley, and the critic Du Marsais. The first has said, "Utility and truth are not to be divided : the general good of mankind being the rule or "measure of moral truth." The second has explained himself in a way still more apropos to the object in discussion : "The distinguishing character of Truth is, that it is equally and constantly advantageous to all parties ; whilst Falsehood, useful for a few moments to a few individuals, is always injurious to the mass." This is the infallible rule by which the friends and enemies of the liberty of the Press ought to be judged ; and common sense tells us, that he who has nothing to fear from the truth, has no interest in clipping its wings.

But the Press has another admirable virtue, not possessed by any other human institution :—the evils which it causes, it also cures. Indeed, it alone can cure them. If there be mixed in the cup a few drops of venom, the same cup contains the antidote. The theatre of the accusation, is that of the defence. Thus, then, neither error nor calumny can enjoy more than a short-lived and precarious triumph, if you make use of the means of publication. Truth and innocence immediately present themselves, and, without the least effort, put their miserable adversaries to the rout.

In opposition to these consolatory reflexions, it has been lately said, in one of the periodicals of this capital, that ridicule can work with impunity by means of the Press ; that there is no

safeguard against it ; and that, consequently, it is lawful for it to throw odium on the most noble thoughts and the purest intentions. This objection appears, at first sight, of some weight : it is, however, easily combated.

Ridicule must fall either on persons who deserve censure, or on those who do not. In the first case, it must be considered as a part of the censure,—as an ingredient in the punishment the censured person merits ; and we cannot see what harm there can be in a derisory smile accompanying the reprehension, or in an epigram adding strength to the odium excited by the culpable. If a minister be an enemy to liberty, or if a magistrate sell justice, there can be no harm in the denunciation being seasoned with the salt of ridicule : it contributes to augment the general detestation excited by such acts. If, on the contrary, ridicule is thrown on the innocent, it only makes impression on the small number of persons profoundly malevolent and corrupt. For the same reason, it is entirely inoffensive ; the great majority repulse it with horror, as the general opinion has never been known to sanction that which offends public morals.

But, taking a higher position, we do not fear to assert that all the ill that can be effected by the abuse of ridicule, even when employed in a way the most unjust, does not equal that which would result from the least restriction that may be imposed on it. Governments lose all restraint, all moderation, when once they have entered the dangerous road of prohibitory laws. The facility with which the first is realized induces them to attempt others ; and the chain which follows has no end. The worst of it is, that in such cases, liberty being compressed, seeks other means of taking its primitive bound ; genius, restrained by the shackles imposed on it, finds innumerable expedients for escaping from the barrier which confines it ; whilst power, thus thwarted, grows more exasperated, and its own impotence augments its irritability ; the contest between the persecuted and the persecutors becomes more and more bitter ; and the laws a mockery, and the authorities degraded, show the truth of that maxim of one of our poets :—

"How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure!"

If, then, we are asked what ought to be done with the liberty of the Press, we reply,—leave it alone : and if it is true, as is generally believed, that the National Government could have prolonged its existence by persecuting those who combatted it through the press, we applaud their forbearance, and confess, that even admitting that great evils might be consequent on its fall, greater would have been those which accompanied the means of avoiding it.

British Commercial Review

Oct. 20.—At 12 o'clock the Brazilian corvette Carioca fired a gun, and hoisted a flag of truce. The brig of war Balcárce, in the Inner Roads, likewise fired a gun and hoisted a white flag at the fore. The Brazilian schooner Rio, bearing a flag of truce, stood towards the Inner Roads: Captain Granville was despatched in a boat to meet her, and returned in the afternoon, bringing with him Mr. Francis Halback. This gentleman had taken his passage to Monte Video in the British packet Zephyr. The Commodore of the blockading squadron, Norton, would not allow him to proceed, and he was conveyed on board the Carioca, to be from thence returned on shore.

Oct. 21.—Arrived, No. 4 Gun Boat, Collins, from Las Vacas, having on board twelve of the men wounded in the late skirmish near Colonia.

Arrived, No. 11 Gun Boat, Castelli. She has retaken a chalupa in the Carazoles, which had been seized at Gualeguachu by 10 black soldiers late belonging to Jacinto Pereyra's flotilla, with the intention of going to Colonia.

A smart cannonade to the northward was heard this afternoon. Several small craft arrived from the Parana.

Oct. 22.—Sailed, No. 11 Gun Boat, Castelli, and schooner Rosario, with provisions for Martin Garcia.

Sailed, National schooner of war, Juncal, Captain Coe; do. do. Sarandi, Captain La Rosa, for Patagonia; and privateer schooner President, Captain Allen, on a cruise. The above vessels had sailed on the night of the 20th instant, and returned on the morning of the 21st. Having light winds, they had fallen in with and been chased by the blockading squadron. On the 20th the latter had gone further down the river, but came again in sight during the chase on the 21st, and anchored S. E. of the town, distant about 16 miles. The national schooners anchored East, upon the edge of the bank.

The Juncal conveys to Patagonia the new Commandant of that port, Don Ramon Rodriguez, and his family; some officers, artillerymen, ammunition, &c.

Oct. 23.—Sailed, privateer schooner Constant, Captain William Mychingberg, on a cruise. She carries one long 8 pounder on a pivot, two small swivel guns, musquetry, and 35 to 40 men.

Oct. 25.—Arrived, schooner Richard G. Cox, Captain Munday, from the Salado. Left that port on 23d instant at 12 o'clock, and at 10 o'clock on the morning of the 24th saw a schooner-brig burning of the Atalaya church, (supposed a prize,) and a Brazilian schooner near, which gave chase to the Richard G. Cox. Passed the blockading squadron without impediment.

Despatches have been received from the Commandant at the Salado, dated 22d instant, to the following effect:—That on the 22d arrived at that port the brig Marquis Nazaret, prize to the corvette Ituzaingo, Captain Mason; taken off Cape Frio, prize master William Page: cargo, 130 pipes of wine. Parted company from the corvette on 9th September. Arrived, on same day, the zumaca Nuestra Señora del Cabo, prize to the brig of war Congress, Captain Fournier. The prize master, Dupont, parted company from the Congress on the 4th instant, and up to that date she had destroyed 14 Brazilian vessels, in-

cluding a very fine government transport. On the 2d instant she took a ship of 400 tons, richly laden, and sent her to Chili. On the 30th September the Paula frigate and a brig of war, with a convoy, sailed from Rio Janeiro. The Congress got amongst them, and took a zumaca. The Paula, in endeavouring to protect the convoy, got so near the coast that she grounded; and a prize taken on the following day asserted that the frigate had been entirely lost. The privateer Rayo Argentino has made three prizes from the same convoy. The prize master, Dupont, states that he saw at the entrance of the river a Brazilian lugger ashore, with a signal of distress flying. The Congress was left in chase of a Brazilian vessel.

A zumaca, prize to the privateer Rayo Argentino, was going into the Salado on 23d instant. The cargo stated not to be very valuable.

Oct. 26.—Arrived, No. 11 Gun Boat, Castelli, from Martin Garcia, and a zumaca. The firing heard here on Sunday afternoon last, was from Martin Garcia, exercising the great guns. A Brazilian, who had murdered a Paraguay, was shot for that crime on the 25th instant, at Martin Garcia.

Oct. 27.—Letters from Montevideo to the 23d instant, have been received this morning. They announce the arrival of a vessel from Rio Janeiro, confirming the intelligence of the loss of the Paula frigate. The American brig Tusculosa, lately taken from the Salado by a Brazilian boat, has arrived at Monte Video.

ARRIVALS AT THE SALADO.

Oct. 17.—The zumaca Melanic, prize to the brig of war Congress, with rice, coffee and timber; prize master, John Brown; taken near Rio Janeiro. The Congress was in chase of two vessels when the prize left, 19 days since; and intended to go in search of 22 vessels coming from Pernambuco under convoy of a brig of war.

Arrived, brig Nuevo Brioso, prize to the schooner privateer Bonærense: prize master, Henry Yribarren; cargo wine, sugar, salt, and clothing. She was taken near the Line, and parted from the privateer 28 days since.

The American ship Hamilton, Pelham, from Boston 76 days, with flour and powder, arrived at Monte Video on the 2d instant, to James Noble. The American schooner Sailor's Return, from Rio Janeiro 3d, arrived at Monte Video 12th instant.—The Congress brig of war, Captain Fournier, had put on board an English brig from 50 to 60 prisoners: they had been landed at Rio Janeiro, and a report prevailed that a Brazilian schooner-brig of war had been captured and sunk by Fournier. A Portuguese brig has been purchased by the government at M. Video, and is fitting as a brig of war: Williams is to have the command, and Usher (one of the prisoners of war lately escaped,) to be lieutenant. The corvette Liberal was at Monte Video on the 13th instant.

The corvette Carioca, besides Norton, has two or three English officers, including Thompson late of the schooner Conception; and a crew of all nations.

A person who left Monte Video a few days since, states, that the corvette Maciaco, Captain Eyre, and brig Caboclo, were in that port, having returned from a cruise: therefore the expedition against Patagonia, if it ever was intended, has for the present been abandoned. We have heard it stated in another quarter, that they have put back from bad weather.

The Brazilians declare that the Government of Buenos Ayres must make good the loss of the American brig Brutus, which they (the Brazilians) lately burned near Ensenada; upon the plea, that the battery at that port having fired upon the brig, she was destroyed from necessity. This will make a "point for the judges."

The American schooner brig Caspian, lately sent back to Monte Video, had ran into two fathom water when chased by the blockading squadron; and on leaving that position was unfortunately caught.

The ship detained by the Brazilians on the 17th instant, is the Hamburg ship Daphne, direct from Hamburg, having on board Mr. Klick, of the house of Fisher & Klick of this city. She had anchored at night near the blockading squadron, taking the lights at the village of Quilmes for those of Buenos Ayres. — The Sardinian brig detained on the 18th instant, had a valuable cargo of sugar, wine, dry goods, &c., to W. P. Ford and Co. from Monte Video. Her name, Asunta; pilot, Malcolm Shannon. This brig still remains with the blockading squadron, and the Hamburg ship Daphne, has been sent to M. Video.

The brig that chiefly engaged the schooners Sarandi and Juncal on the 18th instant, is the Piraja, Captain Anderson; and had, according to Brazilian account, two men wounded, one in the leg, the other in the arm; none killed. The other brig is the Maranham, commanded by a Portuguese. Anderson, whilst a prisoner in this country, was treated in the most kind manner. The language he now holds may be characteristic, but is not a suitable return for benefits received.

General Lavalleja has dissolved the Junta in the Banda Oriental, by the alleged advice of the military commandants of that province, and has assumed, for the present, the chief direction of affairs; expressing his determination speedily to form another Junta, more appropriate to the state of things and the war in which the province is engaged.

Captain La Rosa, of the schooner of war Sarandi, came from Chili first lieutenant of the Juncal, and report speaks highly of his talents and courage. He is a native of Buenos Ayres, nephew to Don Manuel Sarratea (the Minister of this Republic in London), and speaks English fluently. He has been in the Chili navy several years.

Seven prisoners of war, including some of the officers taken in the Uruguay, and from the schooner Maria Teresa, have lately escaped from the Cúna prison. They had managed to get over the wall. There appears to be some great mismanagement as it regards the custody of prisoners of war in this country.

It is said that the sixth article in the private instructions given to privateers, has been expunged by order of Government.

The late success of the brig of war Congress, corvette Ituzaingo, and the privateers, against Brazilian commerce, is very important news, particularly should the Padra frigate be lost, as is reported. It will convince the Brazilians that their trade cannot be adequately protected. The Emperor put forth all his strength at the commencement of the conflict, expecting at once to crush his foe. The effort has failed, and the means of annoyance here, notwithstanding the loss of the Chili fleet and other disappointments, increases every hour. Adventurous men (as we stated in a former number,) will repair from all countries in aid of the Republic. It has been found that brigs and schooners are not sufficient protection for convoys: frigates will be required, and the Emperor has none at present to spare, without materially reducing the force in this river, and then the blockade becomes a nullity, which, indeed, is now almost the case. It is reported that an attempt will be made to bombard this city. Desperation and revenge may prompt such an act, not as the "happy prologue to the swelling act of the Imperial theme;" but as a terrific last scene, to give effect, and conclude the melodrama of the war. The rumour is probably one of the "lies of the day:" at any rate, the smaller vessels of the squadron, and the artillery, should always be in readiness for contingent circumstances. The beach of this city in itself forms an excellent battery.

The following document, found on board one of Fournier's prizes, communicates officially the intelligence of the loss of the Paula frigate:

"Cape Frio, 2d October, 1827.

"Illustrious Sir,

"I have to acquaint your Excellency, that, on the night of the 1st instant, the Imperial and national frigate Dona Paula, was lost on the Frenchman's Island (Ilha do Frances); the crew and a part of the ammunition having been saved.

"Your Excellency's obedient servant;

"MANUEL SOBRINHO.

"N. B.—The frigate still remains upon the rocks.

"To His Excellency the Minister of War and Marine of the Empire of Brazil."

Norton, the Brazilian commodore upon this station, is known to have a great faculty, like Gratiano, of speaking "an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice." He expected Brown, with two schooners and five guns, to go "within reach of the Carioca" (32 gun ship), backed by two brigs of 18 guns each, and 5 schooners. If Norton is so fond of fighting, why not, as occasion might serve, hoist his flag on board a schooner? Many opportunities have occurred, wherein he could have combatted to advantage with the small vessels of his squadron, and showed his personal prowess. Even in the action of the 18th instant, the Brazilians had five schooners to two of their opponents. Lord Nelson (and it is profanation to mention his name in such company), in order to grapple with his enemy, has sometimes shifted his flag to small vessels. We suspect that the mortifications Norton has endured in this river, has made him petulant when Buenos Ayres happens to be the subject of conversation. Besides, in the recriminatory part of the story, his foes have got "to windward of him." They can relate a long history of his mishaps in "deep water" and in shallow water: how, on such and such days, with a force of ten to one, he was driven down the river, in the face of assembled thousands; and how his career began on the 11th of April, 1826, with great expectations and high sounding words, and that from some cause or other a series of disappointments has attended him; and that vexation has made him believe, or affect to believe, that we are a set of brawling poltrons, and until we fall under the dominion of the Emperor of Brazil, shall continue to brawl, insult, and quarrel both with friends and enemies:—"Evermore cross'd, and cross'd, nothing but cross'd."—Norton we know, has lately imbibed a greater dislike to us Buenos Ayreans than formerly, and in that respect "there is no love lost," except that our dislike is mingled with regret that he, or any of our countrymen, should in a foreign service fight to maintain an unjust pretension. The stir will attend them for years to come, even supposing Buenos Ayres to be a "nest of demagogues."

Apropos.—The blockaders, it is said, have employed their leisure hours in sketching a plan which has been forwarded to the Emperor, upon the best mode of attacking this "impregnable city." Some bomb-vessels are to bombard the town. This it is

thought, will heartily sicken the inhabitants, make them feel the horrors of war, and sue for peace upon any terms. The Emperor (for they have got it all "cut and drive"), with a body of troops is to be posted in the neighbourhood, and in the midst of the confusion caused by the bombardment, at the head of the "Imperial Guards" will enter the town and take possession!!

VARIETIES.

According to the last advices from Europe, the Pope and the King of Spain were at variance; and considering that Ferdinand has always been a devoted son of the Church, the quarrel with the Holy Father has created considerable discussion. It appears that the Pope wished to appoint Bishops to some sees in South America, and, it was said, had concluded a treaty with the Republic of Colombia for that purpose, which had given such offence that when M. Tiberi, the Pope's nuncio, arrived at Iron on his journey to Madrid, he found such a reception as determined him to return to Rome. A French publication, called *The Friend of Religion and of the King*, contains the following reflections upon the subject:—

"This measure has nothing to do with politics: its only motive is to protect religion, which in the ancient Spanish possessions of America is at present menaced with total destruction. Ought a religious Prince like Ferdinand carry his resentment against the insurgents so far as to interdict them from the succours of religion? He ought to wish that his former colonies had pastors: they could not in any degree prejudice his interest; on the contrary, they might calm the minds of the people. It is well known with what zeal the British Government has favoured the new Republics, in publicly recognizing them, sending them ambassadors, loans have been contracted for them in London, and it is even said arms and ammunition sent for their assistance. Spain has complained, but the British ambassador has not been conducted to the frontier; so far from that, he is courted and honoured in Madrid. Spain suffers the conduct of a Power that favours the insurrection of the colonies, who has made treaties with them, and who continues to uphold them in their resistance! Has the Pope acted thus? Has he meddled with politics, or interfered in the disputes of Spain? How is it that Spain is offended with one power, and so patient with the other? Why must it be a crime for the Pope to provide for the interests of religion, and that England, who assists in the most direct manner the revolted provinces against the mother country, should be tolerated? When the Pope sends fleets to sustain insurrection, the Cabinet of Madrid will have cause to complain: but when only bishops are sent, there certainly can be nothing to irritate. It seems strange that the nuncio of his Holiness must not reside at Madrid, and that the British ambassador should be followed and caressed: it is equally strange that they are more shocked at the departure of a few Papal Bulls, than at the numerous vessels with men and arms sent from Great Britain."

The Emperor Napoleon often asserted that if he could take London the fate of England would be decided. Upon this subject Sir Walter Scott has made the following observations, which we copy from a French paper:—"Of the three British nations, the English have sufficiently distinguished themselves in the fields of Cressy and Agincourt: the Irish have lost nothing of the courage which has distinguished them in every country of Europe; and the Scotch, of that old illustration which conserved their independence during so many ages against a superior enemy. Suppose even that London had been taken, we should not have despaired of the liberty of the country. The war would then have assumed a popular and national character."

Mademoiselle Georges, the famous French actress, has been performing at the King's Theatre in London. In the part of 'Semiramis' she attracted a crowded house. The Duchess of Kent, Duke of Sussex, Mr. Canning, &c. were amongst the audience. A French company were performing at the Regency Theatre, Tottenham Court Road; and it is said a French Theatre is to be established in London.

When Rossini was in London, and after he had ceased to become "a nine days wonder," the fashionables complained of his abrupt manners, and he left that city rather in dudgeon. George IV. who is an enthusiast in music, paid him particular attention, and

brought down the sneers of some of the writers of the day for so doing. Another writer answered the attack, stating that Rossini, by his delightful airs, had contributed more to the stock of public happiness than the labours of all the Sovereigns of Europe put together: that a king could be made at any time, but to frame a man of genius, whether philosopher, poet, painter, or musician, is no light operation; it is rare work, and can be accomplished only by "Nature's own sweet and cunning hand;" and therefore that George IV. had done himself honour by his familiarity with Rossini.

THEATRE.

A play called the "Wife of two Husbands," was represented a few evenings since, with considerable effect. In England it is performed as an Opera, with some very pretty music by Mazzenghi. Indeed our English Operas (Artaxerxes excepted,) are more properly speaking, Musical Plays.

Señor Caeres took his benefit on Monday night last, after numerous postponements on account of the weather. The house was crowded; we could scarcely obtain a sight of the stage. The play, Voltaire's tragedy of "Fanaticism, or, Mahomet the Prophet;" with a farce called "The Brazilian Braggart, or, the Battle of Ituzango," in which a second Parolles appeared upon the stage.

A late event has, for the present, suspended our operatic enjoyments. We most sensibly feel the deprivation, and regret that a votary of Euterpe should have engaged in occupations and affairs of commerce, so dissonant to the muse of music.

* * We respectfully solicit the indulgence of our Subscribers for the delay they have experienced in receiving the present number of the "British Packet;" being occasioned by the unavoidable difficulties attendant on the transfer of its publication to another Printing-Office.

PRICE OF SPECIE.

- Douhloons, 68 to 69 dollars each.
- Spanish Dollars, 280 to 290 per cent. premium.
- Gold in bars, 18 to 20 reals per quilate.
- Silver do. 20 reals per dinero.
- Exchange on England, 11½d. to 12d. per dollar.
- Do. United States, 300 per cent.
- Do. Rio Janeiro, 330 rees currency per dollar.
- Do. Monte Video, 265 to 270 per cent.
- 6 per cent. Stock, 48 to 50.
- Rate of Interest per month, 2 to 3 per cent.

The market for dry goods is heavy, from the stock on hand, some expected from Chili now that the weather permits communication across the Andes, and likewise the chance of arrivals by sea. Some transactions have taken place in the doubloon market this week, and they have risen from 67 to 69.

The shares of 1000 dollars each in the brig Congress, have advanced, since the late news, to 2500 dollars. On Thursday morning they were at 1200 dollars; no buyers.

British Philanthropic Institution.

THE Gentlemen forming the Committee of Management of the above Institution, are hereby informed, that the first Committee Meeting will take place at Faunch's Hotel, on the 29th instant, at Seven o'clock, at which their attendance is particularly requested.

F. VINCENT, Secretary.

Wanted,

A PERSON competent to conduct the Boys' DEPARTMENT of the BUENOS AYREAN BRITISH SCHOOLS, upon the modern improved system of Education by Mutual Instruction. Salary, 1200 dollars.

Application to be made to the Committee, by letter, to be left at the School House, No. 45 Calle de la Victoria, on or before Thursday the 1st November next.