MEXICO.

Interview With President Diaz on the Situation.

A HINT TO SECRETARY EVARTS.

The International Railroad Project and the Mexican Congress.

CITY OF MEXICO, May 25, 1878.

The news of the appearance of Lerdista bands on the Mexican frontier and their conflict with the government troops, in which the latter claim "first blood," did not reach this capital until some time after it had been published in the HERALD and probably forgotten by its readers. The reason for this I have already stated. The telegraph to the frontier is a mere theory; not a tangible, practicable convenience. The incursion of the Lerdistas has not created much stir in the public mind, although it has spurred on President Diaz to energetic measures, with a view to the speedy suppression of what the existing government now calls insurrection. According to the official report forwarded to the Minister of War and duly published in the papers of this city, victory perched upon the banners of the government troops in the last engagement. The victory consisted in the killing or wounding of one insurgent and the capture of two horses by the troops aforesaid, of whom no one was hurt, their commander dignifying this little unpleasantness into a "deed of arms." So far the Lerdistas have not accomplished anything, and their prospects appear by no means bright. The only military man of note among them is Escobedo, and he is more conspicuous for the length of his ears than for executive ability. Of course, this is the country of surprises, and the Lerdistas may be at it again if an opportunity should occur. Although some of President Diaz's advisers are by no means popular, yet he has not lost his hold upon the masses. No one questions his honesty and patriotism, and his administration is still favorably compared with that of his predecessor. His military resources, too, are great enough to inspire respect. He has an army numbering about forty thousand men, and, what is most essential, they are promptly paid. The misfortune of this government, as it has been the misfortune of every preceding one, consists in the fact that it has a superabundance of military genius on hand. I allude to the great number of generals who are leeches upon the public purse—professional revolutionists, whose services are not wanted, but who have to be paid to keep them quiet. Mr. Romero, the Secretary of the Treasury, has to rake and scrape to provide for this asylum of decayed talent.

PRESIDENT DIAZ'S STORY.

But I shall reserve further comment on the Mexican situation to President Diaz himself, with whom I fought an interview in order to present to the readers of the HERALD an authoritative statement of his views and intentions. President Diaz is not behind the age. He probably sees the advantage of communicating with the world at large through the medium of the leading American journal, and having on a former occasion convinced himself that his utterances would be fairly stated, he received the HERALD representative with his wonted cordiality, and conversed upon public matters in general as freely as the subject permitted.

The writer remarked:—"I hope, Mr. President, that the recognition by the United States will help to consolidate your government and defeat any attempt at revolution by Mr. Lerdo or his military adherents."

"The recognition of this government," answered General Diaz, "may help to render impossible any successful attempt at revolution on the part of Mr. Lerdo or his followers, although there are other and greater reasons why such an undertaking should end in ignominious failure. As for Mr. Lerdo himself, I can hardly believe that he would conspire upon foreign soil against his own country; still less that he would ally himself with savages on the frontier, as it has been reported; for in doing so he would place himself outside of the pale of civilization."

"I suppose that the recognition on the part of the United States was spontaneous and unconditional?" said the writer.

"Yes," continued the President. "The recognition was, if not spontaneous, at least unconditional. As I told you during the first interview, we could not admit any conditions as a basis of recognition; it was a prerequisite, and I am glad that the United States government saw at last the justice of our argument in that respect."

ESCOBEDO'S RAID.

"What is the state of affairs on the frontier? Do you think, Mr. President, that your government will co-operate with that of the United States in maintaining order there?" These were the next questions propounded to the President.

General Diaz replied:—"Peace on the frontier has recently been disturbed by the crossing over from United States territory of an armed band of insurgents. Of course this attempt on the part of a few desperate men has not the slightest chance of success. The insurrection will be crushed in its germ, and I hope that the United States government will in future use due diligence in preventing the fitting out of armed bands and their incursions upon our territory. What would the United States government say if some followers of Mr. Tilden fitted out an armed expedition in Mexico and were permitted to invade American territory to make war upon President Hayes?"

The writer being now interviewed by President Diaz answered, "I suppose President Hayes would say that the Mexican government had not used due diligence."

"Regarding your question," continued the General, "as to whether this government would co-operate with the United States in maintaining order on the frontier, I can only say that we shall preserve order on our side and I suppose that the United States will do likewise on their side."

"Is there any probability of Mr. Cortina being permitted to return to his old haunts on the frontier?"

"It will depend altogether on the issue of his trial," replied General Diaz. "Mr. Cortina's case is now before the tribunals of his country. If he should be found guilty of any of the offences charged against him he will certainly not be permitted to return to the frontier. If the charges against him should not be proven he will have to be released and permitted to go wherever he pleases, like any other citizen of the Republic."

Speaking of the abuses of the *zona libre* the writer propounded the following questions:—"Will your government, Mr. President, take steps to stop smuggling in the *zona libre*? Could not the *zona libre* just as well be abolished?"

On this point General Diaz was reserved, but from his few remarks on the subject the writer believes that the government has taken some important steps with the intention of limiting the *zona libre*, that paradise of smugglers, which limitation may amount to a practical abolition of it.

REDUCTION OF THE ARMY.

"In view of the peaceful state of affairs, does your government propose to reduce the army?" inquired your correspondent.

This was a delicate subject to touch upon, but the President replied without evasion:—"The government has adopted an effective system for reducing the army. We use reduction as a measure of discipline. Whenever any body of troops, be it company or regiment, act contrary to good order and discipline we suppress it, discharge part of the members and embody the remainder into other organizations. In this manner the army has already been reduced about thirty per cent, and I have no objection to informing you that we are about to replace part of the regular troops by rural guards, especially so on the frontier. They are to be organized and paid according to a system which will guarantee their faithfulness. Besides being a saving to the government the rural guards are very effective. Of course, there must be a limit to the reduction of the army. Our territory is very large, and, therefore, requires the scattering of considerable forces. We, as well as the United States, have troublesome elements on the frontier, which must be kept in order."

"The idea prevails in the United States," said the writer, "that public sentiment in this country is opposed to American enterprise."

The President replied:—"I have no doubt there are some individual prejudices against American enterprise. These prejudices, however, the government does not share, and they have probably arisen from the fact that this country has given to Americans concessions for important railroad enterprises which have never been carried out, and I can only express a hope that those given in future will not remain on paper. This government desires to encourage American enterprise. We only fear that it may lead to all sorts of troublesome claims as it has done in the past. Any American citizen who does not come here with the object of getting up a claim against this government will find a welcome.

"Are you, Mr. President, in favor of a commercial treaty with the United States, and what, in your opinion, should be the leading features of such a treaty?"

President Diaz said he was not fully prepared to answer the question, adding, "I can only say, in a general way, that I am in favor of a commercial treaty between the two countries—such as will be advantageous to both. At present we are negotiating with the United States as regards the Indian savages on the frontier—how to stop their depredations and limit them to a certain extent of territory. After this question is arranged we shall see what we can do about a commercial treaty."

THE INTEROCEANIC RAILROAD.

"What is your opinion, Mr. President, regarding the interoceanic railroad from the city of Mexico to the American frontier and to the Pacific? Do you think it will obtain the sanction of Congress, and are you personally in favor of it?" was the next inquiry of the writer.

"I am in favor of Mr. Sullivan's interoceanic railroad," said the President, "as being the only one before us, and I have done all I could to promote it. As to whether it will receive the sanction of Congress I am unable to say. Our Congress, like yours, is a body independent of the Executive, and it is not possible to say what it will do. If Mr. Sullivan's project does not go through this session it will be rather from lack of time than from lack of votes. Of course I can only urge it upon Congress to a certain limit. If it should meet with determined resistance I shall withdraw from it rather than create ill feeling by persistent pressure. Mexico is very much in need of railroads, and this government will encourage any enterprise that will give reasonable guarantee for supplying that great want."

Alluding to the railroad between Vera Cruz and the city of Mexico your correspondent remarked that the plan of Tuxtepec (the platform of the revolution headed by General Diaz) distinctly promised that said railroad would be compelled to reduce its exorbitant charges of freight and passengers. Why had not that promise been fulfilled?

"The preceding government," continued General Diaz, "made a contract with the railroad company which was ill-advised and not in the interest of the people, authorizing the railroad to charge the high rates you mention. We cannot break that contract, but we are now negotiating with the managers with a view to a reduction."

"Is your administration, Mr. President, in favor of a reduction of the customs tariff?"

"This government," replied the President, "is in favor of revising the customs tariff, and there is now a measure before Congress which will bring great relief to commerce. I mean the abolition of interstate customs (*Alcabalas*). We also propose to abolish the export duty on silver and gold. These measures carried out the greatest impediments to a free commercial intercourse will have been removed and then there will be time to think of reducing the import duties."

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

"Is there any prospect of the resumption of diplomatic relations between this country and France and England?" inquired your correspondent.

"Our door is not shut," said the President. "We are ready to meet overtures, but we shall not take the initiative in this matter. As with the United States we shall not compromise the national dignity for the sake of obtaining recognition. Some time ago a half way proposition came from a gentleman connected with the French government, but as it appeared rather disingenuous the offer was not availed of. More recently the French government announced that there would be a space reserved for Mexican exhibitors, but no official invitation having been addressed to this government, as was necessary to secure its consideration, I do not think that any use will be made of that offer."

"Does your government intend to resist payment of some of the American claims which it considers fraudulent, such, for instance, as those of the mining company, La Abra, and Weil & Co., Matamoros?" was the final question of the writer.

"It is obvious to any impartial mind who has investigated the matter," replied the President, "that some of the claims decided against this government are fraudulent, and I can only explain the award of the arbitrator by misapprehension of facts or perjury of witnesses. Of course we shall pay those awards unless the United States government, from a sense of justice, should, after investigation, relieve us from payment. I understand that the American Congress has already taken the initiative in this matter, and we expect to get fair play."

Although President Diaz did not seem averse to further conversation the writer, mindful of the crowd outside who were waiting to see him, here terminated the interview.

EXECUTIVE AND JUDICIARY CLASH.

There is considerable discussion occasioned by the refusal of the Supreme Court to grant leave of absence to three of their associates, who are also members of the Cabinet. They are Mr. Vallarta, the Minister of Foreign Affairs; Mr. Tagle, Minister of Justice, and Mr. Garcia, Minister of the Interior. This refusal meant that those gentlemen must either leave the court or the Cabinet. Messrs. Tagle and Garcia remain in the Ministry, having resigned their places in the Supreme Court, but Mr. Vallarta, the Chief Justice, who, as such, would be General Diaz's legal successor in case anything should happen to that gentleman during his Presidential term, has left the Cabinet, but cannot yet be said to be completely out of it, as there is still some hope that the Supreme Court may yet relent and give him leave to resume his functions as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Mr. Vallarta wants to be President and would fain hold on to both places, as they may be equally conducive to the object of his ambition. The action of the members of the Supreme Court is partly explained by their bitter dislike of Mr. Tagle, who has carried things in a too high handed manner for them, and they have since then intimated to President Diaz that they would consent to Mr. Vallarta's remaining in the Cabinet if he would dismiss the hated Tagle. What the President is going to do about it is yet to be seen. In the meantime Mr. Vallarta's post in the Ministry remains vacant, and, though gossips have provided several successors for him, Mr. Romero and Mr. Mariscal among the number, the probability is that the matter will be kept in suspense to give the Supreme Court a chance to change its decision. Mr. Romero told the writer that he does not want the place, and Mr. Mariscal, who would be an excellent appointment, is too recently from Washington as the representative of the Lerdo government to have any chance of getting it.

The action of the Supreme Court is interpreted as a somewhat severe check to the government and is said to have caused considerable disappointment to President Diaz, who, like many others, considered it of the greatest importance that Mr. Vallarta should remain in the Ministry until all points in controversy between the United States and Mexico are settled.

A GREAT RAILROAD SCHEME.

Sullivan and Palmer's railroad concession, which has been before the House of Representatives—or Chamber of Deputies, as the Mexicans call it—has called forth some very lively discussion in that body. One speaker said that the project, if executed, would bring the enemy by steam into this country. Of course he meant the Americans. Although President Diaz, as he says in the above interview, is in favor of the scheme, yet one who is supposed to be his particular friend and political adviser—Mr. Benitez, a well known politician and member of the Chamber of Deputies—is making a most bitter and strenuous opposition to it. In spite of this, however, the bill passed the Chamber as a whole and remains now to be discussed in detail. As the session is about to expire and the appropriations have not yet been made the bill will have to go over to the next session, when the fight will begin anew. This railroad project, if ever carried out, will change the whole aspect of this country, raising it out of its present slough of despondency into a brighter existence. Colonel Tom Scott has written a strong letter to President Diaz in favor of the scheme.

NOTES FROM VERA CRUZ.

VERA CRUZ, May 26, 1878.

A batch of revolutionists of various military ranks, including one colonel, arrived here to-day by steamer City of Vera Cruz from Yucatan. They were transferred in chains from the steamer to the fort in the harbor. A spruce, intelligent young darkey, with a profusion of gold lace around his cap, took charge of them. The intelligent young African aforesaid is a colonel and the commandant of the fort. It will puzzle an international lawyer to justify the carrying of political prisoners by an American vessel from one Mexican port to another, in the face of the fact that these prisoners can claim and are entitled to the protection of the American flag whenever the ship is at one marine league's distance from the shore, an American ship upon the high seas being a part of American territory, where political offenders from foreign lands may find safety and from which even ordinary criminals cannot be extradited without form of law or treaty.

Consul General Colburn and wife arrived here to-day by the steamer City of Vera Cruz, *en route* for the city of Mexico. They were met by Dr. Trowbridge, the American Consul at this port. It is to be hoped that Mr. Coburn's health may be restored, as he will certainly make many friends in this country by his modesty, integrity and unvaried courtesy.

The family of Dr. Trowbridge, our worthy Consul at this port, will leave to-morrow by the steamer City of New York for New Orleans, and thence to their home in Illinois.

Major De Gress, of the well known American house of Wexel & De Gress, of the city of Mexico, is also a passenger by the same steamer.

In spite of the terrible life absorbing heat prevailing in this place there is not a single case of vomito or yellow fever.

"THE MYSTIC TIE."

PROCEEDINGS AT YESTERDAY'S SESSION OF THE GRAND LODGE—ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

The Grand Lodge of the State of New York resumed its sessions yesterday in Masonic Temple, being called to order at nine A. M. by Grand Master Couch, when prayer was offered by Rev. John G. Webster. The Committee on Work and Lectures, to whom was referred the resolution of W. Brother Doane abolishing the salary of the Grand Lecturer and relieving him from the duty of visiting Masonic districts, reported adversely.

The election of grand officers was then taken up, M. W. James W. Husted acting as Grand Master. He nominated R. W. Edmund L. Judson, ex-Mayor of Albany, and M. W. Isaac Phillips nominated the present incumbent, M. W. Joseph J. Couch. Mr. Couch, however, declined the nomination and Mr. Judson was thereupon elected by acclamation.

R. W. L. Bradford Prince nominated R. W. Charles Roome as Deputy Grand Master and M. W. Ellwood E. Thorne nominated R. W. James E. Morrison. The latter, however, declined and Mr. Roome was elected by acclamation.

OTHER OFFICERS.

R. W. Jesse B. Anthony was unanimously re-elected Senior Grand Warden and R. W. Benjamin Flagler Junior Grand Warden. R. W. Gregory Satterlee was re-elected Grand Treasurer, and James M. Austin, M. D., Grand Secretary. General Richard U. Sherman was elected a Trustee of the Hall and Asylum Fund in place of Philo Remington whose term has expired.

The installation of grand officers was made the special order for eleven o'clock this morning. A recess was then had until two P. M.

AFTER RECESS.

When the Grand Lodge reassembled in the afternoon an amendment to the statute making the pay of country representatives $6 per day, and allowing no pay to the representatives from this city and Brooklyn, was offered and referred. Several other amendments were also referred.

W. Bro. Stanley offered the following resolution:—

Whereas the centenary of this Grand Lodge is close at hand, and whereas a full and complete record of its history is at all times desirable, but will then be peculiarly interesting and valuable, therefore be it

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to devise, if possible, some plan by which a full and perfect registry of the several lodges subordinate to this Grand Lodge may be made and forever after kept in the Grand Secretary's office, and thus a ready reference furnished by which the foundation and progress of every lodge in the jurisdiction can be easily ascertained, not only for the benefit of the craft of to-day, but for all who may come after us.

The Grand Secretary, in opposing the motion, said that when he was elected twenty-five years ago there was no registry of lodges and members. He then established a registry, which was now as complete as it possibly could be. He moved that the resolution be laid on the table. Carried.

M. W. Joseph D. Evans presented a report on deceased members and offered suitable resolutions, one of which recommended a memorial page in the transactions to the memory of each deceased brother. The report was accepted and the resolutions adopted.

The Grand Librarian presented his report, which showed a great increase in the number of volumes since last year. He concluded by stating that New York now possessed a Masonic library second to none in the world. Accepted and ordered to be printed in the transactions.

FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVES.

Representatives from grand lodges of Scotland, Kansas, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Indiana were presented and welcomed with the grand honors.

The trustees of the Hall and Asylum Fund reported according to resolution, showing when the various bonds and notes will arrive at maturity. The Committee on Hall and Asylum Fund reported, commending the trustees and approving of their report. A motion to print the same was referred to the Printing Committee.

An attempt was made to amend the rules so as to hold an evening session, but it failed and a recess was taken till nine this morning.

A CORRECTION.

The amendment to section 5 article 2 of the statutes was not adopted as stated in the HERALD yesterday. It was lost by an overwhelming majority.

ORDER OF EASTERN STAR.

The Grand Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star resumed its deliberations in the morning in Adelphi Lodge Room, F. and A. M., on Union Square, the Grand Patron calling the assembly to order. The Committee on Jurisprudence reported adversely to using the funds of the Grand Chapter for the purchase of testimonials, and the report of the Finance Committee in favor of paying the Grand Secretary $75 a year was adopted. On report of the Committee on Warrants a charter was granted to Evangeline Chapter, of Brooklyn.

The following officers were elected:—Brother Dayton Ball, of Albany, Grand Patron; Sister Christina Butterick, New York, Grand Matron; Brother Joseph W. Beatley, Brooklyn, E. D., Grand Associate Patron; Sister Mary E. Faulkner, of Oneida, Grand Associate Matron; Sister Caroline Janicke, New York, Grand Treasurer, Brother C. D. Hayward, New York, Grand Secretary; Sister Imogene D. Alger, Oak Hill, N. Y., and Sister Sarah Austin, of Lansdale, N. Y., Grand Conductress and Associate Conductress, and Sister Isabella S. Bradley, New York, Grand Warden. Recess was then taken until two o'clock P. M.

At the expiration of recess the Grand Chapter resumed labor, when Brother Jacob M. Hopper, the retiring Grand Patron, installed the newly elected officers in due form. This ceremony concluded the Grand Patron appointed the following officers, who were also duly installed and conducted to their respective stations:—Sister Sarah J. Brooklyn, Grand Adah; Sister E. F. Burrows, Chatham Four Corners, Grand Ruth; Sister Sarah C. Lefferts, New York, Grand Esther; Sister Lucia A. Bradford, New York, Grand Martha; Sister Sarah A. Roberts, of Brooklyn, Grand Electra; Brother George A. Puelan, of Brooklyn, Grand Elecia; Rev. Brothers A. K. Sandford, Poughkeepsie, and William F. Egbert, New York, Grand Chaplains, and Brother W. H. Reynolds, Grand Sentinel.

ISRAEL'S GREAT FESTIVAL.

The Hebrews are now observing the second of their great annual festivals. It bears several names, but the chief is "Day of Giving the Law." Other names are "Feast of Harvest," it being harvest time in their own land, "Pentecost," "Feast of Weeks," it being seven complete weeks from the day of Passover, on which the "omer" or measure of barley was taken as an offering, and "Day of the First Fruits," because the first fruits were anciently offered on this day. But the great event it celebrates is the first mentioned, the delivery of the law on Mount Sinai, which took place A. M. 2448 or 3190 years ago. There is certainly no event which has so affected the world at large as this has, for the decalogue is acknowledged by Christian as well as Jew as the backbone of moral law. The synagogues are decorated with flowers and made to assume a handsome appearance. Strange to say, the period between the Passover and this feast is regarded by this peculiar people as a period of mourning, although the first commemorates their deliverance from bondage and constitution as an independent nation, while the latter celebrates so happy an event as Revelation. The reason is found in tradition, for the facts relating to it are very meagre and can be gathered only from a few passages of Hebrew and Roman writers. It evidently points to the wonderful rebellion of Bar Cochba, with which Rabbi Akiba so identified himself. This remarkable man held in check and defeated Rome's armies and her best Generals for some years, and, when at last crushed, the Roman conqueror bought his victory so dearly that he dared not use the usual formula announcing to the Roman Senate that "the and the army were well." A great calamity attacking the famous college over which Rabbi Akiba presided is mentioned as happening at this period, this is generally accepted as the reason why this season up to to-day is regarded as so mournful that marriages are not celebrated except on the thirty-third day, when the plague or trouble seems to have abated in the school of the rabbi.

TRADE WITH BRAZIL.

Visit of the Emperor and Empress to the Steamer Rio de Janeiro.

HINTS TO AMERICAN MERCHANTS.

Commercial Statistics and the Needs of the Natives.

[BY CABLE TO THE HERALD.]

RIO JANEIRO, June 6, 1878.

The American steamship City of Rio de Janeiro, Captain Wier, which arrived here May 25, was visited to-day by the Emperor and Empress of Brazil, accompanied by the Ministers and a deputation of merchants.

ROYAL HONORS

All the ships in the harbor were trimmed in honor of the imperial visit and the quays were crowded with people. The royal party arrived in the imperial yacht, and on their departure the royal salute was fired from the fort in the harbor. The visitors remained to lunch and expressed satisfaction with the new steamship.

IMPORTANCE OF THE TRADE WITH BRAZIL—PROSPECTS OF BUSINESS FOR THE NEW LINE.

ST. THOMAS, W. I., May 10, 1878.

The new iron steamship City of Rio de Janeiro, which sailed from New York on the afternoon of the 4th inst., arrived here this morning after an uneventful, but delightful voyage. This being the initial vessel of the United States and Brazil Steamship Line, her arrival at this point—the first stopping place on the route to Rio Janeiro—her appearance in the harbor of St. Thomas was hailed with enthusiasm by the merchants and citizens of the place, who consider her advent the harbinger of a revival of trade with the United States and a guarantee that the efforts of American merchants to establish a fair competitive trade with other countries will be crowned with success.

In the beautiful harbor on our arrival a great many sailing ships and three steamers were found, from whose masthead flags of many nations were flung to the breeze in our honor, while the shores were thronged with eager groups who saluted us with cheers, making the scene an animated and gratifying one. The morning was beautiful, the deep azure tropical sky cloudless and the ocean as calm as an inland lake. After remaining here a few hours to take on freight and stores of fruit and wine we are to sail for Barbados this evening, and thence to South America.

IMPORTANCE OF THE TRADE.

Your correspondent has had a fair chance, even during his brief stay on the steamer, to fairly estimate the importance of the new and growing commerce now springing up between the United States and Brazil. In conversation with persons who are doing business with the latter country and the Argentine Republic, and who are now journeying thither on this vessel, the writer received information of the highest value and importance to our business men.

A SOUTH AMERICAN MERCHANT SPEAKS.

Mr. Edward A. Hopkins is an American merchant who has resided for about thirty years in South America, making occasional trips to the United States for business purposes. He is on his way at present to Buenos Ayres. In answer to general questions by the writer he said:—"It is an astonishing fact that, while all the great commercial Powers have not failed to grasp with the utmost promptitude the openings for commerce in Brazil the United States have not only failed to do anything to secure an advantage in these beneficial movements, but are running actually behind their commercial figures of former years. They have, besides, habitually neglected to protect those Americans whose energies or ambition led them to struggle manfully for such a noble object. Since the establishment of the royal mail steamers in the year 1849-50 British commerce has increased 1,000 per cent, or at least thirty-three per cent per annum. When France found this to be the case she also competed with an almost equal result. Italy and Germany have secured a share, and even little Belgium has a large trade with this country, while the commerce with the United States is comparatively insignificant. Even at Buenos Ayres at the present time there are from twenty to thirty first class ocean steamers arriving and departing each month, and the American flag does not wave over a single one of them. It is a well known fact that South American hides are sent to the United States from England to be tanned here and then returned to Europe for consumption, thus paying three freights to British steamships. American leather and American cheese can hardly be sold at present in some parts of South America as coming from us, but the same articles under an English name are in common use. Look at the quantities which go to Great Britain of our unfinished furniture, naval stores, petroleum, lard and salted meats, and we must acknowledge that instead of ourselves she is the great distributor of our productions to foreign nations, especially to Brazil and other parts of South America."

THE COFFEE TRADE.

Mr. Hopkins said that the government had also been illogical when it discriminated against Argentine wools and agreed to admit the coffee of Brazil duty free. "The well known fact stares us in the face that when Congress repealed the former consumer duty the Brazilian Empire immediately increased their provincial export duty on this coffee to the same amount we had taken off. The effect was simply that we, the greatest coffee consuming nation in the world, pay as much for it as we did before."

WHAT BRAZIL'S TRADE IS.

The gentleman expressed himself enthusiastically in regard to the new United States and Brazil steamship line, and the prospects for increased trade which it would necessarily open. "Why," said he, "take again for example the history of the commerce of Great Britain with Brazil before and after steam lines were established. The figures are as follows:—From 1840 to 1850 the total imports of Brazil from England made no increase; in 1853 they had advanced 150 per cent over 1848, and in ten years about three hundred per cent. The total exports of Great Britain to Brazil from 1840 to 1850 were stationary at about £2,000,000 sterling annually. In 1851, the first year after steam by the Royal Mail Company, they advanced forty per cent; in 1854 they had increased 102 per cent over 1850. Thus her exports doubled in five years from a stationary point before the establishment of steamship facilities. As the result of British policy and a consequence of their wise practice the Clyde for five miles along its banks resounds with the din and clamor of busy English workmen, while of the ten marine engine shops that existed in New York at the commencement of the war some are stands and but one remains in existence."

REPRESENTATIVE AMERICANS.

Among the passengers on board of the City of Rio de Janeiro, who may be classed as representative Americans, are Captain Mayo, United States Navy, who is going out to take command of the Hartford, the flagship of the South Atlantic squadron; Mr. Adamson, United States Consul General to Rio; John Baker, United States Minister to Venezuela; Mr. Sully de Souza, Brazilian Consul to Baltimore, and many others. One gentleman proceeding to South America is the representative of large sewing machine establishments in New York and Philadelphia; another is going into the interior for the purpose of erecting machinery which will separate the fibre from a wild plant that is said to be capable of producing cordage as fine as a trout line, or of strength suitable for a ship's rigging; still another has on board a dredging machine for the purpose of searching the beds of South American rivers said to be rich in gold, and for washing the same by some patent process. There are merchants and traders of all grades and conditions, who seem only to have awaited the opening of some first class steamship line to Brazil in order to try the effect of competition with the English and French commercial agents.

BUSINESS FACTS.

Said a plain business man, well known to New Yorkers, "We must awake to the fact in America that one of the principal causes of business stagnation and distress has been over production in the mill, factory, workshop and shipyard. We must find an outlet in foreign countries, the commerce of which has been monopolized by other nations. This endeavor to create a market for our goods in Brazil and other parts of South America I am confident will be attended with success. We purchase more than one-half of the whole export product of Brazil and sell her very little, and even then the English merchant and English banker are our brokers. From Rio Janeiro alone there are about thirteen departures a month by steam to the ports of Europe, and not a single one to the United States; so if we wish to enter into business communications with the people of those countries we have to send a letter across the Atlantic to get it to Brazil.

INTERVIEW WITH COLONEL TISDEL.

"When it was proposed last year," this gentleman said, "that I should visit Brazil and ascertain whether or not it would be possible to divert a portion of the enormous trade of that country to our own shores and in this way revive our shipping and manufacturing interests, I must confess I felt doubtful of the success of my mission, but the moment I was brought face to face with the infinite possibilities of trade in Brazil, talked with the merchants, examined the goods they were buying and the prices they were paying for them, and compared them with the quality and prices of goods sold by Americans, I felt sanguine that our manufactures could obtain a foothold if they could only have proper means of steam communication. I found nine regularly established steamship lines which made semi-monthly trips, assisted by long postal contracts for the transportation of the mails between Europe and Brazil, and that the steamships so employed were large and powerful and first class in every respect. The people can judge for themselves what a country Brazil is when I remind you that she has a territory of nearly four million square miles, sparsely settled for the most part, it is true, but the population of the five principal and important commercial cities is as follows:—

Rio Janeiro	400,000	Para	40,000
Bahia	130,000	Maranhao	30,000
Pernambuco	130,000		

"To estimate their importance I will give you the table of general imports and exports of Brazil from 1870-1 to 1875-6:—

Imports.....$471,570,089 Exports.....$577,041,492

"During the same period the imports of the United States from Brazil amounted to $274,148,500 and the exports from the United States to Brazil amounted to only $48,853,555. A comparison of the foregoing statement will show the mere nothingness of the United States exports to Brazil, while the imports from that country indicate that we are the purchasers of more than one-half her entire exports. Instead of paying for the same in products of our own we are compelled to send our gold coin to Europe in payment for Brazilian produce, and with that gold the supplies for Brazil are there purchased, every article of which could or should go from our own country.

STEAMSHIP SUBSIDIES.

"England and France have united in the establishment of steam lines to Brazil, the former paying for the transportation of the mails a mileage of nearly twelve English shillings, or nearly $3 per mile, while France, with even greater liberality, pays twenty-six francs per mile, or over $7. Aside from this aid given by European governments, Brazil pays an additional sum for the transportation of the imperial mails."

"When you went to Brazil did you find much difficulty in having your proposition for an establishment of a steam line accepted by the government?"

"Yes; I was opposed by all the English interests, of course, but I found the greatest unanimity of public sentiment in Brazil favorable to the project."

"When and how was the contract with the government finally made?"

"The contract was executed on the 14th day of November, 1877, and to the Emperor's good offices it was due, almost entirely. The imperial decree, No. 6,729, of date November 10, was signed, by which Messrs. John Roach & Son agreed with the Brazilian government to establish a line of steamships for ten years to ply between the ports of New York and Rio Janeiro, calling at Para, Pernambuco and Bahia."

"Your stoppages at St. Thomas and Barbados are, then, only with a view to encourage general trade?" was asked.

"The former place is included in our contract, the latter not. I visited the West India islands about four years ago, and made up my mind that a large trade could be done with them. As general agent, too, and General American manager of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, I travelled through South America, Central America, Mexico, British Honduras, Costa Rica and Nicaragua so that I know the wants of the inhabitants of these countries pretty well, and know that the United States can supply them."

HINTS TO THE NEW YORK MERCHANTS.

A well known commercial agent is on board the steamer bound for a trip through Brazil, Bolivia and along the whole West coast of South America. He was kind enough to give your correspondent some hints for New York merchants about this trade—in which he has been engaged for fifteen years—that will be very valuable. In substance his information was to the effect that the true way for American houses to do business with Brazil is through experienced travellers who know the country and business people and speak the language. Of course this only applies to such merchants as have no regularly established houses or do not consign to commission agents who have the sole command of their goods. Advertising in the native papers, mailing circulars and price lists will do little good. The English who receive them have their own correspondents, and those who cannot read English cannot use them.

WHAT TO SEND.

My opinion is that consignments to good houses in the above named cities of flour, lard, pitch, rosin, kerosene, cheap sewing machines, housed oil, Indian trinkets, arms, nails, hinges, wheelbarrows, hatchets and spades, would meet with a ready sale and pay large profits to the merchants and manufacturers. Good advice given me at the commencement of my trading I give to shippers as follows:—"Fit out a vessel to go to the east coast of South America and trade for coffee and other products; thence to Australia and home with hides and tallow, or to the South Pacific islands and trade for spices, gums, &c."

From the above it will be seen what a spirited movement is being made in the direction of American trade with Brazil, and if I have rather amplified in this initial letter it will probably not be considered uninteresting to that large class of our merchants and manufacturers all over the whole country whose business has been stagnant and whose workshops and mills have so long been idle.

THE CITY OF PARA.

The new steamship City of Para, of the United States and Brazilian mail line, left Roberts' stores, Brooklyn, at half-past nine A. M. yesterday, on her first trip to Brazil. The vessel was decked with flags and presented a gala appearance. A thousand shipping merchants were on the pier to witness her departure, and cheers were freely given until she was fairly in the stream. The vessel carried a large and valuable cargo and thirty-two passengers (twenty-three cabin and nine steerage).

HEAVY WEATHER ON THE BRAZILIAN COAST—THE FAMINE AND RELIEF PLANS—LIBERIAN COFFEE PLANTS.

RIO JANEIRO, May 11, 1878.

Part of last week and of this the landlocked Bay of Rio Janeiro, usually so placid, was boiling and writhing with great rollers from the south, which forced their way through the narrow portal at the Sugar Loaf. The scene was glorious, but decidedly unpleasant. The ferry steamers lost their rudders and one drove right into the stockade, smashing it badly and knocking the pontoon and bridge to pieces. Fortunately the Alice was the only vessel in port which came to grief, although some boats were upset, several persons drowned and a boy swept off the shore and lost. At the Praio do Flomengo the sea wall was knocked down and the houses beyond it ostensibly with the rocks. The little island fort of Lage, toward the mouth of the harbor, was swept over by the waves, all the houses on it carried away, and the garrison, huddled behind one of the parapets, had to lie there for three days without fresh water and drenched by the waves which dashed over the battery, it being impossible to succor them. It is greatly to be feared that many disasters have occurred off the coast, but the only one yet known is the Dutch brig Landow, which, however, succeeded in reaching Cape Frio, but badly battered and leaking.

THE FAMINE DISTRICT

These rains seem to have extended far to the north, but we are yet ignorant whether they reached the drought region. The accounts from this region give the same monotonous record of dreadful suffering and mortality, of beasts on bits of hide and unnamable horrors, of robberies and murders, of plunderings of relief troops and muttering threats of seizing the depots of government provisions. The government has made very great relief exertions of late. Since the beginning of April it has forwarded, chiefly to Ceara, 2,500 tons of breadstuffs and 844 tons of jerked beef, and has large orders out for shipment this month. It has, besides, drought away from Ceara over twenty thousand persons, to settle them elsewhere, and has just undertaken the prolongation of the Baturité Railroad, in Ceara, to employ the able bodied still left there among the 200,000 starving and in that province alone. Mr. Charles Morsing, the son of an American citizen, has been appointed the engineer-in-chief.

NEEDS INVESTIGATION.

Charles Armstrong, who alleges United States birth, has been acquitted of the grave charge of wounding a fellow sailor employed in the British consulate here. The consular officials used such efforts to obtain a conviction that I hear Mr. Hilliard is prepared to reclaim, as soon as the United States citizenship is established by proper documents, and that the British Minister has already demanded from the Vice Consul an explanation of his and his subordinates' conduct.

LIBERIAN COFFEE.

The American bark Elverton, Captain Barkley, arrived here on the 30th from Monrovia, Liberia, with a cargo of Liberian coffee plants and a quantity of the seed. For some time Liberian coffee has been attracting much attention here, it being larger and growing on inferior soil than the Arabian plant cultivated here, and many planters propose to employ it for their new plantations. The cargo by the Elverton is the first whole cargo yet brought. It was ordered by John Petty & Co., but the senior partner died of yellow fever two or three months ago. By the Elverton also came Mr. C. T. O'Connor King, a member of the Liberian House of Representatives, a very intelligent, well instructed and gentlemanlike negro of pure blood, who comes to look at Brazil and see what can be done in the way of trade between the Brazilian Monarchy and the African Republic.

FREE SCHOOLS.

The Minister of the Empire has just abolished in the Government College of Dom Pedro II., which confers degrees of bacalaur, the obligation of Protestants to attend and be examined in the course of religion, and has modified the oath, to respect religious scruples. He has also thrown open the examinations to persons not attending the collegiate courses. This is the first of the secularizing measures planned by the Sinimbú Cabinet, which, as I understand, purposes the establishment of civil marriage, the removal of all religious disabilities and greater facilities for naturalization.

FINANCIAL.

The monetary state has not materially changed, as the Minister of Finance is issuing his paper money emission with great discretion, no intending to keep 16,000,000 of the five per cent Treasury notes in circulation for a year longer. The three banks—the National, the Deutsche Brazilianische and the Mauá & Co.—which suspended in May, 1875, and got three years' time, have petitioned for a further time. The first two have paid off forty per cent of their liabilities, but the last has not yet paid anything, except a sum due to the government, beside which it still owes the government 7,000,000 milreis of returned bills of exchange.

HEALTH.

Yellow fever is still decreasing. The deaths from it in the last fifteen days of April were thirty-four, and they range now at one to two per diem. At Montevideo three deaths from it occurred on the 23d and 24th of April.

ACQUITTED.

Erman Dickey, the mate of the American bark Fred. W. Carlon, who has been tried for the killing of a mutinous sailor aboard that vessel, in this harbor, in October last, has been acquitted at Buenos Ayres.

THE IDIOT ASYLUM.

HOW COMMISSIONER COX ENDEAVORS TO CORRECT THE IDIOT ASYLUM EVILS.

Mr. J. H. Baker, a gentleman who, during the past five years, has visited the institutions on Randall's Island every Sunday for the purpose of giving the inmates religious instruction, states that on last Sunday he was refused passage over to the island on the boat belonging to the Commissioners of Charities and Correction. Mr. Baker believes this was done with the object of punishing him for the action he took in exposing the abuses on the island, as it was through his efforts that the condition of the idiot children and the presence of scurvy among them first reached the public, he having reported the fact to the State Charities Aid Association. Mr. Baker's account of the affair is as follows:—

I first commenced visiting the island in December, 1873, and since that time I have been a constant visitor. I took charge of the religious services of the Protestant Church. When I first commenced going there I found other parties, theological students, doing this work, for which they were paid. They left, and the religious care of the Protestant children finally fell into my hands. Rev. Mr. Willett, the regular chaplain, never held services at Randall's Island to my knowledge, he always being engaged at Hart's Island. During all these years I have always made it a point to be there on Sundays, rain or shine. The beginning of the trouble between