

## By Electric Telegraph

SPECIAL TO THE DAILY BRITISH COLONIST

## South America.

LONDON, May 17.—The mail steamer from Rio Janeiro arrived to-day. South American news important. President Lopez, of Paraguay, has accepted the mediation proposed by the United States Government. Minister Washburn would send an answer to Washington. The allies, on the other hand, had not accepted the American offer, and it is doubtful whether they would. No further fighting had occurred between the contending armies. The revolt in the district of Genes, in the Argentine Republic, has assumed still more alarming proportions.

## San Francisco Shipping.

SAN FRANCISCO, May 20.—Arrived, 18th.—Bark Huntville, 14 days from Port Orchard.

## Eastern States.

NEW YORK, May 17.—Jeff Davis still remains secluded in the New York Hotel, and probably will not leave until Monday.

CHICAGO, May 17.—Kirk & Co.'s soap factory was destroyed by fire this —. [Line here went down.]

## Eastern States.

CHICAGO, May 17.—Kirk & Co.'s soap factory was destroyed by fire this afternoon. Loss \$100,000, mostly covered by insurance.

NEW YORK, May 17.—The steamer Virginia, from Vera Cruz, reports Lisala and Meridian in possession of Liberals. There will be no attempt to take Vera Cruz by storm. Provisions plenty and cheap.

## Europe.

LONDON, May 17.—Despatches from Athens state that two sanguinary battles have taken place on the Island of Candia, in both of which the Turkish Commander Omar Pasha was badly beaten, with loss in both contests of 3000 men.

The powers of Europe have again united in a petition to ports to cede Crete to Greece.

## Eastern States.

NEW YORK, May 15.—No steps have yet been taken for the registration of voters in Alabama. In Louisiana registering was progressing rapidly. Two colored inspectors of customs were appointed yesterday. Mayor Heath designs opening public schools, to white and black indiscriminately.

The Dunderberg has been sold to France for \$3,000,000.

A Tribune correspondent applied to Holt for permission to publish Booth's Diary; the request was granted; but Holt referred the request to Stanton, who refused it. The Diary is not to be published if he can prevent it. The President and Holt are willing that it should be published, with the Congressional testimony.

## California.

The bark Siam arrived from Sydney, N. S. W., on the 1st inst., bringing 24 alien passengers, who were duly reported to the Commissioner of Immigration. She not being bonded or committed for by Congress, suit was this morning commenced by the District Attorney in the 12th District Court, to recover a penalty of \$100,000 on a portion of the passengers.

Thos. H. Selby, Treasurer of the Southern Relief Fund in this city, yesterday forwarded by telegraphic transfer \$16,800 in gold coin to New York. Total amount sent from the Pacific Coast thus far, \$56,800.

## South America.

RIO DE JANEIRO, May 8.—An army to invade Paraguay is preparing on the Upper Panama. The decree abolishing slavery is not mentioned in the papers of the 8th.

## Russian America.

LETTER FROM MR. COLLINS TO SECRETARY SEWARD.

NEW YORK, April 4, 1867.

To Hon Wm H Seward, Secretary of State. The many erroneous statements in the press of the day in regard to the country of Russia have induced me to lay before you a number of facts not generally known to the public, and which I trust may be valuable to the Department of State. In my investigations to determine the route of the Russian-American telegraph I sought the highest sources of knowledge in regard to the physical and topographical condition of the north western limit of our continent. As early as 1856, when I first visited St. Petersburg, I embraced every opportunity to become acquainted with Russian officers and parties high in authority who were competent to enlighten me on the subject and studied all the maps and books that could be found relating to it.

Rear Admiral Fruehheim, now Governor of the Amoor country and who held the office of Governor of Russian America for five

years, has also given me much valuable information. I have also had frequent conferences with the Governor and Directors of the Russian American Company, from whom much has been learned. The boundaries and general outline have been so frequently and fully given that nothing need be said further as to the location of Russian America. Commencing at 54 degrees 40 minutes north latitude on the Pacific, the mainland is marked by a succession of islands to the Peninsula of Alaska, so that open boats or small river steamers can navigate safely between the islands and the mainland. Many of these islands are covered with splendid timber and the waters abound in fish. The coast of the mainland is densely covered with timber, which fact was one of the causes which induced the location of the Russian American Telegraph to be made inland east of the mountains.

The first river of any importance that enters the sea in Russian America is the Steeken or St. Francis, in about 56 degrees of north latitude. This river has been followed by our exploring parties to the cascades, where it breaks through the coast range of mountains dividing British America from Russian America. This river is found navigable for boats 50 miles. After passing the cascades it becomes navigable again for some distance toward the Rocky Mountains. Game and fish are abundant, timber good and gold mining has already been commenced by a party of Americans. Natives are quite numerous during the fishing season, but are reported friendly and anxious to trade furs, etc., for merchandise. It is said that the prospect for gold on this river is equal to the old 1849 days of California.

There are many small rivers as you ascend along the coast and passes over the mountains into the British possessions, and parties of native trade with the interior tribes more to the east and north by following the source of these streams and thus arrive in the valley between the coast range and the Rocky Mountains. The next river of any importance is the Copper river, which enters the sea in view of Mount St. Elias, in about 60 degrees north latitude and 142 degrees west longitude. The river is of importance in consequence of its location and the access it gives to the interior. It unites by a lake the waters of the Yukon within Russian territory, giving almost uninterrupted navigation from the coast on the Pacific by way of the Yukon and Kaitchepek to Behring's Sea, thus giving easy access through a large part of the southwest limb of this country. Next comes Cook's Inlet and a river entering into it which the Russian American Company use in connection with the Kooosequeem to reach the Kaitchepek and Fort St. Michael.

After passing the peninsula of Alaska we find a considerable sized stream entering into Bristol Bay. This stream, by a system of lakes, is said to connect with Cook's Inlet. Next in order comes the Kooosequeem, a river of considerable magnitude and of importance to the country in giving access to the interior. This section of the country gives considerable trade to the Russian American Company, and in which they have trading stations.

The largest, most important and the chief queen of all rivers west of the Rocky Mountains and north of 49 degrees north latitude is the great Kaitchepek, which enters into Behring's Sea between 64 and 65 degrees north latitude, by several mouths and on the parallel of 165 degrees north longitude. This great river has an easterly course for some five degrees, then bends abruptly to the north for some four degrees, thence nearly east to a point not far distant from the British frontier, where it receives the Porcupine or Rat River from the northeast and the Yukon from the southeast; the junction of these two rivers form the Kaitchepek; it is navigable to the sea a distance of 1000 miles by steamboats. This river had never been seen by white men in its whole course, previous to explorations for the construction of the Russian American Telegraph, in fact on many maps the Yukon was traced as an affluent of an imaginary river emptying into the Arctic Ocean, but our explorations have determined a great geographical fact which places the Kaitchepek at the head of all rivers on the northwest coast and giving Russian America the largest river north of 49 degrees.

As we proceed north through Behring's Straits and enter the Arctic Ocean, and find Kotzebue Sound, which is fed by a considerable river, on which is a large population; here is found, like on the coast of Arctic Siberia extensive deposits of animal remains, where fossil ivory may become, as in Siberia, an article of valuable commerce.

Further east there are many bays and sounds, and beyond Point Barrow the Colville river enters Garrison Bay. This river has its main course to the south and the natives report it navigable from a point not far from the northern bend of the Kaitchepek to the sea.

Fort Yukon, the head station of the Hudson Bay Company west of the Rocky Mountains, is on Russian territory. This fact has not been established by Government survey, yet it is well known new to both Russia and England. No difficulty has grown out of it between the two Governments, because the Russian American Company and the Hudson Bay Company, who have enjoyed exclusive trade in these regions, came to an understanding as to their mutual interest along the line of the disputed territory, in order that there should be no conflict one way or the other among the natives. They were for peace along the boundaries, and no doubt pursued a wise course.

Major Kennicott, chief of our exploring party, who died on the Kaitchepek last year, had spent some years previously, a winter at Fort Yukon. He describes the country as favorable to trade and of great importance to the Hudson Bay Company. He explored a large district of the country around the fort, generally on foot. He entered the country on his first voyage by the Mackenzie River Pass, returning the same way, on the voyage for the exploration of the route of the telegraph. He entered by way of Fort St. Michael, near Behring's Station. On the upper waters of the Kaitchepek, and upon the whole course of the Yukon timber is plentiful, the country abounds in game, and the rivers and lakes afford fish. Salmon ascend the Kaitchepek in great numbers, and are largely taken by the natives for food, both for themselves and their dogs during the

winter. The natives are reported by Maj. Kennicott, and by employees of the Hudson Bay Company, as peaceable and wonderfully honest, theft being rarely known among them. They are a vigorous, enterprising people, and very fond of foreign trade and merchandise, though the difficulty and cost of transportation by way of the Mackenzie river route limits the supply to much below the demand.

Navigation by way of the Kaitchepek would increase the trade and value of this country one hundred fold in a few years; in fact the Kaitchepek with steam upon it would reveal a new world to enterprise and adventure. By this stream the whole of a hitherto unknown country is brought within the reach of steam communication from San Francisco, and when the Stars and Stripes shall float at Fort Yukon we may look for mines of gold and silver being discovered quite as rich as those further south. The furs of this country are wonderfully plentiful and form a valuable and extensive commerce both to the Russian and British traders. That the Hudson Bay Company can afford to transport their merchandise and supplies overland from Hudson Bay, or by way of St. Paul, and return their furs over the same route, is a startling evidence of the value of the trade, because transportation over this long route cannot cost less than \$1 per pound. With the Kaitchepek open to steam navigation ten cents a pound from San Francisco would pay enormously.

Upon the whole, Russian America, with its dependencies, the islands attached to it, is a valuable country in itself, viewed intrinsically. It is not such a country as Oregon or Washington in climate or soil, but it has, nevertheless, many sources of wealth.

In the southern part gold is known to exist. On Coppermine river, whence its name, there is copper, though as a matter of policy the Russian American Company have not encouraged mining, because they feared that mining, even if successful, would soon break up their monopoly of the fur trade and open the country to the searching eyes of foreigners and the demoralizing influence of cheaper goods and more lucrative employment of the natives.

The fisheries along the coast and islands will build up a population and commerce there which at no distant day will rival Newfoundland and the coast of the Atlantic, and Cape Cod. The shoals and banks along the islands of Russian America are the resort of myriads of codfish, unsurpassed for size and delicacy. Once give us a landing, these fishing towns will soon spring into existence, giving for our Pacific coast a nursery for first-class seamen, which, in the growing commerce of the Pacific, will be just what we want there in the future in order to give us the supremacy of that ocean.

The fisheries are worth more than the whole cost of the country, and will repay us in the future amply for the investment. The immense population of Asia and the Islands of the Pacific will be good customers for our surplus fish, and will readily take all we have to spare. Timber for building purposes is abundant and convenient; saw-mills will so make the lumber trade a source of great profit, not only for domestic use, but for export to Asia and the more southern islands. Boat and ship building can be carried on profitably where good timber is so abundant and easily procured.

The acquisition is also valuable on account of several deposits of coal along the coast and islands. At Kodiak, the Russian American Company have worked a coal vein for some years past, and have used it in their forges, workshops, as well as in their steamers employed in carrying on their commerce with California and Asia.

Nor is this country to be counted as nothing in an agricultural point of view. Wheat, barley and oats can be produced as far North as 60 deg.; gardens flourish along the coast in the Russian settlements, producing all the vegetables requisite for domestic use.

It must always be remembered that the Pacific coast is much warmer than the Atlantic coast of equal degrees. The southern limit of Sitka (New Archangel) is about 40 to 45 degrees of Fahrenheit; and the mean of the thermometer is ascertained to be 45 deg. 4 min.; winter, 34 deg. 7 min.; summer, 56 deg. 7 min.

Taking it then, as a whole, the country of Russian America cannot be considered, as some would have it, a dreary waste of glaciers, icebergs, white bears and walrus, and only fit for the Esquimaux and drinkers of train oil.

One more article of commerce must not be lost sight of—that is ice. On the islands there are many fresh water lakes which afford an inexhaustible supply of very pure ice. The trade in ice, so far, has been confined to the Russian American Company or under their permit, consequently the ice trade has not been developed to any great extent. The trade in the hands of Americans would soon grow to wonderful proportions, for the reason that these lakes in Russian America supply the only ice suitable for shipment on the Pacific north of the equator. I did not mention in order, when speaking of the fisheries, that all the way north from Kodiak to the Arctic, whales are found in great abundance. Kodiak and Bristol Bay are all whaling grounds, and many a New England town owes its wealth to the large catch of whales in Russian American waters. Walrus are as plentiful as about Behring's Straits as blackberries are with us in August. With American fishing settlements along the coast, the ivory and oil of these walrus will become no small source of wealth to our enterprising fishermen.

One more fact in regard to climate and temperature. Major Kennicott died in the great eastern bend of the Kaitchepek, 500 miles by the course of the river from its mouth into Behring's Sea. The ice in the May, and on the 25th a portion of his companions embarked in native boats, taking with them Major Kennicott's body, and navigated the river to the sea without obstruction, and then coasted north 75 miles to Fort St. Michael, a post of the Russian American Company. This proves a good deal as to the favorable temperature of that country, and makes the Kaitchepek nearly as early as the St. Lawrence a point of navigation. I have the honor to be, very truly yours,

P. McD. COLLINS, U. S. C. A., Amoor River.

## France vs. Prussia.

## THE LUXEMBURG QUESTION.

Our last European files bring us some interesting particulars concerning the difficulty between France and Prussia, growing out of the effort of the former to acquire Luxembourg. The Paris correspondent of the London Herald, under date of March 25th, writes:

As regards the Luxembourg question, the semi-official denial of the *France* is generally disbelieved. That France wants to get hold of it, and she has offered to buy it of the King of Holland, is an universally credited fact. The King of Holland, in the *Moniteur* could alter the prevalent opinion. It is also equally firmly believed that Prussia means to keep the fortress, and it is pointed out that, in the event of the sale by Holland having been completed, a *cavus belli* between France and Prussia is readily afforded. Great uneasiness and perplexity continue to prevail. Meanwhile I direct your attention to the following articles in the *Presse*, from the pen of M. Chevalier Clary, which is supposed—how truly I cannot say—to convey a reflex of the opinions of the French Foreign Office:

Is the *France* quite sure that there has been no negotiation relative to the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg? On the other hand, is the *France* sure that a solution has been arrived at? We believe that affairs are more advanced than the *France* says, but that a solution is more distant than the *Temps* supposes. The critical situation of Holland at the present moment has already been shown. The language of the Berlin press leaves no doubt as to the desires and pretensions of Prussian policy, which would place Holland between the alternative of a territorial sacrifice or absorption in the Northern Confederation. M. de Bismark, in one of his last speeches, denied none of the pretensions of Prussia; he only declared that the Cabinet of Berlin would abstain, for the time being, from putting any pressure on Holland, in order not to give rise to a European question. Holland then, knows what to expect, when Bismark thinks the moment opportune to renew his demands and exert the pressure necessary to their success. From whom may he expect assistance, if not from France? Luxemburg is of no importance, either politically or commercially to Holland to which it is only united by the fact of their having the same ruler. The King of Holland cannot have a very strong liking for the role of vassal to Prussia, which benevolence is the only character possessed by the Princes of the Northern Confederation. He ought much more to desire the independence of his crown, as King of the Netherlands, than the satisfaction of reigning as Grand Duke over 200,000 Luxemburgians, under the good pleasure of M. de Bismark. The interest of the sovereign and the people is the same, and it is perfectly admissible that the King of the Netherlands should be disposed to exchange the possession of Luxemburg for a pecuniary indemnity and an alliance which would guarantee the independence of his States. We do not think that these dispositions of the King of Holland have been embodied in any document; it is more than probable that they have been established in diplomatic conversations, merely under the title of an exchange of views on the "eventualities" of the future. But what appears to us certain is that they ought to exist, because they are in conformity with the present state of affairs. Has Prussia anything to do with them? Yes, and no. If Holland and France admit as legitimate and well grounded the presence of a Prussian garrison in the fortress of Luxemburg, Prussia has a right to have an opinion, and ought to take her place as a contracting party to the arrangement which must be come to. If Holland and France refuse Prussia the right of holding a garrison at Luxemburg, in virtue of the provisions of the constitution she has destroyed, it is obvious that there is no need of consulting Prussia in any way. Such is the question of justice; but Prussia is at Luxemburg, and the difficulty is to know how to turn her out. Shall we remind her politely of the rights which she does not possess, and request her to fulfill their conditions? Shall we accept the alternative of only entering the Luxemburg by demolishing its walls? But who does not see that all the importance of Luxemburg is its fortress, which, when not in our hands is an open gate on the French frontier? Where would be the benefit of the annexation if it had not for its object the stopping up of one of the openings made on our frontier in 1815? Would the addition of 200,000 souls to the French population be a serious compensation for the aggrandizement of Prussia and the unity of Germany? The simple excess of births over deaths giving us as much every year, without the necessity of asking M. de Bismark.

WHAT WILL FRANCE DO?—WILL THE PRUSSIAN BE PERMITTED TO OVERRUN THE NETHERLANDS?

[From the Paris "Liberte" of March 24th.] Luxemburg is topographically situated, in a certain manner outside the sphere of action of Prussia; and it is moreover irresistibly opposed to all plans of annexation. Why, then, does Prussia still occupy it and appear to wish to establish herself there definitively? For a long time past Prussia, in her dreams of a Kingdom of Germany, has aimed at becoming a maritime power. From Ostend to Kiel there is not a point of the coast on which she has not fixed her eyes. Her efforts to effect a close connection with Holland, who would open to her a wide access to the Atlantic, does not date, as is well known, from yesterday. Therefore, to unite Holland to the Northern Confederation is at present, and has been since Sadova, the aim of Count de Bismark. What an immense advantage that combination would offer! This would be realized his fondest wish without awakening the scruples of Europe, or exciting the susceptibility of the Dutch. Infringe on the independence of Holland! Never. And Prussia may thus make absolute engagements with all the Governments and give formal guarantees which M. de Roonber will solemnly quote in the tribune. When the *Luxemburg* of the future shall be published, three Prussian despatches addressed to the Hague in the month of December, and two others sent there at the moment of the assembling of the Northern Parliament, will reveal, although

too late, all the gravity of the present situation. Holland resisted insinuations, as she has recently treated formal proposals. Prussia then unmasked herself; she pointed to Luxemburg, which country she is occupying and will keep as a pledge. If ever there was a Dutch Cabinet, which has to choose between the loss of a province and the diminution of its independence! Placed in that difficult situation it applied to the French Government. Here the question becomes delicate, and we fear to touch on secrets to which even diplomacy is not admitted. Luxemburg belongs in reality to the King of Holland rather than to Holland. The question may therefore be treated directly between sovereign and sovereign. The above incomplete exposition may be summed up in the following terms:—1. Prussia demands peremptorily the annexation of Holland to the Confederation of the North, in order to open for herself a wide access to the sea; 2. Prussia has no desire to keep Luxemburg, and only holds the country as a pledge and in order to exercise an irresistible pressure on the Dutch Government; 3. Holland, in order to escape the clutches of Prussian ambition, turns towards France and offers her Luxemburg for a sum of money, asking the same time to be protected by the French army. What will France do? We cannot say; all we know is that Prussia occupies Luxemburg, has established herself there, and does not appear disposed to evacuate that province.

FRANCE ON THE LEFT AND GERMANY ON THE RIGHT OF THE RHINE.

(From the Paris Pays of March 26th.)

By what right, in the name of what principle, should we have blamed the German nation for that which we have never ceased to practice ourselves, and which all Europe has just recognised in Italy? How could what appeared natural and legitimate on the left side of the Rhine be irregular and revolutionary on the right side? France had no interest, either of principle or security, to impede the accord of Prussia and Germany. German unity on the right of the Rhine will be what French unity is on the left. Both nations will again occupy the position they had on the arrival of Caesar. Only in the interest of peace, necessary to all, we must re-establish between the two countries the serious barrier which nature has placed there, and which the artificial combination of a hostile policy toward France had effaced. Germany cannot be tranquil if France is not; and if Prussia and Germany would have the legitimate pretension to be independent in the natural sphere of their territory, it can only be on the condition of not compromising the independence of the only great nation which does not enter them. Prussia cannot pretend to dominate from Niemen to Thionville. The sword of Prussia ought, then, to stop at the Rhine; and since the treaties of 1815 are down no Power must be permitted to pick them up.

WILL BISMARCK CONSENT TO THE SALE OF LUXEMBURG?

The *Neue Freie Presse* of Vienna, which has the reputation of being the organ of Herr von Bismark, has a significant article on the military conventions between Prussia and the South German States, the existence of which has just been disclosed by the official press of Berlin. It points out the intention of the fourth article of the treaty of Prague was evidently to make the northern and southern States of Germany two separate bodies, especially as regards military matters, and that France had not understood it in that sense, and adds that, as the article provides that the Southern Bund should have an "independent national existence," and its alliance with the Northern should be a "national" one, the conventions in question might very justly be made the subject of a Franco-Austrian diplomatic intervention. The *Neue Freie Presse* thinks, however, that it might be preferable for Austria to adopt a less direct method of preserving her interest, especially as Count Bismark has it in his power to silence the opposition of France by conniving at the sale of Luxemburg. It therefore suggests a *rapprochement* with Prussia, which, it believes, would dissuade Count Bismark from pursuing his schemes of aggrandizement, and enable Austria to pursue her work of internal reorganization with security.

## The Port Townsend Tragedy—Things that Sometimes Happen in the Country to which Annexation is Recommended.

MESSRS EDITORS—Amongst the many advantages and benefits that would result from our annexation to the United States, no allusion has ever been made to the agreeable excitement afforded by such startling events as that of the recent tragedy at Port Townsend. It must be admitted that such a transaction at this particular juncture, when we have been so earnestly importuned by the articles in the *Morning News* to throw ourselves into the arms of Uncle Sam, is a very ugly and unwarlike circumstance. It speaks volumes of the state of society, and the absence of law and order in that portion of the Great Republic. We read that these offended sailors coerced and drove this lawyer on board. Where were the authorities? Do they good-naturedly overlook such trifles? Doubtless it must have come to the ears of the authorities, and it is clear that it was looked upon as no offence, for the men were at liberty and again were permitted to brave the law and commit another outrage. The results are before us—the gun and revolver out—shots fired—lives taken. There was no police intervention, so there was bloodshed and murder. I do not say that such a state of things is incompatible with a feeling of safety and security, more especially to those who are a little accustomed to it, but in the event of annexation I think it quite likely that with any of the John Bull race, more especially with those who have wives and families, it would be a long time before they would feel perfectly at home in such an atmosphere.

THE OLD FLAG.

## The Weekly AND CH

Tuesday, a

## Confederation

The more closely proposition to annex the United States, the more tiable and absurd is not the slightest however "humble" Home Government imous the sentiment in its favor, that it will respectful consideration Her Majesty's Minister is ever accomplished through the united North America—no petition of one Colorado to cut loose from the place itself under the foreign power. Even disposed to part with bia and its islands, Canada would strenuously, and its opposition, but prove successful, show that to part would be to close the continent, the which was one of the Confederation. Deprived of a front on the whole scheme would Canadian statesmen for century; but it has new of save in connection the construction of a the continent, over which the rich products of the and the more substantial the British Provinces. therefore, never consentation of British Columbia England should; and if country persisted in part Colony, Canada, finding fined to her present border quickly follow the example and throw herself into Uncle Sam. Besides, of a "national feeling" has gained strength in the Eastern, and if separation mother country were to would be to the end that at present Dominion, Kingdom might spring from the presence of British North America a result could only be brought through Confederation, for way can an united opinion be said with regard ation. The Annexationist day opposes Confederation, defeating the very object view. We do not wish to stand as saying that Confederation will result in Annexation want to point out that nothing of the voice of all the Province effect a change so sweeping except there be a concert of such expression could be obtained and no concert of action had without a union of the People. One of the objections—in only objection we have heard against Confederation, is that have to wait some time before we are so isolated from Eastern Provinces. Well, "isolated," but what of that was California in 1849, yet admitted as a State in 1851, day—only sixteen years after sion to the Union—a railroad pushed eastward over the Sierra da Mountains to connect with a line which is being pushed west from Omaha. The Confederation modeled in some respects after the plan of the Republic. The have perfect freedom of action. Government is guaranteed, Representation according to Population secured. It has no gigantic debt hanging like a millstone its neck which five generations heavy taxation will scarcely enable it and has resources within which, if properly developed, render it one of the most prosperous aggregation of States under the We have no apology to urge in behalf of the miserable blunder called an experiment with which we are