

THE RIO NEWS

PUBLISHED TRI-MONTHLY

on the eve of departure of the American packet, the French packet of the 15th, and Royal Mail packet of the 24th of the month.

Contains a summary of news and a review of Brazilian affairs, a list of the arrivals and departures of foreign vessels, the commercial report and price current of the market, a table of freight rates and charges, and all other information necessary to a correct judgment on Brazilian trade.

TERMS:

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RIO DE JANEIRO, DECEMBER 5TH, 1879

DECREE No. 7,555, of the 26th ult., grants exemption from the "50 per cent. additional" on all wines imported into Brazil after the term of three months from the date of the decree. This exemption is made in accordance with the budget bill of October 31st, in which the legislators of this country sought to circumvent the manufacture and sale of falsified wines. In the meantime the manufacturers of spurious wines are protesting against any reduction in the duties imposed on imported wines on the grounds that it will injure a "national industry," and decrease the home consumption of sugar and rum which enter largely into the manufacture of these wines. We have, therefore, not only a confession on the part of the government, as shown in the speeches made in the Senate and Chamber and in this ultimate reduction of the duties on wines, that it is unable to suppress the manufacture of false wines, but we have also the representatives of this so-called industry entering their protests in due form in the *Jornal do Commercio* without either comment or hindrance. The location of these "industries" is well known; the injuries which are done through their traffic is also well known. Why are they not suppressed?

THE GOOD PEOPLE OF BUENOS AYRES seem to be somewhat wrought up by a suspicious case of yellow fever which was imported into that city by a steamer arriving from this port. Judging from all reports the city must have been quite under martial law for a time. The steamer was at once stopped in her work of discharging and put into a rigorous quarantine; the house where the man died was fumigated and every body who had had anything to do with him were put under inspection; the city fathers met and passed resolutions and vexatious regulations; another passenger, a German woman, who was stopping at a hotel in the city and who was discovered under the influence of a little too much cognac, as she says, was denounced and sent to the hospital where everything will be done to kill her with scientific treatment; and in short, there was a general and unreasonable panic everywhere. It can not be doubted that our Platine neighbors have some good reasons for alarm; their experience with yellow fever has been anything but pleasing. But, the simple fact that a passenger, arriving from Rio, took sick and died, and that his frightened physician was of the opinion that death was caused by yellow fever, are certainly very slight and foolish reasons for such a panic. The good people of Rio de Janeiro long since learned that coolness under such circumstances is a valuable, if not a necessary precaution against the spread of the disease. It has been found that a frightened man, attacked by bilious colic, is very apt to die of yellow fever. A headache arising from overwork is sometimes quite as fatal. If people will keep perfectly cool—mentally cool, of course—and will go about their business without excitement like reasoning beings, it is more than likely that "yellow jack" will pass them by. If, however, they choose to magnify the danger and turn their city into a madhouse, no quarantine will be able to save them; they'll all die of yellow fever.

Through decree No. 7,552, signed on the 22nd and published on the 30th ult., the long-considered revision of the national

tariff is declared law, and effective on and after the 1st of January next. Although there are few radical changes in it, the work on the whole is of such a character as to keenly disappoint the many hopes which were based upon the liberal spirit with which it was undertaken. The invitation extended to a large number of prominent business men certainly gave every assurance that the government desired to profit by their intelligence and experience, and the high character of the gentlemen consulted was accepted on all sides as a sufficient guarantee that the interests of all parties concerned would receive equal attention from them. It seems, however,—as pithily stated by a correspondent in another column—that the government has "systematically and almost entirely ignored" the data and recommendations thus intelligently and gratuitously given. If the minister of finance and customs inspector had already made up their minds on the changes to be made—as would certainly seem to be the case from a comparison of their original schedule with the completed revision—it would have been far more satisfactory to the business community and far more creditable to themselves, if they had issued no invitation and had assumed all the credit of the changes made. As to the character of the revision we shall discuss that in detail hereafter as our time and space will admit. Created for the avowed purpose of augmenting the national revenues, it seeks through prohibitory tariffs to check the importation of many articles, thus eliminating certain existing sources of revenue. Announced as an increased tax upon luxuries, it places additional burdens upon the shoulders of the poor and makes it still more difficult for them to obtain the commonest necessities of life. Promised as a more just and impartial tax upon imports, and as a simplification of the old tariff, it still retains many of the most vexatious requirements and classifications now in operation and renders the inequalities of the tax still more prominent by further additions to overtaxed articles. Taking it all in all it commends itself to us neither as a revision nor as a project for realizing a satisfactory revenue from imports.

In the settlement of the controversy now pending between the Brazilian government and the American steamship line, regarding the obligatory call at the port of Maranhão, there is one contingency which should not be lost sight of—the possible action of the United States government in the proposed revision of its tariffs. It should not be considered that this matter is referred to a view of unduly influencing the decision of this government; that purpose, so far as we know, has never entered into the controversy. Yet, as the action of the American congress in the matter of reimposing a duty on coffee is certain to be influenced largely by the spirit with which Brazil meets the commercial aspirations of American citizens, it is impossible to overlook and short-sighted to underrate its importance. The removal of the duty on coffee in 1872, a duty which yielded about eight millions of dollars per annum, was simply a political measure which was carried through congress ostensibly for the "poor man's breakfast table," but really for its supposed influence upon the poor man's vote. Now that time has demonstrated its futility as a relief measure, and as it harmonizes with the views neither of protectionists nor free traders, the reimposition of the duty may be expected almost at any time. Left to itself, this step might be delayed for some time to come through the disinclination of the men who secured the removal of the tax, to now admit their former mistake; but, if influenced by any act of Brazil inimical to American commercial interests, the reversal of this mistaken policy will come with the swiftness and certainty of fate. If there be any doubts of this, the following extract from a late speech of Senator James G. Blaine, a protectionist and a powerful party leader and prominent candidate for the presidency, will clearly show the drift of opinion among the advocates of the present tariff policy of the United States. When once the protectionists decide to reimpose the duty on coffee nothing will prevent it, especially as the free-traders have all along advocated it as a revenue measure. In an address at Cooper Institute, New York, on the 28th of October last, Mr. Blaine said:

Generally, I have found some man that was very much oppressed with the tax on coffee. Well, we

took that off in June, 1872. Prior to that time we had been getting \$8,000,000 a year out of coffee, and then, under the demand for a free breakfast-table, which certain wise doctrinaires, who always think they know the demands of the American people, insisted on, we took off the tax on coffee, and six months after, the wise and beneficent ruler of Brazil, finding that coffee would be an export or import duty, but not both, and learning that the tax had been taken off in this country, he concluded to put exactly the same amount on for export, and so we found, after turning ourselves around and looking in the glass twice, that we had performed the astounding feat of legislating \$8,000,000 out of the treasury of the United States into the treasury of Brazil.

THE NEW CUSTOMS TARIFF.

Editors Rio News:
At last this *opus mirabile* is published, and we are enabled to see how far the anticipations of the press which heralded the minister's dispatch of the 17th March and the bright visions which it conjured up before the eyes of the long-suffering importers, have been realised. When I recall the readiness with which importers responded to the minister's invitation to co-operate in the re-adjusting of the custom's tariff,—the sacrifice of valuable time to which they cheerfully submitted,—the ample and trustworthy information they ungrudgingly placed at the government's disposal,—when I recall all this, and much more, I am lost in astonishment that the committees should not have at once disclaimed all share in the production of the garbled work which has just been issued from the Typographia Nacional, and which goes forth to this empire and to the world as being based upon their figures and recommendations.

I have no intention of attacking the work from an economic stand-point,—that I leave to others; but let any one carefully read the *Relatório* which accompanies the work, and see how (as is claimed by Sr. Costa Pinto) commercial needs have been considered. The officials who have systematically and almost entirely ignored the data supplied by the merchants (except where such data showed that some article paid less than the official valuation of 30 per cent.) have not hesitated to burden the *tabole empire* with heavy import duties for the avowed purpose of protecting local industries in Rio de Janeiro which cannot even supply local needs! It is unnecessary to particularize; a cursory glance at the *Relatório* will suffice, for the cases are so glaring that he who runs may read.

Is this, I would ask, the grand result of all the labors, all the representations of those who were invited by the government to assist in the revision of the tariff? It seems so; for our grievances remain unaddressed, divers of the old vexatious classifications are retained, and where we have proved the duties to be excessive, the official valuation has been strained to 40 per cent. in attempted justification of the already exorbitant rates levied. And no one protests! It is this apparent indifference to our interests, this acquiescence in any slight (as in the present instance) put upon us, this passive submission to every fresh injustice or exaction, that paves the way for the imposition of more and heavier burdens. We are never consulted, never remembered; but when money is wanted, and then—we are bled mercilessly.

But let us be comforted. If our representations have been disregarded, if our legitimate aspirations and interests have been ignored, did not a grateful minister, a few weeks ago, invite us to the Caixa de Amortização that he might tell us in honeyed words how much he thanked us for our *assidua*, and how he felt sure, that if he again needed information, he could depend upon our hearty co-operation?

Ah! with what alacrity shall we next time respond to the call!

"UM QUE FOI POR LÁ E VEIO TOSQUILADO."

PETROPOLIS RAILWAY COMPANY.

Sir:—The Imperial Petropolis Steam Navigation and Railway Company comes with the profoundest respect before the unfolding justice of your imperial majesty to make a reclamation by right of preference sanctioned in the eleventh clause of the contract celebrated with the provincial government of Rio de Janeiro, April 27, 1852, and approved by decree 602 of the provincial legislative power on the 23rd of September of the same year, and in the meantime forgotten except to be pretermitted by decree 7,522 of Oct. 20, 1879, which grants William Darley Bentley and Charles Collins the privilege of building a railway from the suburbs of São Christovão in this city, passing through the city of Petropolis and terminating at Agnas Claras in the parish of S. José do Rio Preto, district of Parahyba do Sul.

As soon as it came to the knowledge of the petitioner that this new concession was about to be granted, he asked for an audience with the imperial government in order to assert his rights; and to prevent the conflict now existing between the interests of the petitioner and those of the recent concession, besides the question of competency between the general and provincial powers, all of which would have been better to harmonize previously rather than to expose encroachments of the greatest utility and promise to conflict and sacrifice.

Unfortunately the petitioner did not merit the audience asked for, and he now finds himself surprised by decree 7,522, published in the *Diário Oficial* No. 309, of Nov. 16, 1879, and impeded in the contract made with a daily authorized company, called "Príncipe do Grão Pará," for the prolongation of his line.

The uncertainty which railway associations have concerning the future of this privileged zone weakens private enterprise, frightens away floating capital which is already difficult to obtain, and spoils the best laid plans for the improvement and progress of the lines already established and under traffic. This perplexity is discouraging and is made still worse by the repeated examples of double concessions, which, by their fatal opposition, are reciprocally prejudicial to each other. The hearing of all interested parties previous to these new concessions, according to the practices of the English parliament, would have reinstated the discouraged contracting companies which consider themselves always threatened in their rights.

From the fact that it is the oldest in the country, and that it has never been a burden to the public coffers, either general or provincial, the petitioner considers itself, in preference to all similar enterprises, the one most worthy of the unflinching patronage of your imperial majesty.

The number of passengers and the amount of freight between Rio de Janeiro and the city of Petropolis is not yet sufficient to maintain two railways, and will not be for many years. The recent concession made by decree 7,522 will not be carried into effect, while in the meantime, by an unaffordable association it disturbs the capital already raised for the prolongation of the existing line, rendering possible progress difficult if not impossible. Will your imperial majesty deign to give attention to what the petitioner respectfully presents, and reestablish its preference fixed in the eleventh clause of the contract of April 27, 1852, to this end ordering the necessary declarations to be made, which is only justice to the petitioner. And your petitioner will ever pray,
Rio de Janeiro, Nov. 24, 1879.
FRANCISCO JOAQUIM DE CASTRO, President.

RAILROAD NOTES.

The *Alle Duncham*, which arrived from Philadelphia on the 2nd inst., brought 8 first and second class carriages, and 22 freight and cattle cars for the Leopoldina railway; and some 50 freight cars for the Mangaratia railway, São Paulo—del. from the Jackson & Sharp Co., Wilmington, Del. She also brought one locomotive for the latter railway from the Baldwin Locomotive Works, of Philadelphia.
—In connection with the proposed removal of the head office of the "Estrada de Ferro do Norte" from this city to São Paulo, we are informed that the company proposes to keep an agent in Rio, which would obviate all difficulties in the transfer of shares. Aside from this one thing, to which we refer as an inconvenience in a previous number, there are many reasons why the proposed change is desirable. Three-fourths of the shares of this company are held in São Paulo, and as the expense and inconvenience of coming to Rio are so great, it follows that three or four men holding 100 shares each practically manage the road. It is estimated that coming to this city to attend the directors' meetings actually swallows up the dividends of the São Paulo shareholders—a state of affairs to which they propose to submit no longer than they can help.
—The receipts of the "Machado e Campos" line during the month of October were 126,761\$880, against 99,608\$440 during the same month of last year. The number of passengers carried during the month was 2,874; baggage, 41 tons; coffee, 2,825 tons; sugar, 2,250 tons; and merchandise, 1,772 tons.

LOCAL NOTES.

—We learn from our Rio Grande exchanges that the famous tragedian Salvini is expected at the River Plate next season.
—Notwithstanding the recent rains, the people along Rua da Saude are still complaining of an absolute lack of water. The *guardia municipal* of that district should be interviewed.
—Two Italian women, named Antonia and Carolina, had a fight at No. 73, Rua do Richeho, on the 26th ult. Carolina was stabbed twice in the face and once in the hand.
—The director of the Dom Pedro II railway proposes to thoroughly investigate the affairs of that line, in view of alleged irregularities in its management.
—D. M. Fox, C. E., superintendent of the Santos and Jundiahy Railway, São Paulo, returned to Brazil on the 1st inst., in the *Togus*, after a brief vacation in England.
—Any person wishing to purchase engineering instruments will find the following for sale at No. 47 Rua 1º de Março: one Cassalla's theodolite; one level; one level for tunnel work; straight edge; etc.
—The abundant rains of the past week have brought great relief to the suffering people of this city. The streets and drains have received such a cleansing as will materially lessen the danger of sickness for some time to come.
—The Emperor's choice for senator from Minas Geraes has fallen upon the present minister of justice, Conde Ladoyete Rodrigues Pereira. Official notification of the choice was given on the 22nd ult.

—Robberies are becoming a little too frequent in this city. House-breaking and the theft of small things by servants and sneak-thieves are of daily occurrence. A sharp lookout should be kept at all times.

—The Emperor visited the medical school on the 28th ult., and was present at an examination of the stomach and intestines of a man named Alberto Sandenberg, of Nova Friburgo, who was supposed to have been poisoned. Strychnine was found.

—Thomas Irvine, a deserter from the American brigantine *Edith Hall*, objected to a policeman's interrogation in regard to himself, on the 25th ult. and attempted to clinch his argument with a knife. Thomas has retired from public life for a time.

—A man calling himself Isaias Propheta dos Anjos held in jail on the 25th ult. because, as he said, he had no other place to which he could go. It's a sad pass when a man—begging the prophet's pardon for the intimation—deliberately seeks shelter in a Rio jail; it reflects just a little on his sanity.
—Decree 7,524, of October 25th, concedes a guarantee of 7 per cent. interest on a capital of 500,000\$, to be invested in a central sugar mill at Igarapé-Mirim, province of Pará. The parties obtaining this concession are João Galvão and João Camillo Afonso Costari.

—On the 26th ult. the Emperor, accompanied by various members of his cabinet, visited the new Rio do Ouro water works where the contractor, Mr. Gabrielli, and the engineers in charge, explained the various features of the work already accomplished and now in hand.

—While the board of health are seeking to improve the sanitary condition of the city through the removal of the chief and the ex-chief of police for them to remove the cow-stables at the same time? Some of these stables are extremely offensive, and can not be otherwise than dangerous to the health of the city.

—It is related that two men were fighting in the Rua do Príncipe dos Caieiros on the 27th, when a policeman—an Italian—came along and joined in. The policeman of course, had it all his own way—at least so one of the brawlers thought who was so badly used that it was necessary to take him off the field in a cart.

—The city fathers indulged themselves with a *lunch* on the 2nd inst., the occasion of the Emperor's birthday, and a brass band assisted. Their modesty has caused great surprise; it was expected that they would dine.
—On Sunday last a large number of people made a pilgrimage to the residences of the minister of justice and the chief and the ex-chief of police in order to manifest their appreciation for the services rendered by these officials in putting down prostitution. Comment is unnecessary.

—During the month of November there were 3,537 passenger arrivals at this port, of which 2,427 came from Europe, 78 from the River Plate, 690 from the northern provinces including 482 slaves, and 342 from the southern provinces. The departures were 2,415, of which 825 went to Europe, 225 to the River Plate, 430 to the northern provinces, and 837 to the southern provinces, including 148 immigrants and 142 slaves.

—The American packet *City of Pará*, Capt. Carpenter, which arrived on the morning of the 29th ult., brought 25 through and 22 coast passengers. Her cargo consisted of 4,600 barrels of flour and 6,500 packages of general merchandise. We are indebted to her purser, Dr. W. L. Spore, for late papers and information.

—During the past month the Sailor's Mission of this port received 3378 toward its general expenses and 408 toward the purchase of a boat, making 3786 in all. Its expenses for the month were 1678\$, leaving a cash balance of 2088\$. Rev. Mr. Curran visited 150 vessels in all, besides attending to his regular duties at the reading room, hospitals and boarding houses.

—The minister of empire has nominated a medical commission to proceed to the northern provinces and study the nature, causes and treatment of that peculiar disease, called *beriberi*, which is now threatening to become epidemic. The commission consists of Drs. José Luiz de Almeida Couto, Ramiro Afonso Monteiro, Demetrio Cyrino Tourinho, José Francisco da Silva Lima and J. D. Patterson.

—Some unimportant people in this city are complaining that they are prevented from getting what little water is afforded at the public water taps because these unimmaculate officials, the *guardias municipais*, sell the privilege of drawing water to certain carts. And yet they pay their water taxes like good people, and don't fog their oppressors like bad people!

—We see by the *Diário Oficial* that Mr. Morris N. Kohn and others are seeking an authorization for the incorporation of a life and accident insurance company in Brazil. The project is referred to the Visconde de Bom Retiro, of the council of state, for his opinion. In the event of a successful issue of this scheme, our advice to policy-holders is, "draw early and often."
—The *Journal* says that it is credibly informed that the fête of the 29th ult., given by the "Sociedade Francaza de Beneficencia" at the Novo Cassino Flamimense, will be decorated with the purchase of an allegorical figure of life size, representing the emancipation law of September 28, 1871, which will be offered to the Emperor and Empress. As the decree was signed by the Princess Imperial during the Emperor's absence, would it not be in better taste to present the statue to her?

—Though we have seen no formal announcement of the fact, we understand that the communication between the mains of the new water works at Pilares and the old mains of Tres Rios was affected about the 25th ult., since when it is to be presumed that a part of the city in that vicinity has been more abundantly supplied with water. This might have been done on the 15th, or still earlier, were the government engineer a little more mindful of the needs of the city.

PROVINCIAL NOTES

Small-pox still exists in various parts of the province of Ceará.
The receipts of the Maranhão custom house during the month of October were 251,478\$168.

On the 27th of October, at a place called Almas, province of Pernambuco, Antonio de Oudroz Vianna killed João Pereira de Souza with a dagger.
A recent communication from Otvo Preto, Minas Geraes, says that the Catta Banna blacks declared free by the juiz de direito of Sabará on the 14th of October last, are still held in slavery by the S. João d'El-Rey company.

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