



tary exception of ordinary Spanish wines, which are comparatively abundant, and difficult to be realized, and in prices.

The customary supplies from Brazil and the United States are in brisk demand, and maintain full prices, with a decided upward tendency. Sugar, coffee, rice, yerba, and tobacco, are scarce, and consequently high. Salt and American lumber maintain the advance mentioned in our last. Coals are not abundant, and as usual in the winter months, have advanced from 20 to 25 per cent by retail. Of salt and lumber the stocks on hand must be very heavy, and it is difficult to account for the sudden reaction and firm tone, especially of salt, the demand for which, at the present moment appearing rather problematical.

In our last we alluded to the high price of flour; and it is now our welcome duty to report a further advance, during these months, of from 25 to 30 per cent. In these circumstances we feel warranted in repeating our earnest protest against the established import duties on flour and wheat. It is a public scandal, and consequently high, as the exorbitant profits are now in favor, not of the grower, but of a clique of sordid speculators and forestalers. We continue to receive small quantities of wheat from Montevideo; but nothing to check the upward course of our market. To do this effectually we require at least four or five formal cargoes of American flour; and we repeat our conviction of the inexpediency and immorality of any import duty in the actual circumstances, with bread at famine prices.

**EXPORT PRODUCE.**—We may repeat the words of an experienced and competent judge, who assured us, that "he had never seen the produce market in a more deplorable state. The salesmen have been doing comparatively nothing; and the general opinion of jaded heads there are no stocks on hand of any description. As the roads are now almost impracticable, we cannot expect any considerable supplies from the country districts for the next three or four months, and we suspect, judging from the late returns, that the quantity of produce available. It cannot be said that there is an active and healthy demand for any thing. Some ship on their own account, rather than accept the current rates; and others buy a little rather than send their vessels to sea in ballast; but both in a half sorry, half puerile mood, as if dissatisfied with their own act, and distrustful of the result.

Prices during the month have been quietest; so much so that the daily fluctuations in the value of our currency have had hardly any perceptible effect on the market. A conclusive proof of the general languor and stagnation. Of salted ox and cow hides a fair proportion have been dispatched to Great Britain; but in Italy, Spain and the United States have lately been taking the lead. France is now importing heavily, but has rather moderate in exports.

With regard to our quotations of export produce, it must be remarked that the prices are to a considerable extent nominal; whilst the regards the probable course of the market it is impossible to form any opinion. We are satisfied however that there will be a great lull in the market; wool alone excepted.

#### LEGISLATIVE INTELLIGENCE.

We now give a synopsis of the bills introduced by Senator Calvo, to which we alluded in our last.

The first suppresses all port duties on national and foreign vessels; and pro- ceeds away with suppressing the entry, or clearance of vessels. We cannot fancy any formidable objection to this, unless it be the Minister of Finance; and after all the amount is too inconsiderable to merit a formal discussion.

The second entitles all articles without exception, to the privilege of deposit, at the option of the importer. As we like uniformity, we must support the reform, if the present system of deposit is to be preserved in it is not worth while to complicate the system by exceptions, and in general articles of comparatively small value, and in which the storage alone would in general deter the importer from availing himself of the concession. But we are still in favour of a low and firm import duty, say of 10 per cent over

there; with absolute liberty of consumption, transit, or re-shipment or re-embarkation. It would greatly simplify our cumbersome custom-house operations. It would do away the temptation to contraband. It would be a boon to the Interior dealers; who could then make up their accounts with a few ranges of all importing and wholesale establishments, a privilege for which they would willingly pay the additional 5 per cent. And finally, it would probably yield a larger revenue than the present system, with its high duties, free transit, and arbitrary valuations.

Draft No. 3 exempts from import duty a specified number of articles, including tools, machinery, coals, charcoal, iron, and building materials generally. We presume a large quantity of these articles are imported and consumed; and the only question that remains is that of revenue.

No. 4 exempts from export duty all produce of the country shipped from Bahia Blanca. We approve the principle so far as Bahia Blanca is concerned; but as a general measure, abolishing export duties on all articles of country produce from whatever port embarked. At present, as regards Bahia Blanca a worsted article, as we have before stated, it is intended to favor the commercial interests of Messrs. Calafura & Co.

Draft No. 5 declares the port of Villa del Carmen, in Rio Negro, Patagonas, a free port, for import and export for the term of ten years. As regards imports we demur to the expediency of the proposed arrangement. No foreign vessel could have a motive for taking a general cargo to the Villa del Carmen, unless it included a large proportion of valuable goods in small bulk, that could be transported from thence to the interior of the State, at less cost than the import duties established elsewhere; in other words, it would tend to disturb the equilibrium of valuable goods in small bulk, and curtail the revenue, with only a very indirect benefit to the inhabitants of the Villa del Carmen, and the neighboring districts. A drawback, equal to the full amount of the import duties, on all articles transhipped on the coast for the consumption of that goods; saving, moreover, the expense of a branch custom house, where there is no expectation of revenue for the ten years in question.

Draft No. 6 provides for the exportation by country produce free of duty from San Nicolas de los Rios. The remarks applied to Bahia Blanca are equally applicable in this case. In the mean time, and probably for a good many years to come, the duties on the full produce of the country should be permitted to rise from any port or point, Buenos Ayres should be made the only port of introduction for the State, and perhaps even for the Republic. Having discharged her outward cargo in this port, a vessel might proceed to San Nicolas, San Fernando, Esmeraldas, the Salado, Bahia Blanca, or any other port she thought proper, to embark her return cargo of country produce, without any formality whatever, other than keeping on board an Officer of the Revenue, during her stay in port, to prevent contraband, and take a simple note of the kinds and quantities of produce shipped, for statistical purposes. The necessary intercourse must be kept up by a system of coasting craft; and if an abatement, or remission of import duties for distant settlements, as Bahia Blanca or Villa del Carmen, be considered expedient, it should be made on quantities proportionate to their actual consumption.

The history of the branch custom-house at San Nicolas last year, where the expenses exceeded the entire income by a considerable sum, with only indirect guarantees against contraband, demonstrates the erroneous policy of these paltry custom houses; and the same must happen, more or less, with the still greater substitution that prevails in the Confederate Provinces. We venture to say that more than three-fourths of their gross revenue evaporates in the shape of expenses; a system onerous to the contributors, without benefit to the State.

We scout the idea of import custom-houses at the mouth of the Salado, Bahia Blanca, or Patagonas. As regards revenue they would give results even worse than that of San Nicolas; and at the same time form new centres of inevitable contraband.

No. 7 authorizes the Executive to establish and recover postage dues, and other imposts, for the purpose of erecting bridges and otherwise repairing and improving the public roads; an unexceptionable measure, that requires no comment.

No. 8 establishes an abatement of the import duties on goods introduced in vessels that bring immigrants, according to the following scale; viz, from 50 to 100 immigrants entitles the vessel to a discount of three per cent; from 100 to 200 to a discount of five per cent; from 200 to 300, of 7 per cent; from 300 to 400, of eight per cent; from 400 to 500, of 9; and of more than 500 to a discount of 10 per cent.

We highly approve of the spirit of the measure, as tending to foster immigration; but perhaps a million or two placed at the disposal of the Immigration Committee, for partial advances, to be repaid by stated instalments, would be found more simple and equitable, equally effective and more economical.

**POLITICAL ASPECT.**—We are well aware of the importance of correct information on this subject, as business men, who, as we have known, by repeated and disastrous experience, how indolently their interests are bound up with the march of political events, in these young communities.

In the depth of a commercial crisis, aggravated, first, by a monetary crisis, and now by a ministerial one, we can see little that augurs good to the foreign merchant, and much to cause uneasiness and serious apprehensions to foreign residents, doomed to witness the individual and vicarious successive reactions, as unexpected as indefensible.

With a liberal constitution and an enlightened administration, we had a right to expect other things than we now witness; but with a rampant licentiousness in the public press, and scenes enacted in the Senate-house itself, with yells of exasperation and death, that we shrink from narrating. God grant we may be mistaken; but we cannot help regarding them as the preludes of a crisis that may end, so many years ago, in a desolation.

We have seen minister after minister, of the most upright and honorable in the land, hunted like wild beasts, and heeded from their posts like public malefactors; and what have their successors to expect?

There is something radically wrong when such men as Dr. Alsina and Dr. Velaz Sarate find room aloof from the Senate-house and Chamber of Representatives; and when the services of Dr. Torres, the acclaimed saviour of his country during the late rebellion and siege, are not merely forgotten, but publicly attacked and maliciously represented, in less than the space of two short years. How can Mr. Latham, the respected President of the Foreign Community explain this moral phenomenon to his friends in England?

The time may come, must come, when Buenos Ayres will bitterly regret this prodigal waste of her talents. It is ingratitude, folly, infatuation, suicide. It depicts us in the eyes of the world; it proclaims our dissension and weakness; it invites intervention from without; it leads to anarchy in the first instance, and to despotism as its necessary sequel. Such are the palpable, the inevitable consequences of a disunion moment, we denounce the danger, in the all but the forlorn hope, that adequate and timely measures may be concerted to avert the impending calamity; and as means to that end, we would suggest the immediate installation of the Municipalities, at least in the Capital, and the reorganization of the Foreign Community, on the broadest possible basis. This is not the cause of party or faction, but the common interest of every citizen and resident in the State.

#### MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

Dr. Portela having tendered his resignation, as Minister of Government, Dr. Alsina has been named in his stead, and we presume has accepted. Inverting the established order, we would salute the former, and condole with the latter.

A number of parties have been apprehended, on the charge, it is said, of complicity in a conspiracy; respecting which we have heard many conflicting reports, but no reliable details.

#### BRITISH HOSPITAL.

The Annual General Meeting of this valuable Institution was held, pursuant to notice, in the English Church, School Lane, on the evening of Friday the 29th inst., Daniel Gowlan Esq. has been requested to preside at the Meeting, the Committee of management for the past year presented the following:

#### Report.

OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE  
BRITISH HOSPITAL  
for the year ending 1852.

The Committee of the British Medical Dispensary having completed their term of office, beg to present to the subscribers of that useful Institution a report of their proceedings during the period referred to.

By the Medical Report annexed, it will be seen that during the past year 127 Patients have availed themselves of the benefits of the Hospital, of these, 111 have been discharged cured, relieved, 4 died and 12 remain under treatment.

The Treasurer's account presented with this shows a balance in hand of £16,638 2s. besides which the Permanent Fund has been increased to £19,140 1s; bearing interest at the rate of 4 per cent. Your Committee beg however to observe that the total subscriptions and donations are less this year than previously, as also those from Masters of vessels; whilst the amount received from your patients is in excess during the same period, by £2432 2s.

The Hospital building has been kept in good repair, the interior and exterior well washed, the S. B. wall raised considerably, and every other matter necessary for the use and convenience of the Institution attended to in the best manner; the plan and circumstances would permit.

The sum of \$4,425 2 being the balance in hand of the British Hospital, has been collected from the Savings Bank, and paid to the Trustees of the Permanent Fund, together with the sum of \$2,000 being approximately the fourth part of the balance in hand at the close of last year.

The Medical attendant, Dr. Andrew Link is entitled to the thanks of the British Community for his successful treatment of the patients, and his unwearied zeal to promote the interests of the Institution.

The conduct of the Matron continues to merit the same good character, which she frequently laid down to your Committee last year.

Your Committee have not been negligent of the recommendation made to them at your last Meeting, for increased accommodations; fully convinced of the justice of the recommendation in the last report, and they have directed the committee to secure a suitable plot of ground for the erection of more commodious building, but it is only at the last moment of their term of office that they have been able to meet with one, which from its situation and value they could recommend the subscribers to purchase for the use in view, and the Committee will gladly cooperate in completing the proposed purchase, and other necessary arrangements, should this meeting sanction the same.

Your Committee have considered it advisable to purchase a small farm, in which in future all documents and papers belonging to the Institution be deposited, in the Hospital, under an inventory, which the present Treasurer and Secretary will deliver to their successors. The Committee on consulting their Report beg to congratulate the British Community on the prosperous state of the Institution and its continued usefulness, trusting that under the blessings of Divine Providence both these objects so dear to all lovers of humanity, may be continued and extended sufficiently to meet the many calls that our suffering countrymen may hereafter make upon them.

E. LUTON,

Chairman of the Committee.  
It was then Proposed by Mr. Wanklyn, seconded by Mr. J. Hughes, and carried unanimously, that the Report just read be approved and signed.

Proposed by Mr. G. Drabbe, seconded by Mr. J. Hughes, and carried unanimously, that the following gentlemen be appointed by the Committee of management for the ensuing year.

Messrs J. Steward, H. Harvatt, G. Ramsay, R. Hudson, E. Gifford, H. South, and



