

well, may be put under contract next year. Then, to meet the railway through Nova Scotia from Halifax, a section of twenty-six miles only will be required from Shediac to the boundary at Baie Verte. If Nova Scotia makes equal railway progress with New Brunswick in the next two years, we may expect to pass by railway from this City to Halifax in 1860.—*New Brunswick.*

IMPORTANT TO SHIPOWNEERS.

Ships classed "A", whose Characters expire on the 31st December, 1857.

We learn that it has been determined in pursuance of a Resolution passed by the Committee of Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping, "that all Ships classed A for a term of years, and which term will expire at the end of two years 1857, will have the character A struck out of the Register Book on the 31st December inst., and the word 'lapsed' inserted in lieu thereof, except in the case of such Vessels as the Owners shall make it appear, by letter addressed to the Secretary, have not been in any Port of the United Kingdom during the year 1857; such Ships will have the Character A retained until the re-printing of the Register Book in June next. But if the Owners of Ships whose term of years expires at the end of the year, desire that they should lapse to the E character, instead of being marked as above, the Committee will, on application, give directions accordingly."

And the General Committee of this Society having determined by Resolutions passed from year to year, that the Characters of all Ships of the E class (including those with the Asterisk,) which had not been surveyed between the years 1834 and 1856 inclusive, should, in conformity with the Rules, sections 60 and 61, be expunged, and that such Ships should not have their Characters re-entered in the Society's Register Book, until upon further survey they were found to be entitled thereto;—And it having been also decided to extend the Resolutions above mentioned to the Ships of this Class which have not been surveyed since the year 1856:—Notice is given, that in pursuance of this decision, the Characters of such Ships of the Class in question as shall not be re-surveyed prior to the 30th of June next (not having been surveyed since 1856), will be omitted in re-printing the Register Book for the year 1858-59.

In the case of Ships of the E Class, which it shall be made to appear, by letter addressed to the Secretary, have not been in any port of the United Kingdom since 1856, this Resolution will not be applied.

UNITED STATES.

THE AMOOR RIVER.—A California gentleman, Mr. Esche, who has recently returned from a voyage to the river Amoor, in Russian America, for the purpose of establishing a trading post, furnishes the San Francisco papers with some interesting particulars concerning the Amoor country and its inhabitants. The Amoor is a river some 2000 miles long. Mr. Esche ascended it about 300 miles. He found the climate on the coast cold, stormy and disagreeable; but in the interior the weather is much milder. The winters, however, are very severe. Some twenty miles inland, and about 250 miles from the mouth of the Amoor, is a shallow sheet of water called Lake Kisi, which connects by several arms with the Amoor. It is encircled by a hilly but richly wooded country. Fir, pine, larch, birch, and other trees, are to be found there in abundance, but the growth is rather stunted on account of the severe cold and northwesterly gales which prevail upon the coast in the long winters. In the vicinity of the Nicolaeski, a few degrees farther north, the soil, even in summer, is frozen three feet deep. As the traveller goes along the lake westward and proceeds towards the interior, the wood becomes better and larger and would afford tolerably good timber.

At the point of intersection of the lake and river is a military station called Mariensky Post, and near by it the pleasant village of Kisi. The country in this neighborhood and in this portion of the Amoor valley, generally, is pleasant and offers good inducements to the agriculturalist. It is about eighty miles from the ocean across the land, and exhibits a remarkable difference in its climate from that of the coast. There are in the neighborhood of Mariensky, chestnut, oak, hazel, linden and other trees, and in summer a great variety of beautiful flowers.

The lower portion of the Amoor is interspersed with numerous islands, and the navigation is difficult; but it is supposed that the best channels have not yet been discovered. Everywhere it abounds in excellent fish, among which are several varieties of salmon. There is a remarkable fish there called by the Russians *beluga*, and by some, sea horses. It is snow white, rises in the water like a porpoise, and sometimes reaches the length of twenty feet. The Guillaicks, or aborigines, take it for the sake of its oil.

The scenery on the Amoor is grand and imposing, and in some portions resembles that of the Rhine.

The river makes a great bend to the south about the middle of its course, in latitude about 45°, and the country is said to resemble a tropical land in appearance and many of its productions. There are cork trees, grapes, and peaches, apricots and other fruits growing in wild state there. Coal has been found at three different places on the upper river. All along the river from Mariensky to the mouth on both sides, there are numerous Guillaick or native villages, and also many small Russian settlements. The Guillaicks do nothing but catch fish in the summer time and spend the greater portion of their time in boats. These boats are peculiar, and are made of boards hewed out of trees by hand. The Russians use sawed boards; but the Guillaicks prefer the hewed ones, because they make a much stronger boat, and the Russians themselves admit that the Guillaick boat is superior for strength. The shape of them, however, is clumsy.

Within 250 miles from the mouth of the Amoor, there are probably 4000 to 5000 Russians, who devote much attention to agriculture. There are sables, ermine, foxes, wolves, bears, reindeer, deer, hares and squirrels further back in the country, but no hunting about the mouth of the Amoor. There is very little trade as yet. The Russian government is said to encourage immigration by large grants of land to settlers on easy terms. The Guillaicks belong to the Tartar race, and are simple-minded, lazy and peaceable. They dwell in large log cabins, which are infested with vermin.

THE INDIANS PASSING AWAY.—Col. A. H. Redfield, Indian agent for the Upper Missouri, has just transmitted to the commissioner of Indian affairs his annual report. From it we learn that several of the tribes in that region have suffered terribly from the small pox during the last year. The Gros Ventres and Mandems (united in one tribe) and the Yancions and Rickarees, have lost one fourth of their number by this disease. The Assinibonnes have suffered even more severely. More than one fourth of their whole number have perished, Col. Redfield found 30 deserted lodges near Fort William, the owners of which had perished by small pox. Contrary to the customs of the Indians, the dead bodies were left exposed.—A few years since the Mandems themselves numbered over 500 lodges; now they count about 40 or 50. The ravages of this fearful disease have been terrible. The Gros Ventres and the Mandems, like the Rickarees, live in permanent habitations, and cultivate corn, vines, and vegetables to a considerable extent, and Col. Redfield expresses the opinion that with proper assistance and instruction, these Indians, together with the Yancions and Rickarees, might make rapid progress towards civilization in a few years. We should be glad to believe that such a fortune was in store for these Indians; but alas! civilization seems to be fatal to them as to the rest of the race. They readily learn to copy the vices of the white men without profiting by their virtues; and small pox and its equally fatal ally "fire water"—both gifts of civilization—are fast driving them to annihilation. We may say, we must deplore their fate, but it is inevitable. They are essentially a wild people, and their genius never would, under the most favourable circumstances yield to civilized influences. Of the numerous powerful tribes scattered over the whole continent when the whites first landed upon it, how few now remain! It is reckoned that they now numbered about five hundred thousand in North America of whom probably not five hundred will remain at the end of the present century.

Such of our readers as have no opportunity of perusing the President's Message, will find the following extracts upon its most interesting topics, worth the perusal:—

With all other European governments, except that of Spain, our relations are as peaceful as we could desire. I regret to say that no progress whatever has been made, since the adjournment of Congress, toward the settlement of any of the numerous claims of our citizens against the Spanish government. Besides, the outrage committed on our flag by the Spanish war frigate *Ferrolano* on the high seas, off the coast of Cuba, in March 1855, by firing into the American mail steamer *El Dorado*, and detaining and searching her, remains unacknowledged and unredressed. The general tone and temper of the Spanish government towards that of the United States are much to be regretted. Our present Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Madrid has asked to be recalled; and it is my purpose to send out a new minister to Spain, with special instructions on all questions pending between the two governments, and with a determination to have them speedily and amicably adjusted, if this be possible. In the meantime, whenever our Minister urges the just claims of our citizens on the notice of the Spanish government, he is met with the objection that Congress had never made the appropriation recommended by President

Polk in his annual message of December, 1847, "to be paid to the Spanish Government for the purpose of distribution among the claimants of the *Amistad* case." A similar recommendation was made by my immediate predecessor in his message of December, 1853; and entirely concurring with both in the opinion that this indemnity is justly due under the treaty with Spain on the 27th October, 1795, I earnestly recommend such an appropriation to the favorable consideration of Congress.

We cannot fail to feel a deep interest in all that concerns the welfare of the independent republics on our own continent, as well as of the empire of Brazil.

Our difficulties with New Granada, which a short time since bore so threatening an aspect, are it to be hoped, in a fair way of settlement in a manner just and honorable to both parties.

With the independent republics on this continent it is both our duty and our interest to cultivate the most friendly relations. We can never feel indifferent to their fate and must always rejoice in their prosperity. Unfortunately, both for them and for us, our example and advice have lost much of their influence in consequence of the lawless expeditions which have been fitted out against some of them within the limits of our country. Nothing is better calculated to retard our steady material progress, or impair our character as a nation, than the toleration of such enterprises in violation of the law of nations.

It is one of the first and highest duties of any independent State, in its relations with the members of the great family of nations, to restrain its people from acts of hostile aggression against their citizens or subjects. The most eminent writers on public law do not hesitate to denounce such hostile acts as robbery and murder.

Weak and feeble States, like those of Central America, may not feel themselves able to assert and vindicate their rights. The case would be far different if expeditions were set on foot within our own territories to make private war against a powerful nation. If such expeditions were fitted out abroad against any portion of our own country, to burn down our cities, murder and plunder our people, and usurp our government, we should call any power on earth to the strictest account for not preventing such enormities.

Ever since the administration of General Washington, acts of Congress have been in force to punish severely the crime of setting on foot a military expedition within the limits of the United States, to proceed from thence against a nation or state with whom we are at peace. The present neutrality act of April 20, 1818, is but little more than a collection of pre-existing laws. Under this act the President is empowered to employ the land and naval forces, and the militia "for the purpose of preventing the carrying on of any such expedition or enterprise from the territories and jurisdiction of the United States," and the collectors of customs are authorized and required to detain any vessel in port when there is reason to believe she is about to take part in such lawless enterprises.

When it was first rendered probable that an attempt would be made to get up another unlawful expedition against Nicaragua, the Secretary of State issued instructions to the marshals and district attorneys, which were directed by the Secretaries of War and the Navy to the appropriate army and navy officers, requiring them to be vigilant, and to use their best exertions in carrying into effect the provisions of the act of 1818. Notwithstanding these precautions, the expedition has escaped from our shores. Such enterprises can do no possible good to the country, but have already inflicted much injury both on its interest and its character. They have prevented peaceful emigration from the United States to the State of Central America, which could not fail to prove beneficial to all the parties concerned. In a pecuniary point of view alone, our citizens have sustained heavy losses from the seizure and the closing of the transit route by the San Juan between the two oceans.

The leader of the recent expedition was arrested at New Orleans, but was discharged on giving bail for his appearance in the insufficient sum of \$2000.

I commend the whole subject to the serious attention of Congress, believing that our duty and our interest, as well as our national character, require that we should adopt such measures as will be effectual in restraining our citizens from committing such outrages.

THE HARMONIC SOCIETY.—It is gratifying to hear of the progress and prospects of this Society. It now numbers forty members, 14 orchestral, and 26 vocal performers, of the latter, eight are females. The public will be taken by surprise when they hear the first concert given by the new Harmonic Society.—*Chronicle.*

Our obituary list this morning chronicles the demise, at Fergusson's Cove, 29th inst., of Mr. William Power, at the remarkable age of 104 years.—*Ibid.*