

The Express

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MONTEVIDEO, THURSDAY, JULY 4, 1889.

(CHARLES GURNEY—Editor)

Nº 387.

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The Express.

MONTEVIDEO, JULY 4, 1889.



4TH OF JULY

1776 - 1889

To-day the great and prosperous Republic of the United States enters into the one hundred and fourteenth year of its existence. No country since the world began has such a great and glorious retrospective. From a humble and neglected colony five short generations have witnessed its steady rise to the status of a great and powerful Nation, one of the richest and mightiest of the world.

Columbia, and thy citizens, all hail!

LAND BOOMS.

The collapse of the land boom in Victoria, Australia, has thrown many speculators into the deepest despair. The following remarks by a correspondent, and in a way the magnitude of the sum involved, are worthy of attention:—The highest figure of liabilities as yet is £400,000. The next highest is £300,000. Then comes a third for close on £200,000 and so on down to about £50,000. The singular feature of the speculators of these land speculators is that all have large surpluses set down against their deficiencies. The fact is that though the sums are large, very little cash has passed between the vendors and the purchasers. In most cases the only money that has been paid has been the deposit when a sale was made, and the balance is in bills at long dates. Sometimes syndicates paid heavy cash deposits. In one case £20,000 was paid in cash, which was forfeited to the vendor because the syndicate chose to draw out of the bargain.

The land boom in the Uruguay Republic has not arrived yet, it is on its way however, and signs are to be noted which show that it may be here almost before it is expected. A very considerable boom is apparent in the Argentine Republic, but there taxation has kept pace if not outrun the prices of land which must serve to check wild speculation.

The great increase of the prices of town lots in Montevideo must not be confounded with a land boom, that is, only, at present, the natural rebound from bona fide values which have been kept in abeyance by previous bad government and an unsettled state of affairs; and if houses can be bought in the city, or sites upon which to build them, which pay from 8 to 10 per cent, the investment is a sound one, the only disadvantage of which comes to the tenant.

The land boom will be in the departments and, naturally at first will follow the lines of railway. Prices for land in the country, have not yet risen abnormally, but even now we should recommend caution in purchasing. Land is sure to rise in value, that may be taken as a foregone conclusion,

but the rise will vary much with regard to situation and ways of communication.

Also if an estancia is well found and stocked, it should show a fair average profit upon the value of the land as well as the money invested in stocks and crops.

We have heard of estancias which pay 200 per annum and of others which pay 800 and 1000, the latter not often. If the land appreciates in value so much the better for the owner, but it will be remembered that 1000 upon \$100,000, is only 500 upon \$200,000, and that although land speculation may drive up prices so that profits may be made by several purchasers, the last must come down upon the produce of the land for a return of interest upon the money invested.

These remarks occur after hearing of the collapse in Australia, but if we take experience as our guide we should be able in this country to guard against a big land boom, and although we may not become so suddenly rich neither shall we be thrown on our beam ends.

SHOOTING A "MAN-EATER."

A TERRIBLE SCENE.

The notorious Jounsar man-eating tigress has at last, says the Calcutta correspondent of the Times, been killed by a young forest officer. This tigress has been the scourge of the neighbourhood of Chakrata for the last ten years, and her victims have been innumerable. On one occasion she seized one out of a number of foresters who were sleeping together in a hut, carried him off, and deliberately made him over to her cubs to play with, while she protected their innocent gambols from being disturbed. His companions were eventually forced to take refuge in a tree from her savage attacks. Here they witnessed the following ghastly tragedy.

The tigress went back and stood over the prostrate form of her victim and purred in a catlike and self-complacent way to her cubs, who were romping about over the apparently lifeless body. She then lay down a few yards off, and with blinking eyes watched the gambols of her young progeny. In a few moments the man sat up and tried to beat the young brutes off. They were too young to hold him down, so he made a desperate attempt to shake himself free, and started off at a run, but before he had gone 20 yards the tigress bounded out and brought him back to her cubs. Once more the doomed wretch had to defend himself over again from their playful attacks. He made renewed attempts to regain his freedom, but was seized by the old tigress and brought back each time before he had gone many yards. His groans and cries for help were heartrending; but the men on the tree were paralysed with fear, and quite unable to move.

At last the tigress herself joined in the gambols of her cubs, and the wretched man was thrown about and tossed over her head exactly as many of us have seen our domestic cat throw rats and mice about before beginning to feed on them. The man's efforts at escape grew feebler. For the last time they saw him try to get away on his hands and knees towards a large fig tree, with the cubs clinging to his limbs. This final attempt was as futile as the rest. The tigress brought him back once again, and then held him down under her forepaws, and deliberately began her living meal before their eyes. It was this formidable beast that the young Cooper's Hill officer and a student attacked on foot.

They were working up her trail, 15 yards apart, when suddenly Mr. Osmonson heard his younger companion groan, and turning round saw him borne to the ground by the tigress. Mr. Osmonson fortunately succeeded in shooting her through the spine, and a second ball stopped her in mid spring. Meantime his companion rolled over the bill, and was eventually discovered insensible a few feet away from his terrible assailant. He is terribly mauled, and now lies at the Chakrata Station Hospital, where hopes of his recovery are entertained.

GOLD, OR GOLD AND SILVER?

The interest of the debate which has taken place on bi-metallism in the House of Commons was a little forestalled by the speeches at the Foreign Office. The case for a double monetary standard can hardly be stated more forcibly than it was by the different speakers who addressed Lord Salisbury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. On one point the public will have no difficulty in coming to a conclusion, though Mr. Goschen was almost nervously anxious to avoid even the appearance of countenancing it. The Chancellor refused to speak of the growing power of the bi-metallists—an expression which all but slipped out inadvertently—for fear he should risk offending the other side, but nobody who has followed the recent discussions can doubt that their power is growing.

The report of the Gold and Silver Com. for Commission, which appeared a few months ago, is alone sufficient evidence of that. Nor would it have been possible, even a short time since, to get together such a deputation. The general faith in Gold—the orthodox faith as it must still be called—has been at least severely shaken. Whether it is destined to fall is a question on which it is not wise to be in a hurry to pronounce. Both the Premier and Mr. Goschen deprecate a hasty decision, and every-one must agree with the Prime

Minister that the question is not one to be settled off hand by a debate and division of the House of Commons.

There must, he would Lord Salisbury calls a plain preponderance of instructed opinion, outside as well as inside of Parliament, to justify the Government in taking any forward step. It is quite possible, of course, that the logic of facts may force their hand. The difficulty which has been occasioned in India by the fall in the price of silver is a serious one, and will have to be dealt with somehow. The report of the Gold and Silver Commission recommended that the Indian Government should be allowed a free hand to establish a double standard, if they feel it needful to do so, and the recommendation has met with general approval. This may or may not be the beginning of the end which the bi-metallists desire.

COCA CHEWING.

Practical science should certainly have sat at rest by this time whether the showing of coca, as practised by natives in South America, increases the chewers' strength and powers of endurance. This has been alleged and denied over and over again, and with all possible emphasis on both sides. The testimony just given by a resident in Warwickshire carries the matter a little farther because he speaks from personal knowledge. For 12 years he lived on the slopes of the Andes, and while there he came to the knowledge of very wonderful athletic feats which were apparently due to the consumption of coca. Native porters took nothing of carrying burdens of from two three cwt for 50 or 100 miles at a stretch, provided they are supplied with a due allowance of the miraculously sustaining leaves. In the same way, the native miner will go on toiling for 30 hours in succession with no other food. And so on; a long list of physical achievements not to be paralleled on this side of the Atlantic. It is quite possible, nevertheless, that coca does not possess the miraculous qualities attributed to it. The natives are trained, it is admitted, from the earliest youth to carry heavy weights long distances on little or no food. And long training is a wonderful thing for bringing out the latent possibilities of human strength.

Look at the long distance cyclist who will go wheeling along for 24 hours at a stretch, at an average speed of 11 or even 12 miles an hour. Throughout the time, he takes no rest whatever, while his nutriment is about sufficient to serve for an ordinary breakfast. Yet his training is probably only of recent date, whereas these South American eccentrics have had their muscles hardened and their appetites restricted throughout their lives. Perhaps some of the Catford Club riders will give the leaves a trial.

TELEPHONING.

The pleasures of life multiply rapidly. No sooner has the invalid lady, who had not attended church for years, had a Congregational chapel switched on to her house, so that she could join in the service telephonically, than all sorts of suggestions crowd in for the yet further annihilation of absence. It seems that many persons are about to switch themselves on to the same chapel; but that is nothing in comparison with far more interesting proposals.

It seems that the result of putting one's ear to one's bedroom wall is so like being in church that not only can one hear the sermon and the organ, but even the accompaniment of coughs, sneezes, rustling of dresses, and shuffling of feet. Why, it is asked, should not the absencee give as well as receive, and join in the congregational portion of the service as audibly as those who are present?

If objection be made that the telephone is still insufficiently developed, the answer is obvious—an invention once granted, all its little improvements are but a question of time; and even if the present instrument did not act quite according to intention, the singer would have all the delight of imagination without being missed by anybody, to the great advantage of the music generally. It might happen, no doubt, that persons a little hard of hearing might make mistakes, and come in at the wrong time, and in the wrong way, as, for instance, with a favourite high note in the middle of the sermon. But all objections must vanish before yet another convenience. The victim of a fit of Sunday morning laziness will not have to fall back on such feeble excuses for staying at home, or even in bed, as a head-ache or the weather. He (it is usually he) will simply give orders to switch on some church or chapel to his bed-room or smoking-room and then, in solitude, take advantage, or not, of the privilege, and nobody be the wiser.

EXPRESSIONS

—Again we cannot refrain from alluding to the supplementary. Dependent. We read that it was to be devoted to the ladies, and we supposed in our innocence that the real Lyon's silk article was meant, not the half wool substitute, but when we see assignation houses openly advertised along with other light matters we can only say with Mrs. Grundy: «Gracious goodness who will morally hide its diminished head.»

We recommend the Dependent to try its own receipt of salts of lemon to remove some of the stains from its columns.

