

Diary of the Chilean Civil War of 1891

Kept by John A Gibbs in Valparaiso 7th Jan – 21st Dec 1891

Covering note by JAG to the original bundle of documents:

7th Jan to 4th March 1891 is a copy made by my father in manuscript in 4 batches.

5th March to 6th May is a batch partly typewritten, partly handwritten

7th May to 25th May is missing (*subsequently found out of date order - RMG*)

27th May to 20th August in my handwriting

20th August to 25th September. Partly typed, partly handwritten

26th Sept to 21st Dec missing

A complete copy from 7th Jan to 21st Dec exists in the private files of Antony Gibbs and Sons who received it fortnightly from me from Valparaiso, unless the files have since been destroyed.

JANUARY

Wednesday 7th Jan 1891

About 1a.m. the fleet in the bay consisting of the 'Blanco Encalada', 'O'Higgins', 'Esmeralda' and 'Magallanes' proceeded to Quinteros where they joined the 'Almirante Cochrane' and declared themselves in favour of Congress and opposed to President Balmaceda. The Captain of the Fleet is Jorge Montt, and Captain Javin Molines his 'Major de Ordenes'.

Congress was represented on board by Waldo Silva – Vice president of the Senate – Ramon Barros Luco, President of the Deputies and Isidoro Errázuriz Deputy for Valparaiso, Secretary to the Squadron Enrique Valdevo Voyaza and the Editor of the 'Heraldo'

A supplement to the Heraldo prints a declaration - signed by W Silva and Barros Luco and dated 6th Jan, to this effect that *'The president having proclaimed that he is unable to govern in accord with Congress as the Constitution order him to do and as all his predecessors have done and that he has resolved to maintain the forces by sea and land without legislation authority and to make the public payments without a "ley de presupuesto" that therefore he has placed himself outside the Constitution, he has renounced the legitimate authority with which he was invested, had aimed at amassing a personal and arbitrary power emanating from his will alone and unlimited except to the extent that the considered events called for limitation. In such a gross emergency it is the duty of Congress to take charge of the defence of the Constitution and to take all such measures as the circumstances demand to restore their rule. They count on the support of the land and sea forces because they exist only in virtue of the constitution and lose their legal existence by placing themselves at the disposal of a dictatorial regimen set up by the entirely private motives of the President. Congress has adopted the resolutions to be found in the abridged document and at the same time has conferred on the undersigned power to present themselves to the fleet and demand from it that it co-operate in obtaining the earliest possible restoration of the Constitutional Regimen. In virtue whereof the undersigned order that a naval division be organised to make the President of the Republic understand that the fleet obeys the Constitution and that therefore it is indispensable that the annual law which authorises it be passed without delay. Captain Jorge Montt will command this section and the undersigned are embarked to attend to the development that this movement in defence of the Constitution of the Republic may take'.*

The above was addressed to Jorge Montt and the chiefs of the officers of the Navy and Montt's acceptance of the post followed.

The offices of the opposition papers in Valparaiso, The Mercurio, Patris, Heraldo and Union were closed by order and Police paraded in front of their doors. Telegraphic communication both in the country and foreign posts were stopped at about 11 a.m. and later in the day Telephonic communication was stopped at about 2 p.m.

The Fleet (5 vessels) entered the bay – cruised about unmolested attended by the tug 'Miraflores'. At 7 p.m. they moved up in front of the 'Huascar' which was lying near the floating dock undergoing repairs, and their boats surrounded and took her and she was towed out by the 'Miraflores'.

The streets are patrolled by mounted soldiers and police – there are rumours of many arrests of oppositionists in Valparaiso and Santiago. By order of the Intendente of Valparaiso Joaquim Villarino, all wheel and animal traffic stopped after 10.00 p.m.

Thursday 8th Jan.

The Intendente published by proclamation a decree of the Presidente countersigned by his Ministers to the effect that *'The Fleet in the name of the majority of congress having been taken and the Constitution and public order and peace thereby upset, this having been done not by the will of the people but by the insurrection under arms of certain members of Congress against him (the President) who is the chief of the army and the Fleet, he declares that he assumes the administration of all the public power for the administration of Government of the State for the maintenance of Public Order and therefore for the present the laws which interfere with the use of the powers which may be necessary to secure order be suspended'*

Decrees of the President are also published declaring the army 'en campaña' and raising their pay 50%, also dismissing Jorge Montt and Xavier Molinas from the Navy as traitors to the country. A proclamation of the President to the army is also published calling on it to defend the country and the Constitution against the Revolutionists. The machinery in the opposition newspaper's offices was wrecked this evening by order. During the day a Paper headed 'La Constitucion' was published declaring itself to be issued in place of the 'Union' which has been stopped by order of Claudio Vicuña (premier) and Villarino. It was promptly suppressed and those found reading it arrested. Telegrams permitted to-day but are vetted by the Intendente.

Alejo Barrios and Francisco Riesco Alealdes of Valparaiso arrested, also Antonio Subercassano and other. In Santiago 30 arrests are reported to have been made by the President's orders.

The President is said to have enrolled and armed several thousand men in Santiago. The Valparaiso club is closed and guarded. The 'Esmeralda' has left the bay and it is supposed to have gone after the Chilean Steam Company's ship 'Amazonas' taking troops to Antofagasta. The Fleet are said to have one million dollars on board and drafts for a large amount obtained it is supposed through Edwards' Bank.

Between 10 and 11 p.m there was some firing with machine guns off Barron and the docks and boats from the fleet took off men and stores. During the day they took 50 cases of rifles out of the German Steamer 'Cleopatra' imported by the Government.

Friday 9th Jan

The 'Cochrane' and 'Magallanes' have left the port. At 1 p.m. the 'Blanco' and 'O'Higgins' opened fire on the Membrillo Road, protecting the embarking of men coming to join them. 4 or 5 men killed – the firing was not replied to.

The Chilean steamer 'Aconcagua' seized by the Fleet. Pedro Monti said to have been shot in the street in Santiago.

Saturday 10th Jan

At 8 a.m. a steam launch from the 'Blanco' took off a lighter of flour and were fired upon, returning the fire with their Gatling: bullets passed close to our office, and many fell on the hills.

The Steamer 'Pizarro' from the north was stopped on arrival by the Fleet and her mails searched. The 'Aconcagua' (held by the fleet) left port today with the 'Amazonas' which had returned and been taken by the Fleet.

No business has been possible since the 6th. Exchange almost nominal at 22 ¼ . The Government paper 'El Comercio' reports that the 'Esmeralda' arrived at Talcahuano and her boats repulsed by soldiers on the shore (7th of the line)

Sunday 11th Jan

The 'O'Higgins' has left the bay, so that the 'Blanco' and the 'Huascar' alone remain of the Fleet. The 'Aconcagua' returned today and the Chilean Co's steamer 'Bio Bio' was taken by the Fleet. Both steamers are alongside the 'Blanco' and boats are continually passing between the steamers and the warships. The 'Huascar' got up steam today, so that evidently her engines have been repaired.

Everyone is completely in the dark as to the meaning of the movement of the Fleet or what their intentions and policy are. No private information is available from other ports or from the country, as all telegrams pass through the hands of the Government officials. All the news that has been received from outside Valparaiso emanates from the Government and is often very meagre, and no one knows what to believe of it. It reports the country all quiet, and troops everywhere loyal to the President. The latter apparently has everything his own way ashore. All suspected persons are arrested and all official posts filled with men that he believes he can rely upon.

Valparaiso is under the thumb of soldiers and the police and there have been no disturbances.

The inaction of the Fleet is regarded as a sign of the weakness of the Congress party ashore but if the men on the ships abide by their leaders it is clear they can command the coast and obtain what supplies of coal and provisions they want, while cutting off supplies arriving by sea to the ports; a matter that will be especially serious in the north of the country. Thus in time it is to be supposed that soon if the army does not declare for them, the opposition will be able to dictate terms to the Government.

Government publications however report much disaffection on board the ships and if that is true we may see an early solution of the trouble in the President's favour. All shipping and discharging of goods has been stopped in the bay for several days.

About 6.30 p.m. today the soldiers on the 'Malecon' fired on a steam launch coming from the British man-o-war 'Champion', though she was flying the English flag. The launch instantly returned, but came back in 20 minutes flying the most enormous flag and landed an officer at the mole, who came no doubt to demand an explanation. The firing was clearly a mistake: it is said that the officer who ordered it has been put under arrest.

The 'Champion' is the only foreign man-o-war in the bay. She is commanded by Captain Sinclair. The British Vice-Consul Howard has been active in trying to prevent the desultory firing from the

shore which can do no good and only result in the Fleet making reprisals, and he has received a promise from the Intendente that it would be stopped. The forts have taken no part in firing.

12th January

The 'Aconcagua' has again left the bay. It is rumoured that the new Chilean men-o-war 'Almirante Lynch' and 'Arturo'¹ have arrived from Europe in the south and have sided with the remainder of the fleet.

The President has issued a decree prohibiting the possession or use of arms by private people and ordering their surrender, declaring that they will be paid for at their value. He has also decreed that in the case of ships returning their allegiance to the Government, the crew will receive a gratification equal to 2 years' pay, and that the officers who had no knowledge of the revolutionary scheme and were only obeying their superiors will be pardoned.

A decree is also pasted on the walls dated 9th Jan renouncing all responsibility on the part of the Government for any acts that the rebel fleet affecting the interest and rights of foreign nations.

The English Consul informs us that the Fleet have given a promise through the 'Champion' that an hour's notice will be given to the foreign consuls before any bombardment is commenced, but in the case of the batteries firing from the shore the ships must reply without notice.

In spite of the promise mentioned above, about midday the troops ashore fires on the tug 'Miraflores'. She retired without replying. There are rumours that Coquimbo and La Serena have declared for the opposition and have appointed Cornelio Saavedra their Intendente.

13th Jan

The News of the uprising in Coquimbo and La Serena seems to be authentic. The Intendente of Talca is reported to have been shot.

The Steamer 'Britannia' homeward bound has been in Coronel since the 9th inst. unable to get coal.

Doubtless the Government are afraid to allow coal to be loaded into launches lest it should be seized by one of the fleet.

The 'Cochrane' and 'Magallanes' are reported to be in the north and to have visited Antofagasta. The 'Esmeralda' and the 'O'Higgins' are supposed to be in the south.

The following is a translation of an announcement in today's 'Boletin del dia' and will serve as an example of what the authorities allow to be circulated. It is doubtless aimed at the Edward's family

To The Millionaires – To You!!!

You the Millionaire families already counted and watched step by step who have made your fortunes by means of money – barefaced robbery – and money changing. You who in the eyes of ignorant

¹ The Arturo Prat was being built at that time but was not commissioned till 1893

people appear as protectors with your charitable gifts, after you have gathered in their money by the sweat of their brows. A thousand determined men of this port who know the history of your families whose lamentable power conduces at this moment to the terror and death of their Pacific people, covering the country, hitherto the mirror of the American nations, with the blackest reproach and ignominy. You, we warn that if at the first shell hurled at the town by the squadron which was Chilean but which is now your property, the Government does not dispose of your heads officially, we, with our own unaided power (an imperious duty demands it of us) will exact it immediately.

It is our wish to pull up by the roots the cursed darnel which impedes the luxuriance of the fine plant of the fair garden called Chile.

There appears to have been very little rioting in Santiago. On Sunday 240 arrests on suspicion were reported to have been made there. The President is enlisting all the forces he can from the country. The greater part of the south is said to favour the opposition and it is believed that the Bio Bio bridge has been partly thrown down so that no coal can now arrive overland in Santiago and Valparaiso.

We learn through the English Consul that when the 'Champion's' launch was fired on, on the 11th inst, not only the 'Champion' but also the 'Blanco' and the 'Huascar' cleared their guns for action and laid them on the town, and the 'Blanco' sent a boat to the 'Champion' to enquire whether any of their men had been hurt. Captain Sinclair has demanded a written apology from the Intendente for the firing

14th Jan

An arrival from Coronel reports that the 'Esmerelda' is there and that there is no truth in the reported damage to the Bio Bio Bridge.

Troops are to be marched overland to Coquimbo. Horses are being seized for the use of the army and receipts given for them. At one hacienda 250 were taken. Men are offered 30 dollars to enlist, but those who do not come voluntarily are pressed into service. Two civilians supposed to have been in communication with the ships are being tried by court martial today.

Admiral Hotham with the English men-o-war 'Warspite', 'Pheasant' and 'Swiftsure' are reported to be on their way to Valparaiso. There are reports of attempted mediation between the parties on the part of the Archbishop Casanova and of the English and German ministers, but whether there is any truth in them it is impossible to say.

15th Jan

The inaction of the fleet and the order that is maintained ashore had diminished the feeling of insecurity in the town: Shops are still open and except for the greater number of police and soldiers about, the appearance of the town is much as usual

Scarcely any business can be done however. Operations in the bay of course remain suspended. The cable has been at intervals closed. Coquimbo and the trans-Andine line here has been closed since 9th inst. All telegrams dispatched have to receive the signature of the Intendente's Secretary and an attempt has even been made to refuse to deliver messages unless the addressees bring their codes

and allow the Secretary to translate them. The mail steamer from the north arrived yesterday but her mails have been by order landed at Caldera. We are completely in the dark as to what has been going on at Iquique since the 6th inst.

The Ministries continue their functions. The Commission Conservadora of course no longer meets, and it is not likely that soon the Consejo de Estado can come together, seeing that some of its members are of the opposition. The President is therefore an absolute dictator and the Ministers are merely his servants whom he can dismiss and replace at his pleasure.

Last night the government hulk 'Miraflores'² which lay about 200yards out, was hauled by means of a rope and a locomotive ashore under the Malecon. She is said to have 600 tons of coal on board, but if it is so, it is curious that the fleet have not already secured her. The 'Huascar' takes periodic trips out of the bay leaving the Blanco here alone.

Friday 16th Jan

Last night the 'Boletin del dia' announced that the Emeralda landed 400 men at Lebu who occupied the coal establishment there, but were driven off by the Government soldiers and the forces' leader General Urrutia mortally wounded. It also says that the 'Cochrane' and 'Magallanes' have been completely routed at Iquique. The same paper points out what is certainly a fact that no one but the Government can receive news from the North or South, but this statement only serves to strengthen the doubt as to the trustworthiness of the published news.

At 5am this morning one of the forts at the Baron and the fort on the hill overlooking the Custom House opened fire on the 'Blanco' and struck her killing and wounding several men. The latter fact being vouched for by the Captain of one of the PSN steamers³ lying near. The Blanco did not return the fire but instantly moved in close to the floating dock and as soon as she began to moor the firing ceased. This appears to be in flagrant breach of the agreement on the part of the government forces and the moderation of the 'Blanco' is looked on as admirable but ominous.

3pm.

The killed and wounded from the 'Blanco' are now being brought ashore in HMS 'Champion's' boats. The 'Blanco' has certified to the Intendente the blockade of this port and requests that all foreign vessels move out of the line of fire within 48 hours, after which time any firing from ashore will be instantly returned

Letters have been received from Iquique dated the 8th and 16th inst. per Italia and Pacificque – Evidently brought by private hand, saying that the opposition paper had been forcibly closed and the Editor imprisoned, reporting also the arrest of D McIvor

A telegram is said to have been received from Iquique today by the Government stating that the blockade of that port had been notified to be commenced on the 20th Inst.

² This is not the correct name: The harbour tug (built on Tyneside in 1882) is the Miraflores

³ Pacific Steamship Navigation Company

A letter from Coronel dated 12th Inst read to me today says that 60 political prisoners were that day being taken by rail to Santiago and that the Government has massed 1500 – 2000 soldiers in 24 districts. At the time of writing the new Chilean Ironclad expected from Europe has not arrived.

During yesterday and today the exchange had fallen from 22 ¼ to 21 ½ .

Saturday 17th Jan

The 'Blanco' is cruising outside the bay. A report emanating from the 'Champion' says that the officers on the 'Blanco' had the greatest difficulty in restraining their men from mutiny in consequence of the refusal of their commander to fire in return yesterday. It is mentioned on good authority and generally believed that the orders to fire on the 'Blanco' emanated from men in command who had dined too well at a banquet given on the night of the 15th by the Intendente and that they confidently expected to sink her. 3 shells struck the ship. Certainly (people say) only some such explanation as this can account for the folly and (as they call it) treachery of the act.

The following notice is posted in the British Consulate this morning.

"The squadron having given notice of the blockade of Valparaiso and having given 48 hours' notice for neutral vessels to clear out, any persons desiring to embark must do so before noon on Saturday the 17th inst.

A petition signed by numerous British firms and individuals has been forwarded to H M Minister in Santiago praying him to intervene and obtain a longer space of time from the squadron as in 48 hours the numerous vessels in port cannot be got ready to go out, and also protesting against the firing from the shore without notice to foreigners.

With regard to the blockade people are asking how foreign nations regard the contending parties. Each side declares itself to be the rightful Government; but it is firstly to be remarked that the rights of either party by the Chilean constitution and law can hardly be a matter on which any foreign nation can express an opinion and secondly that at present the President is all powerful ashore and that he is before the world the head of this state and that he is maintaining order, as far as we know, throughout nearly all the country. If foreign nations still recognise the existing Government will they not resent the act of the fleet and refuse to recognise the blockade?

On the other hand it cannot be laid down certainly that the President will be able to maintain his ground and therefore it is open to regard the fleet as not an insurrectionary force but as one of the contending parties in a civil war and in such case many state that by international law the blockade must be recognised.

The Foreign Ministers are said to be consulting their Governments on the point.

If the decision is against the blockade they can however only protest for the only foreign warship at present available is HMS 'Champion', which is far inferior in strength to the 'Blanco'.

The Intendente of Valparaiso, Joachim Villarino, has resigned, by reason it is stated, of the firing on the 'Blanco' contrary to his orders and agreement. Admiral Oscar Viel has been appointed in his

place. Claudio Vicuña (Minister of the Interior and Premier) is the real director of affairs in Valparaiso.

Alijandro Frederick (related to the Edwards and Delano families) who has been active in the operations in the bay has been captured ashore and Vicuña seem determined to have him shot, but representations have been made to him by neutral parties which may cause his sentence to be modified.

The President's wife and family after hiding for some time at Los Andes have crossed to the Argentina. Mails from Iquique have been delivered today, including the mail which the Government had landed at Caldera. They contain little more than the news previously received by letters.

Presidential decrees have been issued granting a rise in pay of 25% to those officers and crews of the fleet who have taken no part in the insurrection, and in the case of the army or navy men killed or wounded 'in defence of public order' granting pensions to their families equal to their pay.

The recruiting for the army is having an effect on the agricultural products of the country, already they are becoming scarce in Valparaiso: but the effect on the wheat crop, which is exceptionally good this year and is nearly ready for reaping, may be very serious.

Sunday 18th Jan

The 'Blanco' and the 'O'Higgins' are stationed about 5 miles out, blockading the bay; Nearly all the ships and steamers have removed themselves outside the limits of the port, sailing ships to the number of 35 and 11 steamers. There remain in the port about 6 sailing vessels, hulks a number of launches and the 'Champion'. The German ship 'Potsdam' endeavouring to sail out round the southern point of the bay was caught by the current and became a complete wreck on the rocks. Another vessel coming in her wake was only saved from the same fate by the assistance of the PSN steamer 'Arequipa'⁴

The Moles have been furnished with sandbags as a protection to the soldiers and more cannon are being placed on the hill over the custom house.

Monday 19th Jan

An effective blockade is being maintained and the general opinion is that no bombardment of the forts or public buildings will be attempted unless from further provocation.

Rumours are very numerous today and speak of risings in Santiago against the President, desertion of the greater part of the forces sent overland against Coquimbo, the surrender of Iquique to the fleet and other occurrences, all unfavourable to the Government. The belief that something serious had occurred was strengthened later in the day by the Government issuing orders to cut and seal the ends of the submarine cable and to cut the overland lines to Santiago. In one case the instruments

⁴ In 1902 **Arequipa** was wrecked in a gale, killing 63 people.

were actually destroyed. It is worth recording that since the 7th inst. we have not had a particle of European news and are now of course completely cut off from communication.

A decree is published today to the effect that all persons supplying provisions or other articles to the Fleet will be tried by the 'Council of War'. Another decree prohibits all persons from leaving Santiago, Valparaiso, Viña del Mar, Quillota, Talca, Concepcion and Talcahuano without passports, but after its publication another decree was issued suspending its operation for the province of Valparaiso.

Exchange fell further today to 26 3/8

Tuesday 20th Jan

The president has suspended the passports decree altogether 'pending the organisation of the service for issuing them'

A letter received from Coquimbo states that the town was occupied by forces of the Fleet without any opposition.

Yesterday's rumours remain unconfirmed but the report of the surrender of Iquique to the 'Cochrane' and 'Magallanes' seems to be derived from fairly good authority.

Frederick is not to be shot but has been sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment. Another man is banished from the country for a year.

The Chilean Co's Steamer 'Cachapoal' with a cargo of flour and provisions on board is said to have gone into Coquimbo and been taken by the opposition party.

Wednesday 21 Jan

Letters have been received from Iquique today dated 16th inst. confirming the news of the notification of the blockade of that town from 20th inst. The letter states that all was quiet in the town but provisions had become very scarce, HMS 'Pheasant' had arrived and stationed herself there.

The Steamer from Iquique was stopped by the 'Blanco' about 40 miles south of Coquimbo and again by the 'O'Higgins' last night off Valparaiso.

The report of the 16th inst of the defeat and wounding of General Urrutia⁵ by the Government forces seems to have been untrue.

A decree published today prohibits all vessels whether Chilean or foreign from calling at Coquimbo 'which is occupied by the revolutionary forces'

⁵ Brigadier General Gregorio Urrutia 1830-1897

Another decree re-establishes communication between the shore and the vessels in the port of Valparaiso, and absolutely forbids communication with those lying outside except by special permission when the object is to bring them into the inner anchorage.

Thursday 22 Jan

The 'O'Higgins' is the only one of the fleet seen outside this port since 19th inst and she keeps apparently always beyond the range of the forts, contenting herself with maintaining the blockade. The Government are loading the Chilean Co's Steamer 'Imperial' with stores and it is said with guns and ammunition, but what they are going to do with her is a matter of conjecture.

A Government decree today forbids the transportation of any provisions either to Chilean or foreign ports without a deposit of 3 times their value as a guarantee that they will not go to ports occupied by the fleet, nor are intended to help the latter. A firm today offered the deposit and applied for leave to ship to Iquique, but was refused, a fact that seems to support the news of the capture of that place.

Today's 'Boletin del dia' characterises the blockade of Iquique as a speculation on the part of North, Zegers, Montt, Altamizuno and others to raise the price of Nitrate!!

An opposition paper distributed quietly yesterday announced the occupation of Iquique. It stated also that on the 18th the soldiers guarding the Moneda⁶ in Santiago rose and that Balmaceda changed his quarters to the barracks; that there are 10,000 men in the north ready to assist the opposition and that Urrutia has 6,000 men in the south. The character of the language of this publication however makes these stories carry no more weight than those disseminated by the Government party.

Today's 'Boletin del dia' publishes extracts from the Iquique 'Voz de Chile' of 13th inst. giving the correspondence between the captain of the Cochrane and Manuel Salinas, The Intendente of Tarapacá, on the subject of the blockade.

Salinas' rejoinder to the announcement of the blockade is very spirited and to the point from the Government's point of view.

Since the President's decree of 9th inst declaring the fleet beyond the pale of the law, the Government always speak of the Fleet as 'rebels and pirates' and since the blockade they constantly announce that foreign Powers take their view of the case and do not recognise the blockade, but it remains to be seen whether this is so or not.

An unofficial and private letter has been received from the British Minister (Kennedy) with reference to the protest against the shortness of notice of the blockade and against the firing from the shore without notice to foreigners or foreign ships. He says he presented the protest first to Godoy, minister of foreign affairs who absolutely refused to receive it, saying that the Government are responsible for nothing the Fleet may do, and implying that they are pirates and would be fired upon whenever they could get the chance. He then went to the President who said much the same and

⁶ Palacio de La Moneda or simply La Moneda, is the seat of the President of the Republic of Chile.

added that if the Intendente of Valparaiso gave a promise not to allow firing without notice he deserved a severe reprimand, but that in any case his dismissal had been decided upon (The retirement of Villarino corresponds to this)

Exchange has fallen to 19 ½ . It is in such a state that authentic news of any event in favour of the opposition would send it up.

This feeling is due not only to the distrust with which the President's policy is regarded, but also to the doubt as to how he will provide himself with funds if the situation should be prolonged. It not supposed however that the success of the opposition would conclude the political troubles because of the absence of leaders in its ranks, and the fact that though united now in a common cause it consists of numerous parties whose differences are likely to break out when the bond of union is removed.

Friday 23rd Jan

The following taken from a private letter from Coronel dated 20th inst. 'There has been a little shooting here. Troops fire on a boat and the 'Esmeralda' replied killing 3 men. The rendezvous of the Fleet is at Santa Maria island where they are drilling troops'.

No other news today. Exchange down to 19^d

Saturday 24th Jan

The 'Boletin del dia' describes the firing at Coronel as a regular and unprovoked bombardment, with much minute detail, but another private letter which the writer has seen today shows that it was commenced from the shore and that the newspaper exaggerates it greatly. The same letter gives an account of the Lebu affair reported on the 16th inst from which it appears that Urrutia landed, that all the people ran away, and that he then went back; The next day the Government had all the works connected with the coal mines destroyed in order to prevent them falling into the hands of the Fleet. The working of the railway had not been interfered with by the Fleet, and coal from other places was being sent north as fast as possible. The stocks of coal in Valparaiso have been bought up by the Government.

The Lawyer who defended Frederick was arrested before the trial was over. The blockade here is not being carried out in a rigid manner; foreign steamers and ships are constantly entering and leaving the port, some of those entering have arrived without meeting any of the Fleet; others have been stopped by them and allowed to proceed.

The downward course of the exchange has for now been arrested.

Sunday 25th Jan

Nothing worth recording

Monday 26th Jan

The 'Blanco' attended by the 'Itata' S.S. is cruising off the port today.

The 'Imperial' has now been cleaned in dock and is now proceeding with her loading. A letter from Santiago received on 24th states that the house of Macurio Ossa has been sacked by roughs, and the houses of Melchor Concha y Toro and Luis Ossa Brown entered and searched by Government order. Today a letter states that the Government sent a great quantity of carts to forcibly take goods from the store of Besa & Co but that the proceeding was put a stop to through representations of the English Minister. A cargo of English coal arrived in the south has been seized by the Government.

Rumours are going about that Balmaceda has attempted or had intention to arrest General Baquedano, but found that the effect on the army would be too dangerous.

The 'Boletin' today announces that the advance force (under Commandante Stephan) of the expedition sent against Coquimbo and Serena has occupied Ovalle after a little fighting. Ovalle is connected by rail with Coquimbo and Serena, and according to the papers it was defended by some men sent up by the Fleet.

The P.S.N.C 'Serena' SS has arrived from Pisagua without having touched at Iquique and reports that the blockade of the former place was notified to begin on 25th inst but that the place had been occupied by the opposition already. All communication with ships in the bay has again been stopped by the authorities and the decree about shipping without a deposit of three times the value of the goods cancelled.

Tuesday 27th Jan

The 'Blanco' is still outside with the 'Itata'. Last night she used her electric searchlights over the forts and the bay

The 'Boletin' announces that 2 of the Chilean Fleet, the 'Abtao' and the 'Almirante Lynch' arrived in the straits 5/7th inst and that the 'Abtao' has come on and gone over to the opposition, and that the 'Almirante Lynch' has not yet put in an appearance.

The President has decreed that in view of the difficulties that have been in practice produced by the suppression of the 'gremios'⁷ of workmen which existed last year and the necessity of maintaining public order and regularity in shipping and discharging in the Ports of the Republic, the 'gremios' that existed in the Ports of the Republic before 1st inst be reorganised. (NB the 'gremios' being organised under Government officials are powerful instruments in the President's hands. They were disbanded from 1st inst by a law passed through Congress last year.)

Emilio Sartizi has been appointed 'Commandante' of the Valparaiso 'gremio'

⁷ Sort of trade union

The Government has offered 6 months credit on duties to those who will take delivery of their sugar stored in Custom House bonds. The newspaper says that 'in order to avoid false impressions arising from the decree it is necessary to explain that there 50,000 packages of sugar so stored, and that room is wanted for other goods now being discharged from ships' The duty on this sugar may amount to ½ million dollars

Exchange rate today 19 3/8, but little doing.

Wednesday 28th Jan

At sunset last night 50 – 100 soldiers in full marching order were put on board the 'Imperial' SS which is lying alongside the Fiscal Mole⁸ and there was general anticipation either that she would attempt to go out or that the 'Blanco' would try to take her. At midnight there was firing with rifles and machine guns, the men on the 'Imperial', the mole and the Malecon firing on a launch from the 'Blanco' that had come nearly as far in as the floating dock, and on a boat in front of the mole, the launch returning fire. At 12.30 a.m. a cannon was fired at the 'Blanco' from the Andes Fort. At 2 a.m. there was a great deal more firing in the bay. It is said that a torpedo was launched at the 'Imperial' but just missed and passed through the mole, and this morning a torpedo without its head is exhibited in front of the Intendencia labelled 'La Obra de la Revolucion' (The work of the revolution)

The Government publish today a communication, not dated, from the Intendente of Tarapacá to the effect that Government troops had met the Pisagua revolutionary forces at Zapiga and defeated them completely. If this is a telegram received via Europe it appears that Iquique has not been occupied by the Fleet.

8



Valparaiso Fiscal Mole in 1888

A telegram from Stephen to the President is also published dated Ovalle 27th inst 3.40p.m. stating that the revolutionaries have abandoned Coquimbo and Serena and a later telegram states that they have embarked and that he has occupied the town.

The Captain of the 'Imperial' (a United States citizen) and the Engineer (an Englishman) refusing to serve in her were imprisoned but today were released by the intervention of the US and British Consuls.

A Presidential decree dated 23rd inst is published, prohibiting the export of nitrate from Tarapacá, but 'in order to avoid the stoppage of the nitrate works' it authorises the Intendente to buy the production at the average price of December last and to give payment in vales⁹ of 1,2,5,10,100, and 1,000 dollars to be signed by the Intendente, the chief of the customs house and a representative to be appointed by the nitrate makers. The vales to bear no interest, to be secured first by the nitrate bought and secondly by the Nation, to be redeemed when the blockade is over in Tarapacá and as the nitrate bought is sold. Each sale to be applied to the vales by lot.

A second decree dated 26th states that the duties are to be deducted from the price paid.

The objects of this decree seem to be to prevent the nitrate holders from paying duties to the opposition if they get possession of Iquique and Pisagua, and while the prohibition to export continues to give them a 'modus vivendi', but it is at least to be observed that the price is hardly suitable, seeing that the Nitrate Combination¹⁰ has just been formed.

For some time now the notes in circulation have barely been enough for the currency of the country on account of the regular burning of Government notes by law, and they have not been replaced by a silver coinage. The scarcity is felt much more now because the Moneda in Santiago and the Treasuries in the Provinces have been storing up all they could in the present emergency. To meet the difficulty the large banks have arranged to lend the bonds necessary by law to secure further issue of bank notes which is legally permissible, to some of the small banks who have not issued up their authorised amount. Thus banks hope in 10 days to provide 1 ½ million in paper which they think will be enough, especially with the Government notes which will be first free for circulation by a decree of the President which permits the banks to substitute bonds for the Government notes, which they have deposited in the Treasury as part security for their own issue of notes

There has been a good deal of talk about the possibility that the President may make a fresh issue of Government paper, but this does not at present seem likely.

The Government has prohibited the exporting of the 'moneda feble'¹¹ of the country.

The 'Blanco' yesterday signalled HMS 'Champion' her wish to communicate with her, and the latter after obtaining leave from the Intendente sent of a launch to her and brought ashore despatches to the foreign consuls. These the Intendente refused to deliver unless they were opened in his presence, suspecting that they contained letters for private persons, and although the consuls assured him that any such letters would be returned to the Blanco, somehow or other he has gained

⁹ Spanish for Coupons

¹⁰ For Combination read Cartel

¹¹ Feble money is debased coinage, typically lowering the silver content

his point and has found letters addressed to various people whose arrest had instantly been ordered.

Thursday 29th Jan

Nothing occurred last night and the Blanco is not in sight

Charles Lyon, Jorge Edwards, Antonio Cornish of Besa and Co, Francisco Valdez Vergara manager of the Banco Valparaiso, and Ferrari have been arrested.

The Government has decreed that in view of the fact that Agustin Edwards 'is the recognised chief of the revolution and has and is contributing his resources to foment and sustain it, a supervisor of the bank of Edwards and Co be appointed'

This morning George Ross, a partner in the Bank died and the other partners Joachim and Augustin Edwards being in hiding, and Jorge Edwards and Ferrari in prison, the clerks closed the Bank and later in the day the Government sealed up the doors.

The intercepted letters appear to have been sealed up in a packet by the consuls, which was handed by them to the Intendente addressed to the Blanco with a request that it should be returned. The letters were however opened and reports have been spread from the Intendencia that they contain the whole plan of the opposition, how attacks from the sea and simultaneous risings in the various towns were to take place etc., and that they disclose the fact that that the Fleet were getting very short of money and that they are very deficient in rifles and ammunition.

The Government are very jubilant over yesterday's news. The state of affairs really seems to be that until the Fleet have drilled sufficient men and have obtained arms and ammunition which they are supposed to have ordered or sent one of the Chilean Co's steamers for – they cannot hold any place on the coast and however willing the people of the country may be to rise, they are kept in check by the army and can do nothing unless they are supported.

The above however doesn't entirely apply to Tarapacá nor perhaps to the province of Antofagasta because troops cannot be sent overland to these provinces and with a small force and the assistance of the people it would be easy for the Fleet to subdue the few troops existing there.

Apparently the Fleet do not want to waste ammunition nor do more harm than necessary and hope that Iquique will give in without fighting.

Friday 30th Jan

Yesterday's exchange closed at 19^d and today it has fallen to 18³/₈

The Cable was reopened yesterday but the Government wishing to have it reserved for their use, the Cable Co have refused to send their messages unless they pay considerably higher prices, meanwhile the Government will not allow any private messages to go.

The Government papers say that the 'Almirante Lynch' returned to Montevideo from the Straits but the real fact appears to be that the Government sent the 'Pilcomayo', one of the fleet which was in the south when the revolution began, to the straits to meet and send back the 'Almirante Lynch', that she met her and that both ships agreed to join the rest of the Fleet and are now at Santa Maria island off Coronel.

The 'Arturo Prat' mentioned on the 12th as rumoured to have arrived has not yet left Europe.

The letters from Coronel mentioned on the 12th inst is entirely confirmed by an arrival from there today. It speaks of the people of that region as nearly all opposed to the government and describes the various brutal acts of the Intendente of Concepcion. In addition to the arrests mentioned yesterday Alejandro Vial manager of the Banco Nacional in Santiago has been imprisoned.

Saturday 31st Jan

None of the Fleet have been in sight for two days

Last night the Government sent the 'Imperial' SS out with a number of troops on board, not less it seems than 500, and it is supposed she is going to attempt to run the gauntlet of the Fleet and land them in Tarapacá. HMS 'Warspite' with Admiral Charles Hotham on board has arrived here today.

The president has decreed that 'Considering that the participation of certain persons in the overthrow of public order commenced by the rising of the Fleet is notorious and that it is necessary to provide for the indemnification for damages thus occasioned to the State and private people, the Registrars of landed property are forbidden to inscribe any alienation of, or charge on the property of the following persons': (44 names follow).

The President has appointed a scrutineer over all the banks in Santiago in view of the proofs which exist of the participation of certain banks in supplying funds for the revolution. N F Linnick, consul-general for Austria in Valparaiso has had his Exequatur¹² cancelled for having received and forwarded letters for oppositionists from the Fleet.

A printed slip dated Santiago 30th absolutely denies the fighting at Zapiga and Ovalle, and characterised the telegrams published as inventions of the Moneda.

Coquimbo it says was only occupied by the fleet temporarily for the object of collecting certain forces and goods for the north and was abandoned to avoid loss of life. It also declares that the torpedo exhibited here was taken out of the Arsenal, and this is certainly what most people believe.

The Nitrate Decree of the 23rd mentioned on the 28th has been cancelled owing to representations from certain nitrate holders who made contracts to ship, and the President has issued another one in its place, permitting the support of the nitrate provided that the duties are paid to the Government and in Valparaiso. Payment of the appropriate amount to be made before shipment in Valparaiso, and the balance to be settled in Iquique after the shipment is finished. The mercantile

¹² Official recognition by a government of a consul or other representative of a foreign state, authorizing them to exercise office.

house and the 'oficinas'¹³ in which the nitrate is made are made responsible to the Government for any duties they may pay to the revolutionary forces.

The Scarcity of notes mentioned on the 28th is being seriously felt by the banks and they have today been diminishing credits and refusing to cash cheques in full. In addition to the cause for the scarcity given on 28th there is no doubt that it has been assisted by the quantity of notes sent on board the Fleet and by the fact that private persons have been hoarding large amounts.

Exchange is now nominally 18 $\frac{3}{4}$. The rising tendency being due to the slight panic existing today which induces some who have bought bills to re-sell and thus avoid having to draw further on their currency credits at the bank.

¹³ 'Oficina' in Chile was used to mean Nitrate field or Nitrate works

FEBRUARY

Sunday 1st February

Valdez Vergara of the Banco Valparaiso has been set free

Monday 2nd Feb

Private letters from Coquimbo received today speak highly of the conduct of the revolutionists during their occupation of the place. They paid for everything in cash and kept perfect order. No mention is made of any fighting at Ovalle.

The financial difficulty has somewhat abated today owing to an arrangement that the Bankers have made with the Government. The President agreed yesterday to give them \$2million¹⁴ in fiscal notes on loan from the supply in the Moneda, but he made them give him a letter recommending him to issue \$12million more notes, and to stop the burning of notes and the purchases of silver required by law. The \$2million does not quite remove the present difficulty because it has come down mainly in notes of large amount and the demand for small notes was being particularly felt. Exchange has fallen again and is 18 ¼ for this mail (4th) and 18^d for several mails ahead.

The President intends to remit silver (out of the reserve stock of about \$5million) for the service of the foreign dept. instead of buying bills. Two or three Chilean men o war appeared off the bay but returned southwards after about ½ an hour.

Feb 3rd

Mt J.A. Gibbs sprained his ankle yesterday and is laid up for a day or two.

No opposition ships in sight

Mr Berry of Squire and Berry found dead near his house this morning. Considerable trouble in arranging exchange operations for this mail which has been effected through Squire & Berry.

SS 'Imperial' reported to have safely reached Pabellon de Pica and to have landed 500 troops, 1500 rifles ammunition and supplies to go overland to Iquique. Later on a telegram is said to have reached Government from Arica that the Imperial had arrived there from Pabellon de Pica.

HMS 'Champion' has left - destination unknown - leaving 'Warspite' and 'Acorn' (arrived yesterday) in the bay.

The Diario Oficial of 2nd Feb contains the decree regarding the new minimum of note etc. Leaving aside the 'considerandos' it is as follows:

1. Lend the banks that ask for these \$1,500,000 in 'billetes Fiscales' as a deposit at sight with interest as already arranged.

¹⁴ The \$ is the symbol of the Chilean peso

2. Suspend the burning of Fiscal notes and the accumulation of silver
3. Of the silver held by the Moneda, coin up to \$1,000,000 in small money of 'lei de quince penignes por peso'. The rest of the silver on hand to be destined to the foreign service of the state
4. Emit gradually as required up to \$12,00,000 in Fiscal notes
5. Appoint scrutineers over all the Banks to watch their operations

Signed and authorised by the Director del Tesoro, Director de Contabilidad, and President del Tribunal de Cuentos

All of the above steps were recommended in the petition which the President caused the Representatives of the Banks to present to him. In the petition they stated that their reason for asking for the emission of the £12million was that without it they would have to close their doors. On no other terms would the President give them help.

The resolution to issue fresh small coins containing silver at the rate of 15^d on the dollar was due to the fact that that the present coinage is worth nearly 20^d on the dollar and the paper dollar being now worth less than 18^d the shopkeepers and others have been hoarding the coins with a view to getting a premium on them and they were thus almost unobtainable.

The means adopted to relieve the banks have had the desired effect of putting an end to the crisis.

The subvention to the Chilean Steamship Co has been suspended.

Exchange today fell to 17 $\frac{7}{8}$ ^d

Wednesday 4th Feb

Referring to what was written on 30thulto. about the Cable Co, the Government made an arrangement with them by which they got the exclusive of the line, for, we understand, \$2,000 per day

The Government has already paid the Telephone Co \$20,000 for the exclusive use of their line since 7thulto. ...

Letters have been received from Iquique date up to the 29thulto from which it seems that the report of fighting between Pisagua and Zapiga – denied on the 30th here – was true and that the opposition forces retired on board their ship at Pisagua, but that their capture of Iquique rumoured on the 19th and following days was untrue.

The 'Cochrane' had notified foreign ships lying in Iquique to clear out as she intended to fire on the town. The working of the railway had been stopped, all shipping had come to an end. So far everything was quiet and artificial employment was being found for the men in the town out of work. Provisions were getting scarce. For duties due the Intendente had decreed that drafts in

Valparaiso would not be accepted, but only cash or Banco Nacional deposit notes. Bank notes were getting very scarce. The Fleet had given the Pisagua people till 4th inst to clear out.

Exchange down to 17^d

Thursday 5th Feb

Today the Government are said to have had a cable saying that 3,000 men from the 'pampa' marching on Iquique were met by Government soldiers who killed wounded and took prisoners a very large number, and that the Fleet had fired 2 shell into the town but, on representations from the Consuls, had desisted from further firing till those who could leave the town might do so.

Friday 6th Feb

The President has added to following names to those whose property it is forbidden to alienate or mortgage: (list of names not recorded)

The 'Panama Star' and 'Herald' of 15th Jan publish a telegram from London of 13th Jan stating that the 'Chilean Envoy' declared that only 3 out of the 31 ships of the navy had joined the opposition' but he must have either been deceived or is deceiving, for at that date as this diary shows the opposition possessed the ironclads 'Huascar', 'Blanco' and 'Cochrane' (which are the only ships of this class that Chile possesses except the 'Arturo Prat' which seems to have been only lately launched in Europe). Also the deck protected cruiser 'Esmeralda' and the unprotected 'Magallanes' and 'O'Higgins'.

They have since acquired the unprotected 'Abtao' and 'Pilcomayo' and the new torpedo boat 'Almirante Lynch' and have taken into their service the Chilean Steamship Co's 'Amazonas', 'Aconcagua', 'Cachapoal', 'Itata' and 'Bio Bio' steamers. The remainder of the Chilean fleet consists of 3 deck protected cruisers building or not yet fitted, 11 torpedo boats hauled up ashore, which the Fleet have constantly threatened to destroy (and they could easily do so) if any attempt is made to launch them, the new torpedo boat 'Almirante Condell' in Monte Video, The unprotected corvette 'Chacabuco', small transports 'Chile' and Tolten', 4 small gunboats and the call of the rest of the Chiles Co's steamers.

Of the above the Government have only been able to avail themselves of the Chilean Co's 'Imperial' SS, and even before the 13th the 6 vessels held by the opposition were amply strong enough to do what they liked with the rest of the fleet on the coast

Exchange today down to 16 ³/₄ but recovered to 17^d

Sat 7th Feb

The 'Imperial' SS returned this morning from the north safely. The government taking advantage of the absence of all the Fleet have launched one of the Torpedo boats and it lies concealed behind the

mole. There is news today on apparently good foundation that the 'Pilcomayo' and 'Almirante Lynch' did not come onto Coronel but were captured by surprise by the Government party at Punta Arenas.

From Tarapacá it is reported that Iquique has been taken by the Fleet and that they also re-took Pisagua but that the men they left ashore at the latter place were attacked and defeated by Government troops.

It is said that the Fleet have forcibly taken coal from the English sailing ship at Coquimbo. HMS 'Warspite' has left Valparaiso today for Coquimbo and intends probably to go on to Iquique.

HMS 'Acorn' is therefore here alone. None of the revolutionary Fleet have been seen here for some days.

The Nitrate Decree repayment of duties mentioned on the 31st ulto has been made applicable not only to Tarapacá but to all nitrate ports.

Eulogio Altamirano and Demetrio Lastarria have been deprived of their posts as Guardians of Minors on account of the part they have taken in the revolution.

The School of Medicine has been closed, and many professors and schoolmasters deprived of their posts for participation in the revolutionary movement.

Exchange today rose to 17 $\frac{3}{8}$ but went back again to 17^d

Sunday 8th Feb.

The 'Imperial' SS went out again last night after taking mules and horses on board. It is presumed also that more troops went in her. The Government are now also loading the only other Chilean Co steamer in port, the 'Maipo'.

The revolution having been going on for over a month, it may be well to give a review of the situation as it appears to most people:

The commencement saw the opposition in command of the sea; the army, consisting of only 4/5000 men believed to be to a great extent disaffected; the upper and wealthy classes and the priests distinctly oppositionary; the country people for the most part apathetic. The oppositionist feeling had been accentuated by the President's manifesto of 1st Jan and by a decision by 4 out of 6 judges of the Supreme Court to the effect that the army had no legal existence for want of the passing of the annual law authorising its maintenance (This decision has not been previously mentioned in this diary). The general opinion was that the Fleet would take some action immediately and by means of the moral effect of a bold and decisive stroke ensure that active co-operation of at least a part of the army and perhaps of the general mass of the people.

The success of the opposition was regarded as more than probable, but the prompt measures of the Government cooled whatever ardour the army felt for the revolutionary party, and the Fleet whether over confident in the feeling ashore in their favour, or whether

finding themselves too weak in men and arms, adopted a policy of inaction and confined themselves to increasing the number of vessels, receiving what men they could attract from the shore at various places and providing for their own sustenance.

Meanwhile the President took energetic steps: he declared the whole country to be under martial law and the Fleet rebels to be traitors. He suppressed the opposition press; he took the telegraph and the telephone lines into his own hands; he increased the pay of the army and by active recruiting he has raised the numbers to nearly 20,000 men who are being rapidly drilled. He has arrested all the most important oppositionists ashore including those believed to be supplying the Fleet with money; he has filled all offices in the country with his own men; he has kept the country quiet; he has interfered as little as possible with industries and has continued public works in progress.

The elections for senators and deputies take place on the 4th March and he has undoubtedly so wielded his power that if they take place a Congress favourable to him will be returned. He has set aside the property of oppositionists to provide indemnification for damages and expenses occasioned to the country by the revolution. Lastly he has provided for a large amount of money in case the diminished business of the country should cause him to run short of funds.

The opposition are therefore in a much worse position than they were at the beginning. It is believed that the Fleet, recognising the state of things, are now concentrating their efforts on the capture of Tarapacá with the view of holding that province. There they could establish a firm status for the opposition ashore. They can probably get money by the collection of Nitrate Duties (in spite of the President's decrees). They can obtain supplies from Peru and organise their forces, meanwhile depriving the Government of the important revenue derived from that province.

The feeling of the Exchange market is now quite different to what the writer reported it to be on 22nd Jan. For now it is seen more clearly that the struggle is likely to be a long one, and any success on either side tending to shorten it would raise the exchange

Monday 9th Feb

There is good authority for believing that the 'Imperial' SS on her trip north landed her troops, not in Pabellon de Pica, but at Patillos and that she then proceeded to Arica, discharged her cargo and brought away with her \$3million, which had been sent up there from Iquique. The Government have received a telegram stating that Pisagua has been burnt to the ground and that 2,000 inhabitants were on their way by sea to Arica. Iquique the telegram reports to be quiet.

Tuesday 10th Feb

The telegram alluded to was from the Intendente of Antofagasta, who had obtained his news from the captain of the German steamer 'Ramses' on the 8th inst. He reported the 'Blanco' and the 'Itata' to be off Iquique and the 'Huascar' off Punta Gruesa waiting there for the 'Esmeralda'.

The papers this morning state that Pisagua was bombarded on Thursday the 5th by the 'Cochrane', 'Blanco', 'Magallanes', 'Huascar' and 'O'Higgins' and that the fire resulted from it.

The papers also state the Taltal was taken some days ago by the 'Huascar' and 'Cachapoal' and that 25 soldiers of the Bruin regiment stationed there refused to give themselves up (though ordered to do so by the Governor of the Dept.) and marched overland 73 leagues to Antofagasta, several dying on the way!

The Consejo de Estado¹⁵ held a session on the 7th, Balmaceda presiding. The Councillors present were Cousiño, Garcia, Ibañez, Vargas, Velasquez and Vidal and 4 of the ministers attended.

The Intendente has issued the following notification to all Nitrate Producers domiciled in Valparaiso and the Valparaiso agents of those domiciled elsewhere. 'The Supreme Government protests against all payment of drafts drawn in favour of the revolutionists and payment will be enforced in favour of the constituted government even when they come viséd¹⁶ by the respective Treasuries'

The report of the taking of Iquique on the 6th or 7th has not been confirmed but is firmly believed by some

The exchange rate yesterday¹⁷ today nominally 17 $\frac{1}{8}$ ^d

Wed. 11th Feb

Yesterday a safe in Vorwerk & Co's¹⁷ office which had been deposited there by some of the Edwardses was sealed up by order of the Government and the Intendente says that it is believed to contain bonds and gold which will be required for the liquidation of Edwards' bank (sic). Jorge Edwards and Ferrari were let out of prison a few days ago and were given till the 15th inst to make certain arrangement at their bank, but this morning they were re-arrested.

The writer has seen a letter dated 7th inst from Coquimbo which confirms the news reported in this Diary on 26th ulto of the fighting at Ovalle. The opposition forces seem to have been taken by surprise.

On the 5th isn't a boat from the 'Esmeralda' tried to go alongside the 'Bolivia' Steamer and was fired upon from the shore and a considerable amount of shooting then took place between the

¹⁵ Council of State

¹⁶ Original manuscript words not clear, but the sense is -RMG

¹⁷ From Vorwerk's website: In 1847 the company ordered the construction of the sailboat "Christiane" in Apenrade, Denmark and entered the shipping business. In 1860 the company VORWERK & CO was founded in Valparaíso, Chile. As a branch of the German company it is dedicated to the foreign trade of products such as Chilean saltpetre and German machinery.

'Esmeralda' and a tug she had with her and the soldiers ashore . On the 6th inst the 'Esmeralda' went off north. The taking of coal by the Fleet from an English ship reported in this diary on the 7th inst was a fact: she was the 'Kilmorey' and was towed out of Guayacan by the 'Aconcagua' SS The 'Itata' SS also took the German ship 'Rajah' loaded with coal out of Coquimbo. All the coal at Totoralillo and at La Higuera 14 miles inland was burnt by Government troop to prevent the Fleet from getting it and the Chilean barque 'Bio Bio' coming into Coquimbo with a cargo of coal was set on fire by them and sunk. Guayacan and Totoralillo smelting works are likely to be stopped for want of coal.

The exchange was pushed up today to 18d but fell again to 17 ¾ d

Thursday 12th Feb

The Government have launched a second torpedo boat

The President has dissolved the naval School.

The Government are said to be sending men over the Andes to man the 'Condell' and 'Lynch' both of which are now supposed to be on the east coast.

With regard to Iquique, the newspaper 'Nacion' publishes a letter addressed by J. Montt the captain of the Fleet to the Intendente of Tarapacá date 4th Feb and the Intendente's reply dated 5th which confirm and continue the news with regard to the firing on the town mentioned on 5th inst. The letters had reached the Moneda by telegram from Antofagasta. Montt states that:

The delegates to Congress ordered the occupation of the northern provinces on 8th Jan, but that as the blockade of Iquique which he had accordingly instituted causes grave injury to the people and commerce in general, in consequence of the persistence of the Intendente, he has resolved to put an end to the situation and take the place at any time after midday on the 5th inst. He asks him to inform the foreign consuls that if the forces ashore fire on his men from the town, the place will run the risks appertaining to war'

The Intendente in reply states:

His intention to resist actively any attack of the Fleet and that he is convinced that resistance is the best safeguard of the national and foreign interests place in his hands seeing the trouble that would ensue to them were they in the power of a revolutionary government and that government wanting the power and moral authority to maintain order. If his defence provokes an attack of the Fleet on the population the whole country will cry out in protest, as the diplomatic representatives of England, Germany, France, Italy and the United States NA¹⁸ and the consular body of Iquique protests against the mere threat of bombardment'

He also replies to a protest which Montt had made against the position of the hospital flag in Iquique and states that it only protects those wounded by the shell fired on the town the day before.

¹⁸ United States of North America: a very old fashioned term used in late 18th and early 19th centuries

Friday Feb 13th

The Diario Oficial of yesterday publishes a decree of the President of 11th inst with regards to the elections and the constitution stating that the Congress having by the acts of the majority dissolved itself, that it is his duty not only to put an end to the revolution, but also to remove the causes of its origin, and that as these objects cannot be obtained through the constitution and laws, it is necessary to call on the people to elect a Congress to effect the reforms necessary for the permanent prevention of differences between the Powers of the State

He therefore decrees:

- 1) The Elections for Senators, Deputies and Municipal Officers shall be held
- 2) The Chambers shall retake the character of the Constitutional Congress and may reform the Constitution as far as is necessary to ensure public order and internal security and may establish the attributes of the Power of the State in such a form that a conflict between them cannot arise
- 3) The elections shall be held according to the law of 20th Aug 1890 on the basis of the existing registers and with the following modifications of the law: *(details not recorded in the diary)*

For some days reports have been current of the taking of Talcahuano and Concepcion by General Urrutia and opposition troops, but these have proved completely false.

Exchange today rose from 17 ½ to 18 and fell again to 17 ¾

Saturday 14th Feb

Exchange up to 18 and down again to 17 ¾

Sunday 15th Feb

The Government have launched two more torpedo boats making four in all

Monday 16th Feb

HMS 'Champion' has returned having left Iquique on 9th inst. She passed HMS 'Warspite' on her way to Iquique. She brings no letters for private people from Iquique and the last date *{of a letter}* from there is still the 19th ulto. Iquique had not been taken but was closely blockaded.

Provisions in the town were getting scarce. Many people had sent their families on board merchant vessels and numbers were living on the island in tents fearing bombardment. The capture of the town was supposed to be being delayed for the arrival of arms and ammunition expected by the Fleet from the north. The Fleet was distributed between Iquique, Mejillones del Norte, Pisagua and Arica, except for the 'Esmeralda' which was said to be looking for the 'Imperial'. Several cargoes of Nitrate are said to have been despatched from Pisagua by the opposition party.

It should have been mentioned several days ago that Tocopilla as well as Taltal had been taken possession of by the Fleet. Also the Government had sent the 'Luis Cousiño' SS out of {Punta} Loba with men, mules and provisions on board, destination unknown.

There is considerable mystery about the 'Condell' 'Lynch' and 'Pilcomayo' and the troops said to have gone over the Andes. The PSNC 'Liguria' SS arrived here today reports no Chilean warships in Monte Video on 2nd inst. And that the 'Condell' had taken in coal and stores there and preceded her southwards.

On the other hand mules were certainly taken up ostensibly by the Government to take men to Monte Video, but it is also reported that many oppositionists have crossed the frontier and are waiting their time in Argentina.

The following foreign Men of War are on this coast or on their way:

HMS 'Pheasant', 'Warspite' at Iquique

HMS 'Champion', 'Acorn' at Valparaiso

HMS 'Espiegle' due

HMS 'Cleopatra' and one other, on their way round from the east coast

A US corvette on her way - now in the straits

Two French men of war and two German on their way from China and Japan.

Tuesday 17th Feb

The 'Imperial' SS has returned from her 2nd trip north having after several narrow escapes landed her troops in Sama (on the frontier of Peru and Tacna)

HMS 'Acorn' has left the bay leaving 'Champion' here alone

Exchange which yesterday went up to 18 ½ had today gone back to 18 ⅓. The present higher level of exchange does not seem to be due to any notion of an improvement in the situation but to financial difficulties compelling the sale of drafts.

Wednesday 18th Feb

The French Man of War 'Dubourdisa' has arrived in the bay.

Letters have been received from Iquique date the 5th and 10th inst and from Pisagua dated 11th inst.

Iquique: The news reported in the diary on the 5th and 16th is confirmed. The lesson given to the men in the 'Pampa' by Government troops has had the effect of keeping them quiet.

Previously on the 29th ulto there had been looting at the 'La Palma' oficina. The shots fired by the 'Blanco' on 4th inst were directed against the forts. The notice given by the Fleet that they would land or bombard any time after noon on 5th Inst was postponed till 6 p.m. on the 6th inst on the consuls' representations. The 'Sivertown' and 'Mount Tabor' SS had taken many people away, and many others were on board ships off the port and on the island. On the 10th the 'Blanco' was firing on troops marching up the 'cuesta' towards the 'pampa'

Pisagua: The burning of this place was untrue but there was some considerable firing on the town and James Inglis & Co and Perfetts bodegas were burnt owing to an explosion of dynamite in one of them. The opposition forces gained possession of the town, and Nitrate was being shipped.

In the case of a cargo of nitrate despatched from Taltal by the Lautaro & S. Luise Nitrate Co, the opposition party received payment for the duties in a draft on the oficina's Valparaiso agents in favour of the Taltal Treasury, and the Government have so far not attempted to secure payment to themselves from the Valparaiso agents. Indeed the latter have been unofficially advised by the British and German Ministers that the Government will not be able to enforce it. The opposition are said to be accepting duties at an exchange of 24^d

From Coquimbo there is news that most of the native families have gone away into the interior fearing that the Fleet will return and bombard.

The Fleet are supposed to have recruited 600 men there during their occupation. There was a parade today of all the troops in Valparaiso through the streets numbering about 3,000 men.

Thursday 19th Feb

It is now rumoured that Iquique surrendered on the 16th.

Exchange yesterday and today 17 $\frac{3}{4}$

Friday 20th Feb

Edwards' bank has now reopened today and Jorge Edwards and Ferrari let out of prison, but they are signing cheques 'in liquidation'. It is said the liquidation is at their own wish. The Government scrutineer reported that he found nothing compromising in their books.

Exchange rose to 18 $\frac{1}{4}$

Saturday 21st Feb

The 'Imperial' SS after being docked, went out again early this morning with troops on board and heavily laden with coal.

The Guayacan Smelting Works were closed some days ago by order of the Government but are reopened after the Managing Director Wm Lyon has promised to go up and dismiss any employee found to have been working for the opposition party.

The 'Luis Cousiño' SS which, as mentioned on the 16th was despatched from Loba, landed the Government Troops and arms which she conveyed, on 9th inst on the coast of Tacna under the command of Colonel Arrate, and she returned to Coronal.

Exchange 18 ¼

Sunday 22nd Feb

The following news from Tarapacá is published by the Government by telegram from Antofagasta whither it been brought by the German SS 'Iris'.

After capturing Pisagua 5/6th inst the opposition troops under Canto entrenched themselves in the Alto de Hospicio, and a few days later established themselves in Dolores. They were there attacked on the 14th inst by Colonel Robles, who was the officer who took the first expedition of the 'Imperial' and who had assumed the command of all the forces in Iquique. Robles was defeated. On the night of the 16th Robles retired all troops from Iquique and took up his position at Primitira and waited there for Canto's advance and finally defeated him completely. Meanwhile opposition forces from the Fleet had occupied Iquique and the Intendente Salinas had retired to Tarapacá town.

On the 18th Robles attacked Iquique and the fighting was still going on when the 'Isis' SS left. The government forces which were landed in the province of Tacna from 'Luis Cousiño' under Colonel Arrate and from 'Imperial' under Colonel Gana had not yet arrived on the scene.

Monday 23rd Feb

No further news from Tarapacá but Antofagasta is reports to be blockaded.

Exchange 18 ¼

Nothing doing

Tuesday 24th Feb

It is announced that the 'Imperial' has arrived on this her 3rd trip, at her destination, supposed to be near Antofagasta.

News from Iquique dated 22nd inst has been received by the Government from Antofagasta but not yet published, telling of heavy fighting, bombardment, the burning of the town, heavy slaughter and the final surrender of the town on 1th inst.

The 'Partido Liberal' has issued a manifesto from Santiago with regard to running a candidate for the Presidency at a meeting to be held on 8th March.

2,000 tons of copper held by the Atacama Mining Co at Copiapo have been embargoed by the Government about a week ago.

Exchange has gone down to 17 $\frac{7}{8}$ buyers this mail, and 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ April/May

Wednesday 25th Feb

New from Tarapacá is as follows:

The Opposition forces in the pampa were led by Generals Urrutia and Canto and numbered 1,800 men. In the fight near Dolores the Government troops under Robles numbered 339 of whom 108 remained after the battle. The fight at Primitira took place on the 16th inst after Robles had been reinforced from Iquique and the oppositionists there lost about 240 men killed or wounded and retired by train towards Pisagua. Robles then remained in the pampa waiting for the forces under Arica and Gana expected from Arica with the addition of which his number would be increased to about 2,000 men.

Iquique seem to have been taken by the Fleet on 16th after the retirement of the Government troops: On the morning of the 19th Colonel Soto with 250 men (Gov't) sent down from the pampa entered Iquique and fighting took place all that day, the opposition force having taken up its position in the Customs house and being supported by the guns of the Fleet. Next morning Soto received a reinforcement of 100 men sent down by Robles, but that day (20th) Soto found himself obliged to surrender and agreed to make his soldiers lay down their arms and to march them to Cavancha¹⁹, the Fleet agreeing to convey those who would not join them to the south.

During the fighting 6 blocks between the Customs house and the main plaza were burnt and several private houses sacked.

The Intendente Salinas had not gone to Tarapacá but had retired on board one of the ships. The 'Amazonas' SS with wounded on board was to leave Iquique for the south on 22nd inst.

Robles in his despatch to the President asks for more officers at once, so many of those he had having been killed; The opposition are said to have obtained arms via Panama.

The Government find the cable interrupted today between Coquimbo and Antofagasta.

The US man of war 'Pensacola' under an Admiral arrived in Valparaiso bay today

HMS 'Espiegle' has arrived on the coast and is believed to be at Iquique.

¹⁹ A beach near Iquique

HMS 'Daphne' came down from Copiapo to Callao some days ago

Exchange today touched 17 ½

Thursday 26th Feb

The 'Imperial' has returned from her 3rd trip having landed her troops near Antofagasta. The report of the blockade of that place was, it seems, untrue. There will be about 500 Government troops there with those the 'Imperial' took up.

The opposition forces appear to have abandoned Taltal and Chañaral which they had occupied for some time probably with the main object of collecting men.

The Government are said to have received a telegram via London to the effect that the forces under Arrate and Gana have arrived near Iquique.

Argentine papers report that men sent over the Andes reached the 'Cordell', 'Lynch' and 'Pilcomayo' and that these ships had left for an unknown destination.

Exchange today 17 ¾ but very little doing

Friday 27th Feb

A Nephew of Claudio Vicuña came down from Antofagasta in the 'Imperial' having left Iquique on the 19th per 'Isis' SS, and he confirms the news from the place up to that date. The town was formally given up on the 16th on the retirement of the Government troops to the pampa and after the landing of troops from the Fleet and Intendente Salinas with the consent of the Fleet went on board the 'Warspite'.

The oppositionists opened the prison and let out the political prisoners and with these the common prisoners and the latter caused the sacking which took place the next day. One of the Urban Guards, a Spaniard, had been killed. Soto's attack began at daybreak in the 19th in thick fog.

The 'Imperial' went out again this morning with, it is said, 1500 men on board. Some newspapers are supporting Claudio Vicuña, others Enrique S Sanfuentes for the Presidency. The 'Escritura' of the dissolution of partnership and liquidation of A Edwards and Co is published.

There have for some days been persistent reports that Antunez, the Chilean Minister for England and Admiral La Torre who is supervising the construction of Chilean warships in France, have deposited the funds at their command in the name of the Chilean Constitution and that they cannot be touched by the President under the present circumstances.

As to the silver in the hands of the Government according to the Diario Oficial of 7th inst, on 29th Dec last, the total deposited in the Treasury on that date according to the law of 14th March 1887 amounted to \$43,699,062.39 in hard dollars in value, so that deducting the amount set aside by the

decree mentioned on 3rd inst for coining small money, there cannot be over 3 millions in hard dollars available for remittance to London according to the same decree

Saturday 28th Feb

In some of the northern ports the Government are offering men \$100 to enlist. In the province of Talca the Intendente has issued a decree requiring 30 people whom he mentioned to supply 500 horses between them of a certain size and age and in good condition under penalty of a fine of \$200 per horse or 20 days imprisonment, payment by receipts in the name of the Government, which receipts however are liable to cancelment if the holders are proved to be supporting the opposition by word or act. Recruiting in the southern provinces is still proceeding actively and agricultural operations are being greatly prejudiced.

Letters to telegraph stations over the Argentine frontier are being opened and the telegrams abstracted.

Colonel Robles has been promoted to the rank of Brigadier General. All the officers engaged in the battles at Dolores and Huara have been promoted, and all the common soldiers engaged in them given 3 months extra pay.

The judge at Ancud Jose Alejo Fernandez, having resigned and giving his reasons to be that on account of the assumption of all powers by the President and the suspension of such laws as he deem expedient, he is unable to fulfil his function in compliance with his oath, has been arrested and is to be tried by Council of War.

The French warship 'Volta' has arrived.

The exchange rate yesterday 18, today down to 17 $\frac{7}{8}$

MARCH

Monday 2nd March

The President in a decree dated 27th ulto. Has suspended the functions of the supreme court and the courts of appeal for the reason that their exercise would embarrass the work of pacification and would be the occasion of disputes which would aggravate the misfortunes which agitate the republic.

On 28th ulto the 'O'Higgins' arrived at Caldera escorting the 'Amazonas' SS with 264 wounded men including 21 officers from Iquique and requested to be received. The Authorities refused to allow any of the wounded or various public officers (Gov't) and their families who had also been brought down, to be landed, giving their reason that there was no means of paying them proper attention in the Department and recommending the 'O'Higgins' to take them to Valparaiso.

The 'O'Higgins' however conveyed them back to Iquique. The Intendente of Valparaiso is trying to get a steamer to send for the wounded.

The 'Silvertown' SS has arrived at Valparaiso with passengers from Iquique and news thence, up to 25th ulto. She has done splendid work in assistance of the refugees from Tarapacá. The 'Isis' SS has also arrived bringing letters from Iquique dated 18th ulto. All was quiet in the town till the town was handed over to the Fleet on 16th ulto. During that day the crowd, not only those let out of prison, sacked and set fire to the Government newspaper the 'Voz do Chile', absolutely destroyed the barracks and sacked several private homes belonging to Government men. The sailors ashore from the Fleet apparently not trying to stop them. During that night rioting continued, resulting in the killing the wounding of over 100 men. The only force keeping order in the town up to the fight of the 19th was the Urban Guards, composed of volunteer foreigners. Ramon E Vega was appointed Intendente by the Fleet. During the 17th and 18th the town was fairly quiet. Soto's attack began at 7 or 7 a.m. on the 19th and fighting was going on all day till 5 p.m.

Then the armistice was agreed at the intervention of HMS 'Warspite' in the early part of the day the whole town was in Soto's hands except the Intendencia where men from the Fleet were located, but the Fleet landed other troops during the day and supported their men ashore by a constant fire, but they seem to have avoided using shells for the most part. During the day Denscoris' bodega and nitrate were burnt, and 5 blocks of the principal business part of the town containing according to the Iquique newspaper, 72 dwellings and offices were burnt to the ground.

Soto in his official despatch mentioned having set fire to some of the latter himself. The fire brigade worked well and were only choked off by being actually fired upon. Most buildings in Iquique seem to have suffered to a greater or lesser degree by the firing. The killed and wounded on both sides are reckoned at 188 men and of the inhabitants at -----²⁰.

The wounded whose numbers were constantly being added to by men brought down from the battlefields in the pampa, were in a miserable plight.

²⁰ Manuscript is blank here

The night of the 19th was quiet and on the morning of the 20th Soto gave in as already described. The same day Vega resigned the office of Intendente, and General Urrutia was appointed by the Fleet in his place. Soto's troops after laying down their arms seem for the most part to have stayed in the town, though some went off to the pampa.

Up to the 25th all was quiet in Iquique. The authorities were offering to accept duties on Nitrate on completion of shipment @ 24^d exchange, and in drafts on London.

Robles was in the pampa and supposed to have about 400 men, though many are said to have deserted him, and against him 1,500 men had been sent up from Iquique.

Of the forces under Arrata and Gana marching from Arica, 400 (the advance guard) were said to have arrived at Titiriche after 60 men had died on the road. The forces landed by the 'Imperial' near Antofagasta are supposed to be marching to the Tarapacá pampa via Calama and the river Loa, but it is an awful march and considering that many of the men are mere recruits, but few are expected to arrive. The oppositionists' forces seem to number about 3,000 men, but if they can establish themselves in Tarapacá they will have little difficulty in increasing their number from the people in Iquique and the pampa who for the most part favour them. The 'Warspite' has been ordered up from Iquique to the north – supposed to be going to Behring Straits.

In Coquimbo there are now nearly 4,000 Government troops.

The report of the Government having sent troops over the Andes is true.

The Argentines are sending troops to Puente del Inca.

Government notes of the new emission decreed by the President on 2nd ulto have now appeared in circulation.

Tuesday 3rd March

The Government have chartered the German SS 'Isis' to leave tonight for Iquique to fetch the wounded.

It should have been mentioned yesterday that the Government Intendente of Tarapacá came down in the 'Silvertown' and has gone up to Santiago. He is spoken of by Government men as a traitor, to the great indignation of those who know him and saw how he conducted affairs in Iquique.

Retzlaff of Retzlaff & Charme²¹ was murdered by his men in his oficina in the pampa.

In the fire at Iquique the Notary's office and all records in it were destroyed.

Exchange had a reaction today to 17 ¼

²¹ A nitrate extraction company based in Pisagua

Wednesday 4th March²²

The 'Imperial' has returned from her 4th trip but where she has been is not known.

There is a report the Government troops have suffered two defeats near Pisagua.

Exchange 17 ½ this mail. 17d buyers for April

Thursday 5th March

Exchange fell rapidly today to 16 ¼

Friday 6th March

The 'Imperial' SS and the 'Maipo' SS were expected to out last night with more troops for the north, and that they did not do so is ascribed to be due to some of the men having refused to go on board, to a rumour the 'Huascar' had been seen off the bay and to another that Antofagasta had been occupied by the Fleet.

To Antofagasta it is now said that 1,200 soldiers were taken up by the 'Imperial' on her last (4th) trip, and that it is believed that 1,100 men which had previously landed there were despatched by train to Calama to march thence down the river Loa to Quillagua and from there to the Iquique pampa, being a march of some 70 – 80 leagues, over half of which is absolutely waterless. The soldiers were informed that they had only one days march before them but many deserted from the train on the way to Calama.

HMS 'Daphne' has joined HMS 'Champion' in the bay here.

Exchange touched 15 ¾ today and recovered to 16 ½

Saturday 7th March

The 'Imperial' has gone out this morning on her 5th trip north 1,500 men, mules and horses on board, after a good deal of difficulty with some of the men.

Antofagasta is blockaded, by the Fleet. Not yet occupied as reported yesterday.

Arica is also blockaded.

The President has asked the Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce to recommend to him the measures they would recommend to prevent the fall in exchange and they have advised him:

1. To remit as little as possible to Europe
2. To make no further issues of paper money

²² The diary from here to 25th April had been previously typewritten

3. To open cable communication with foreign countries

They at first thought of recommending the suspension of the payment of the amortisation of the foreign debt, and the selling of the silver contained in the treasury for the purpose of purchasing bills on London for what remittances are absolutely necessary, but eventually decided not to do so.

The reason that the silver has not yet been remitted home is believed to be due to fear that it might fall into the hands of the Fleet.

It is said that the Government remitted the whole of the £200,000 in bills on London (Mentioned on 2nd inst) by last mail, obtaining it from the banks, but that the banks have still to buy about £70,000 for the next mail to replace the bills they gave without actually buying.

Exchange today 16^d

Sunday 8th March

The 'Maipo' SS which has for long kept up steam in readiness to go out for the Government and which was to have been despatched by them tomorrow night, and loaded ammunition, flour and other stores and had about 200 soldiers on board, was taken out early this morning for the opposition by means of a stratagem executed by a Major Garcia Valdivieso, who after secretly disabling the guns in the forts, first presented a forged order to the school ship to send her men on board the 'Maipo' and proceeded himself with certain artillery soldiers on board, presented a similar order to the captain and went out with the vessel unnoticed from the shore. There had been a great banquet at the Intendencia last night and perhaps the occasion favoured the stratagem.

The 'Partido Liberal' held their meeting today in Santiago, and the 300 delegates whom they had named to vote, representing the Presidential Party in all departments of the country except those of Iquique and Pisagua, unanimously elected Claudio Vicuña their candidate for Presidency. Several days ago Sanfuentes had published letters stating his intention not to stand.

Monday 9th March

HMS 'Champion' and the French warships 'Dubourdieu' and 'Volta' have left Valparaiso. All traffic across the Andes has been forbidden till after the 10th inst. Letters from the districts of Taltal, Chañaral and Carrizal speak of great scarcity of men on account of so many having been taken to serve in the army or the Fleet, and many in hiding to avoid the recruiting offices of the army of the President

Exchange 16d

Tuesday 10th March

Letters have now been received from Iquique up to the 6th inst.

There had been no disturbances in the town of any importance, and there does not seem to have been any great scarcity of provisions though they were very dear. The 'Blanco' was the only Chilean man of war in the bay. The banks were still closed but had previously been issued deposit orders for £100 to assist the currency.

Currency was getting very scarce for no notes have been sent up from Valparaiso for some time. Nearly all the oficinas in the pampa had stopped work for want of provisions and coal and nothing could be sent up to them. The workmen were leaving the oficinas quietly and mostly coming down to Iquique. Telegrams to Europe having no reference to the state of affairs were allowed to be sent.

On the 2nd inst the opposition troops were in Molle, and the Government troops under Robles in the Central. On the 5th inst the opposition forces were in the Central mending the railway which had been torn up by Robles, and Robles was in Pozo Almonte. On the 6th the former were in Pozo Almonte and the latter within 6 miles in a good position at Oficina Serena. A battle was hourly expected. The opposition troops were supposed to number 1700 and Robles' 2,000, so that the latter must have been joined by the forces marching from Tacna. In the event of the Government troops re-entering Iquique the policy of the Fleet was to evacuate the town and simply shell them out. Nearly all the families and a great number of people had left Iquique. Pisagua was almost deserted.

The Delegacion Fiscal de Salifreras has reported to the Government that their office in Iquique was sacked, all the copies of titles and documents connected with the Nitrate grounds destroyed or lost and all their work of the last four years in classifying and mapping the grounds rendered almost useless.

There is no doubt that it is the policy of the Government to destroy the Nitrate Oficinas if they cannot hold Tarapacá so as to prevent the opposition getting much nitrate to ship. The President and Godoy²³ have both avowed it to several people and the English Minister has protested.

The Chilean Co's 'Laja' SS is today said to have come down from Peru and come over to the Fleet, and the President has had Horacio Lyon, the head of the company arrested.

Antofagasta is also said to have given in.

Exchange has gone up to 16 ¼

Wednesday 11th March

The report of the surrender of Antofagasta seem to be untrue, but news from there speaks of boats from the Fleet taking out coal from the 'Thetis' (an English vessel) having been fired on from the shore, and of the Fleet having captured a vessel bringing provisions and stores for the Huanchaca Co and sent her up to Iquique. There is a report on apparently good grounds - vis a cable received by a private individual from Europe that the expected battle in the Iquique pampa has taken place, that Robles was completely defeated and wounded and a great number of his men taken prisoners.

²³ Domingo Godoy, short lived Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1891

Exchange on the above rumours has today touched 16 9/16d

The USS 'Pensacola' left Valparaiso today for Iquique, but the Admiral refused to convey letters of any kind. The only warship left here is HMS 'Daphne'

Thursday 12th March

The 'Isis' SS returned this morning with about 300 wounded men from Iquique and they are being brought ashore at the landing mole. The 'Isis' brings confirmation of yesterday's news of the battle in the pampa. It was fought at Pozo Almonte and commenced at 7 a.m. on the 7th inst. The opposition forces were completely successful but only a few details are as yet available.

Exchange went up today to 17d and back again to 16 5/8d

Friday 13th March

In the battle of the 7th inst. Near Pozo Almonte, the opposition forces led the attack under Canto. It lasted from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. The day seems to have been won by a charge made by Canto's troops with the bayonet, and by the accession of his forces by desertion of some of Robles' men. Robles was wounded, and according to one party he was murdered by the soldiers in the ambulance van in the pampa, but according to another party, he died on his way down to Valparaiso in the 'Isis' SS.²⁴ His army was completely broken up, what with the numbers there were of killed, wounded and prisoners. The Government papers account for the defeat by saying that Canto's forces greatly outnumbered Robles', the latter's force having been smaller than it should have been owing to the fact that some of Gana's division had been left to defend Arica, and to his having sent his cavalry to protect ammunition coming from Camarones; also they say that his ammunition ran short. Anyhow the battle seems to be of a very decisive character, as it leaves Tarapacá in the complete possession of the opposition forces for the present, since it is not likely that they will have any trouble with the troops marching against them from Antofagasta. Arica and Tacna are said to have been occupied by the opposition troops already, and Antofagasta is we know blockaded. It looks therefore as if the three provinces, Antofagasta, Tarapacá and Tacna will soon be entirely in their hands. It is believed by many that the Fleet purposely allowed the 'Imperial' to land her troops, hoping thereby, as indeed they have doubtless done, to add to their own numbers from them, and being confident that they would in any case be lost to the Government. It is now supposed that they will try to take her.

There are considerable signs that the President's army, consisting as it does mainly of recruits, is to a great extent half hearted, or quite oppositionary according to rumours afloat.

Exchange 16 5/8d

Saturday 14th March

²⁴ '(The former story since proved true)' - handwritten note by JAG

There is a rumour that the 'Almirante Condell' and the 'Almirante Lynch' have arrived off this coast

HMS 'Acorn' has gone to Antofagasta from Coquimbo

Exchange today touched 17d

Sunday 15th March

HMS 'Champion' has returned to Valparaiso

The German SS 'Osiris'²⁵ has arrived from Iquique with 148 more wounded. The Government have received news that the 'Imperial' SS was chased from Antofagasta for 14 hours by the 'Esmerelda', but that she eventually lost sight of her and put into Huasco. Government people are very anxious about her safety.

Claudio Vicuña being candidate for the Presidency has renounced his post in the Ministry. His place as Minister of the Interior is taken by Domingo Godol, formerly Minister of Exterior, and Godol's place has been filled by Ricardo Cruzat

Monday 16th March

The SS 'Imperial' returned this afternoon safely from her 5th trip out, but it is not yet known where she landed her troops.

Letters have been received from Iquique dated up to the 10th inst. In the battle at Pozo Almonte of 7th inst over 900 men on both sides were killed and wounded, and over 300 prisoners were taken by Canto's troops. Some sacking on the Oficinas seems to have been done by Robles' troops before the 7th but the battle put an end to the Government policy of destroying the oficinas. After the battle, Oficina Buen Retiro seems to have been almost completely destroyed by the pampa workmen attached to the victorious army. On the 10th inst the opposition army were supposed to number 2500 men. Some of the Government forces from Antofagasta under Camus had arrived at Cerro Gordo, and Canto had sent men to Virginia to meet them.

In Iquique itself duties on imports of all provisions had been removed for 50 days from 5th inst. Provisions had been bought in considerable quantities from the north. The representatives of Congress had declared the President's emission of \$12,000,000 illegal, and that it ought not to be accepted by the Treasuries. Banks in Iquique were contemplating an emission of note to supply the deficient currency there.

The capture of the 'Laja' was affected by the 'Aconcagua'. The 'Laja' had bought down Peruvian troops to the frontier to prevent Chilean troops landing on their soil to get into Chile.

²⁵ Actually British. Owned by the Moss steamship Co. The rather Germanic looking company flag may have caused the confusion see <https://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?238116>

The president in a decree dated 9th inst refuses to agree to grant a petition which Valparaiso buyers of Nitrate had presented to him asking that the duty on contracts made last year might be fixed at the rate of exchange for duties ruling in December last.

A great number of troops have arrived at Viña del Mar and Valparaiso during this last few days. A distribution of the President's troops has been arranged, by which 10,000 men are applied to the Coquimbo region, and 10,000 to the Valparaiso, and 10,000 to the Concepcion regions.

Tuesday 17th March

The 'Warspite' which had been ordered up north is returning to the Chilean coast.

The 'Imperial' it is now known, had to land the 1,500 men she took on her last trip at Coquimbo

The Valparaiso paper 'El Comercio' is publishing very violent articles against the banks, advocating their abolition and establishment of a state bank. The arguments used, however foolish they may be, cannot be answered, for the papers allowed to be published are under Government supervision, and the state bank is known to be favoured by the President.

The currency difficulty is still being felt with regard to the small coinage. Shopkeepers especially making capital out of the lower value of the paper dollar than that of particularly, the old small coinage. (the new coins it will be remembered are worth 3d per \$ less than the old ones). People, however reluctant, have been obliged to accept the new issue of paper money, but the banks it is noted make all the payments they can in the new notes, retaining the old ones as much as possible.

Exchange fell today to 18 ½

Wednesday 18th March

There are various rumours of more sacking having taken place at Iquique and of another battle in the pampa in which it is said that the Antofagasta troops under Camus were defeated.

The Government has ordered the destruction of the railway from Tongoi to Ovalle to prevent the opposition troop from attacking Coquimbo in the rear by this route.

The officers and crew of the 'Imperial' SS have it is aid refused to go on another trip in her after her adventures with the 'Esmerelda'. It is now known that she intended to land her men at Camarones north of Pisagua but found the 'Tolton' there which fired and drove her away.

Thursday 19th March

The 'Ecuador' has been sent up north to fetch more wounded.

From Iquique letters arrived up to the 13th inst and all was quiet there. 50 of the prisoners taken at Pozo Almonte had joined the oppositionists and have been sent up to the pampa.

In addition to the \$100.00 deposit notes which the other banks had issued, the bank of Tarapacà was issuing \$10.00 deposit notes to assist the currency.

From Antofagasta news has come, dated 15th inst, that 250 men of the Government troops there had revolted and been taken off after a little fighting to Iquique where they arrived on the 11th. The troops in the place are reportedly mostly recruits, nearly all the trained soldiers having been sent on the Calama/Iquique expedition.

From Toco news has come that the Government troops on the above expedition have used up all the provisions there and in Tocopilla, that the Anglo-Chilean Nitrate Co's Oficina had been destroyed by them, and a great part of the railway torn up. 800 men of Camus' division had returned and were marching back to Calma.

The cable has been cut south of Antofagasta

The telegraph line from Valparaiso to Santiago and across the Andes has at last been re-opened by the Government, for the free transmission of telegrams without even their subjection to censorship, The cable has also opened for public use as far up the coast as Caldera.

It is very confidently reported that the President intends to make a further new issue of \$20,000,000 in paper money.

It is said that the Argentine Government have recognised the Fleet as belligerents and further that they have embargoed silver sent over the Andes by the President²⁶

Exchange up to day to 16 5/8d

Friday 20th March

The Intendente of Santiago – Colonel J.M. Alcérrecá – has been made chief of the 2nd division of the army, and Agustin Correa Bravo has been appointed provisional Intendente

Exchange fell to 16 1/16d

Saturday 21st March

The 'Almirante Lynch' arrived in the bay today and the 'Almirante Condell' is close at hand. The 'Pilcomayo' seems to have remained on the east coast.

The following is the latest from Antofagasta. On the 17th inst the 'Blanco' notified the place that by reason of one of her boats having been fired upon from the shore, she would open fire on any trains that attempted to run after 2 p.m. that day, and after noon the next day on the water condensers if they were seen working.

²⁶ 'untrue' - added in pencil to manuscript by JAG

She also gave 48 hours' notice to neutral and defenceless people to leave before she would make a regular attack on the town. On the 18th inst. A passing steamer saw the 'Blanco' firing shells, and it is said that on that day the troops defending the town were retiring by train to Calama, taking with them all the locomotives of the railway.

A question was raised by the Peruvians at the time when the 'Laja' was captured (4th inst) by the Chilean Fleet, as to whether she was taken in Peruvian waters, and according to official telegrams published today the authorities were satisfied that the capture was effected 9 miles from shore and therefore outside of territorial jurisdiction.

A telegram from Berlin is published here dated 3rd inst stating that the German Government has notified ship owners not to receive any war materials intended for the Chilean insurgents. The German Minister is said to be the only one of the foreign ministers in Chile who has hitherto held the opinion that the Fleet should not be treated as belligerents, so it seem not unlikely that the German Government should now forbid shipments of war materials intended for the Chilean President's Government, while forbidding them for the Fleet. Now that the oppositionists have established themselves ashore, and area actually holding territory it is believed that Foreign powers will recognise them as belligerents.

The President has appointed Scrutineers (Inventors) for the house of Besa & Co whose doors have been closed by his order since the beginning of the revolution.

Exchange 16 3/4d

Sunday 22nd March

The 'Almirante Condell' has now arrived, and both she and the 'Almirante Lynch' are anchored close to the shore near the Docks. These 2 torpedo cruisers would be very formidable weapons in the hands of the President if he has a man capable of working them and the torpedoes they carry, for they are much faster than any of the Fleet. It is understood he is prepared to give \$5,000 down to such a man. With these two ships here and the 'Imperial' SS and the torpedo boats (7) it is not at all improbable that the Congress Fleet will attempt to take out some of them some dark night, and when the moon is down the electric search light from the shore keep a watch over the bay.

Monday 23rd March

HMS 'Warspite' has returned to Valparaiso today and HMS 'Daphne' leaves soon for Iquique.

Letters have arrived from Iquique dated 16th inst. The 'Maipo' steamer captured by the oppositionists in Valparaiso on the 8th inst, as reported on that day, had arrived at Iquique with 250 men of whom a great number were officers. Provisions in Iquique were still very expensive, but were allowed to be freely distributed to the pampa and elsewhere. They were arriving from Callao and were expected from San Francisco. Workmen were returning to the pampa and work was starting in some of the Oficinas. The opposition troops were mainly in Central and Pozo Almonte and an advance guard in Cerro Gordo keeping a watch for the enemy supposedly coming from Calama.

There had been no further fighting. It was said that Camus' troops had been unable to cross the Loa at Quillagua owing to the floods and this tallies with the news from Toco that Camus' troops were returning, and also a report published in today's papers that he had returned to Calama and has 3,000 men there. No mention is made in the Iquique letters of the reported sacking by miners.

Exchange 16 3/8d

Tuesday 24th March

There has been a report that the President has bought the Brazilian Iron clad 'Riachuelo', but a telegram from Rio Janeiro published today emphatically denies it.

The Government has transferred the troops at Caldara and Vallanar to Coquimbo.

The Fleet are said to have captured the English steamer 'Arica' under suspicion that she has arms on board.

The Government have stopped the English steamer 'Puno' in Coquimbo and forced her to land 3,000 packages of goods manifested for the Peruvian ports, suspecting that it was intended to tranship them to Tarapacá

It has long been prohibited to send goods from Valparaiso to the ports threatened, or held by the opposition, and now it is even prohibited to ship to Coquimbo

Exchange closed to today with buyers at 16 3/8d

Wednesday 25th March

HMS 'Daphne' left for Coquimbo and Iquique

Last night the home of Doña Juana Ross de Edwards in the Plaza Victoria, Valparaiso was entered by a number of officers and soldiers acting on information extorted from one of her servants that the priest Salvador Donoso (ecclesiastical Governor of Valparaiso) and the lawyer Federico Pinto were hiding there. On the ladies of the house being threatened by the officers, the men they were looking for, came forward and gave themselves up, but the house was afterwards searched for papers and both officers and men seem to have behaved badly, and jewels and other portable valuables were stolen. All the servants were imprisoned, and on an appeal for their release being made by Jorje and Enrique Edwards, and Ferrari, those three were arrested, Mrs Edwards being allowed to go free. Donoso and Pinto have been supposed hitherto to be with the Fleet and their capture is important. They were arranging their disguises when the soldiers came.

Yesterday there was a report that Coquimbo was being bombarded, but this proved untrue. There seems good grounds however for believing that some of the Fleet or their transports are off the port.

Thursday 26th March

There is a very general fear that the Fleet will be her on Saturday or Sunday and it is said the papers found on Pinto disclose plans for a general rising on Sunday.

Friday 27th March

There has been a report for some time that Francisco Echaurren²⁷ had been sent up to the north to endeavour to make some arrangements with the Fleet, but he is certainly now in Santiago and if he did go and has returned his mission must have been unsuccessful.

The president is evidently very short of paper money, firm to whom the Government owes money cannot at present get paid. About \$4,000,000 (four million dollars) out of the \$12,000,000 authorised to be emitted still remain to be issued and the delay has been caused by the non-arrival of supplies of paper expected from the US of North America. A large quantity is said to have been ordered.

The papers say that José Luis Vergara offered \$100,000 to Moraga the commander of the 'Lynch' and 'Cordell' to hand them over to the opposition, that Moraga reported it and that Vergara has been arrested. There is a general feeling of uncertainty and apprehension in Valparaiso. People coming from Santiago report extraordinary quietness, and that men meeting in the streets are afraid to speak a word to one another about politics.

Edwards' Bank is to be liquidated by the Banco de Valparaiso.

Saturday 28th March – Passed off quietly

Sunday 29th March (Easter Sunday)

The USS 'Pensacola' and French warship 'Volts' returned this morning to Valparaiso from the North.

The 'Ecuador' SS had also returned from Iquique, bringing 74 more wounded men and the papers say as seems probable that the authorities there would only allow the serious cases to be taken away.

News from the North has been received bearing from Iquique the date of 20th inst. It appears that Arica has not been occupied by the opposition as reported in this diary on the 18th inst, but was still blockaded, 300 men had arrived there from the battle of Pozo Almonte, of the 7th inst, under Gana and Arrate. Altogether there were said to be about 700 men there.

The firing by the 'Blanco' at Antofagasta on the 16th inst (mentioned on the 21st inst) was directed at the forts and a landing attempted by her boats was repulsed. On 19th inst the 'Esmeralda' 'Aconcagua' and the 'Maipo' joined the 'Banco' and landed troops. The Intendente Villagas acting under orders received from the President retired with his troops by rail to Calama, apparently without fighting and taking with him all the railway engines. In Calama he joined Camus troops who had returned thither from their ineffectual; attempt to reach Iquique and there are supposed to be

²⁷ An 'Elder Statesman' figure who had held many political appointments in a long career - *RMG*

about 3,000 men collected there but it is difficult to see what good they can do, for the deserts and the ships will prevent them from acting efficiently

In Taltal was the 'Abtao' and another warship at Tocopilla.

Today is the day of elections of Senators, Deputies and Municipals decreed by the President. No troubles occurred in Valparaiso.

There are persistent reports of some of the Fleet being near at hand and extra precautions are being taken against an attack but the day has passed over quietly.

The papers say the new Chilean Ironclad 'Presidente Errázuriz' launched in France has run her trials, and if so will probably shortly be on her way hither.

Complaints are made here of false 20cent pieces having come into circulation.

Monday 30th March

The Elections appear to have passed off all over the country without any rioting. Of course the electors are thoroughly under the thumb of the Government authorities and the result is thoroughly in favour of the Government. In some parts of the country men were compelled under threats to vote and as none but those presumed to be Government men were Candidates, there was no danger to the Government ends.

The papers report that the 'Esmerelda' and 'Aconcagua' have appeared in the bay of Caldera and fired on the forts.

From Buenos Aires a telegram states that an unsuccessful attempt has been made to capture the 'Pilcomayo' by Chilean revolutionaries

Business re-commenced today having been suspended owing to the Holy Week holidays since 24th inst.

Exchange opened today at 16 ¼ and fell to 16 3/16

Tuesday 31st March

The opinion is gaining ground that the policy of the Fleet is not to attempt yet to strike a real blow but to strengthen their army by picking up fresh bodies of men in the smaller ports leaving Valparaiso alone for the present and avoiding any encounter with large bodies of the President's troops.

Cable communication with Coquimbo has been entirely stopped by order but the reason is yet unknown.

Exchange closed today at 16 1/8

APRIL

Wednesday 1st April

The news of the 20th ulto from Iquique reports everything there quiet. Provisions were still very expensive, being at least four times their normal value. The scarcity of currency was getting more and more marked and the President's new issue of notes was of course not accepted there. There was some talk of getting silver down from Peru. A few nitrate oficinas were beginning to work, but great numbers of the Bolivian workmen had left and with the drain on numbers of the Chilean workmen to supply the Congress army, and with the difficulty of paying the men, it did not seem probable that work on a great scale could yet be commenced.

The Congress forces were being organised but there was some discontent among the men owing to their not getting paid. The Fleet, on the capture of Iquique, are said to have found unliquidated policies for \$1,000,000 in the Customs House, payment of which they have since enforced, and they have also been collecting 'patentes' taxes²⁸ that were due.

The Iquique paper 'Nacional' of the 20th ulto says that a telegram has been received that the French Government has prohibited the sailing of the new Chilean warships building in their ports and that the 'Presidente Errázuriz' is detained at Le Havre. If this is true the French have evidently recognised the revolted Chilean Fleet as belligerents

Exchange today is down to 15 7/8

Thursday 2nd April

Gregorio Cerdo y Ossa has been appointed Intendente of Santiago. Political Prisoners in Santiago are being sentenced, but by what tribunal does not appear, to various long terms of imprisonment. A Presidential decree is published transferring the Custom House and Treasury of Caldera to Copiapo.

The recent rumours that some of the Fleet have been near Valparaiso are true, for it seems that one of them (The 'Esmerelda'?) took off 400 men at Lagune close by, and that another ('Blanco'?) sent her boats for water into Pichilemu in the province of Colchagua, that some of the soldiers there fired on them and that the 'Blanco' replied killing a good many, and that afternoon a number of the soldiers went over and were taken on board.

Exchange down to 15 ½

Friday 3rd April

The closing of the cable to Coquimbo on 31st ulto was due to a dispute between the company and the Government with regard to payment of the official scrutineer's salary. There have lately been numerous reports of a rising of the troops there in favour of the opposition, but the Intendente of

²⁸ Business license tax

Valparaiso has today received a telegram by the overland line saying that nothing at all has happened there.

The house in Valparaiso in which an opposition paper called the 'Boletín de la Noche' has for some time been secretly printed, has been discovered and numerous arrests are expected in consequence.

Eulogio Guzmán of Iquique was arrested today aboard a German steamer under suspicion of going to join the revolution in the north.

An edict is posted summoning J. Garois Valdovinos and Sinforoso Ledesma who are concerned in the capture of the 'Maipo' to appear within 8 days before a military court in Valparaiso.

Besa and Co's office has at last been opened, but their business is in liquidation under a Government Scrutineer.

The Government are trying to get paper for the new notes printed in Valparaiso.

Exchange 15 ½

Saturday 4th April

Closing of the northern ports

The President has issued a decree dated 1st inst closing to commerce the ports of Pisagua, Janin, Caleta Buena, Iquique, Antofagasta, Tocopilla, Taltal and Chañaral, and all intermediate caletas²⁹ during their occupation by the revolutionaries, quoting the law of 24th Dec 84 for his right to do so and pointing out that by that law any ship anchoring or discharging or receiving goods in any port where it cannot be officially dealt with (except in case of Force Majeure) and any goods being shipped owing duties which have not gone through the routine ordered by the new law, are liable to confiscation. The decree further states that the penalties imposed by the Customs House regulations on those who traffic in the above ports do not exempt the producers and exporters of nitrate and iodine from the responsibility imposed by the decree of 30th January this year (see diary 31st Jan)

Exchange today varied between 15 3/8 and 15 ½

Carlos A Moraga has been named Commander of the fleet in the President's hands

Sunday 5th April

There was a parade of all the troops in Valparaiso today in the streets and squares.

A decree is published today dated 31st March suspending traffic over the Chañaral railway, and dismissing all the employees except the Manager and the Accountant.

²⁹ Cove or small bay

Another decree postpones the payment of the 'patente' tax due by the mines in the districts occupied by the revolutionists, for two months.

Monday 6th April

A preliminary session of the new Congress is announced for 15th inst to elect Presidents, vice-presidents and secretaries.

The United States of North America Government are said to have communicated through their minister here to the Chilean Government that they do not recognise the belligerency of the Fleet.

Exchange 15 7/16 – 15 ½

Tuesday 7th April

HMS 'Acorn' has arrived from Coquimbo where she left HMS 'Espiegle' which had just come down from Iquique. The 'Champion' leaves today for Coquimbo.

The United States of NA 'Baltimore' arrived here

Arica has capitulated to the Fleet and they have occupied the place without fighting. From Antofagasta there is news that Camus, finding his troops at Calama to be deserting rapidly took them into Bolivia by train and that they there laid down their arms and dispersed so that the oppositionists have now complete control of the Antofagasta district and command the whole coast certainly as far south as Chañaral.

Chañaral seem to have been occupied (for the 2nd time) by forces from the Fleet on 18th ulto.

Letters from Caldera confirm the news that the 'Esmerelda' had been there, but she went away again after taking some of the men. The Fleet are not likely to have any difficulty in occupying Caldera and Copiapo as soon as they wish to do so, for there are very few Government soldiers there (if any) and the population is said to be almost entirely oppositionists. Although Caldera is not included in the list of ports closed by the President, the Customs House authorities in Valparaiso will not despatch vessels thither.

Letters have been received from Iquique up to the 1st inst. Exchange on London there was 17d. The price of beef went up to \$1.60 per lb and then supplies gave out completely, but more was expected soon. Nitrate was being freely shipped and the railway was beginning to work well.

The Iquique papers published a decree of their Intendente (revolutionary) postponing the payment of the 'patente' tax for 1 month from 1st March, so that the report that this had already been collected by him must have been untrue. (The president's decree reported in this diary on 5th inst. postponed it for 2 months).

The Valparaiso papers are still writing against the banks and advocating the formation of a state bank in their stead.

Exchange today in Valparaiso 15 5/8

There are rumours of a quarrel in the Ministry, but it seems to have been patched up for the present.

On 31th ulto Jorge Montt published a decree in Antofagasta that the duties on the shipment of Nitrate and Iodine were payable in Iquique, Pisagua, Tocopilla, Antofagasta and Taltal during April with a 'recargo'³⁰ of \$71.11%. This was the 'recargo' of the President's Government for January, but their April 'recargo' is today published at \$128.95%, so that the opposition are holding out a considerable bait to shippers.

Exchange 15 ½

Thursday 9th April

All sorts of rumours are afloat, and it is impossible to believe any of them, for they seem to be got up merely to influence exchange.

A telegram in the papers dated London 21st ulto. Says that the Chilean minister has stated that he has funds in hand for the service of the Chile debt in July.

The scarcity of small coins is getting worse and worse and all kinds of 'ficha'³¹ are in use. The banks have no supplies and will only give a few dollars change as a favour. The Intendente of Valparaiso yesterday ordered the head of the police to proceed against a certain man for illegally making payments in, and putting into circulation his own 'fichas', and today he has been fined \$100

The Government papers state in contradiction to the Iquique papers that the ironclad @Presidente Errázuriz' has been delivered to the Chilean agent in Le Havre and is only awaiting the arrival of certain officers from this side to start for Chile. The 'Almirante Lynch' and 'Almirante Condell' in Valparaiso are not ready for sea, their boiler tubes requiring considerable repair. They and the torpedo boats and the 'Imperial' are being manned under Moraga's orders, and by Presidential decrees their officers and crews are promised extremely high wages

Owing to the extreme dullness of trade, the Customs House in Valparaiso has become completely choked up with goods, and a decree has now been issued to take affect from the 16th inst, ordering the immediate dispatch of a long list of goods and to facilitate it, allowing goods in insufficient packages to be free of duty.

Exchange varied greatly and ended up at 15 5/8d

Friday 10th April

HMS 'Espiegle' arrived from Coquimbo

³⁰ Additional levy

³¹ tokens

Exchange today 15 9/16d

Saturday 11th April

It is expected that the 'Lynch' and 'Condell' accompanied by the Imperial will soon be sent out with orders to sink the transports belonging to the revolutionary Fleet. The President is said to have threatened to employ them also to sink the English ships sailing from the prohibited ports with Nitrate on board in order to frighten ships and shippers from embarking more nitrate, but that the English Admiral and Minister pointed out to him that they would then be under the necessity of sinking his ships. The English and German Governments are believed not to recognise in any way the closing of the northern ports.

The German steamer 'Romulus' put in lately to Coronel for coal after having laded nitrate in the north and was boarded by Chilean soldiers and her cargo partially discharged. Very strong representations were there upon made by the German Minister to the Chilean Government and the nitrate was reloaded and it is said that the Government indemnified the steamer for loss and detention.

Before the date of the decree closing the northern ports, the despatch of ships from Valparaiso to ports held by the Opposition (as mentioned before) was prohibited, but some vessels got over the difficulty by clearing themselves out to false ports and then proceeding to the ports at which they had been chartered to load; other vessels have remained here and some have been on demurrage since the beginning of February. In certain cases the agents of vessels have now through the English Minister notified to the Chilean Government that they claim compensation under a treaty between Chile and England dated 4th October 1854, which give either nation the right in case of war of closing ports against ships of the other for 8 days, after which time the ships expenses are recoverable from the nation which closes the ports; but if the closing lasts over 12 days all losses and prejudices are recoverable.

Exchange 15 9/16d but nothing doing in it

Sunday 12th April

The 'Warspite' left Valparaiso today for Coquimbo, and the 'Acorn' for England. The foreign ships now in Valparaiso bay are HMS 'Espiegle', the Unites States 'Pensacola' and 'Baltimore' and the French 'Volta'

Monday 13th April

Two papers say that the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal will probably be opened at the beginning of next month.

José Luis Vergara who attempted to bribe Moraga to give over the 'Lynch' and 'Condell' is being tried by a military court. It seems certain that he has already been flogged.

There is very little doubt that flogging is being employed as a method of correction on many political prisoners in Santiago, and oppositionists have even circumstantial stories to tell of torturing to exert confessions having been resorted to. If this latter is true it must surely be without Balmaceda's knowledge. Pio Fierro, head of the Secret Police in Valparaiso and was the leader of the men who entered Mrs Edwards' house on 21st ulto has been removed from his post, after, it is said, a severe reprimand from Balmaceda on that occasion.

The Government are trying to avoid the emission of fresh paper money. They are confusedly unable to pay their debts for want of ready money, but they are looking about for other means of raising money. Rumour says that they have thought of coining the silver (which still remains in the Moneda), of putting an export duty on wheat and of imposing a property tax. They still have \$4,000,000 of the \$12,000,000 decreed to be issued which have not been emitted, and which they have been unable to emit owing to the want of paper (which they get printed in the United States of North America) and to the inability of the Chilean printers to produce it. They are thinking of issuing these \$4,000,000 to the banks in promissory notes ('vales') of \$10,000 each.

Exchange 15 5/8

Tuesday 14th April

News from Buenos Aires says that the 'Pilcomayo' has been disarmed by order of the Argentine Government and this has evidently been done with a view of preventing further attempts to capture her for the Chilean Revolutionists.

The papers report that Camus who took his troops into Bolivia from Calama is marching them unarmed through Bolivian and Argentinian territory to the railway terminus at Tucuman whence they will go by train to Mendoza and then to Santiago.

There seems to be no truth in the report (previously stated in the diary) that the Argentine Government has recognised the belligerence of the Fleet.

The British Minister Chile, after consulting his Government has received notice from them by cable that they do not recognise in any way the paper blockade of the northern ports which the President has attempted to institute.

It is understood that the German and French governments have sent similar messages to their Ministers. The announcement of this will set foreign ships free to enter or load at any port in Chile, and it appears to be a step towards the recognition of the belligerency of the Fleet by Foreign Powers.

The troops in Valparaiso (under Alcerraca's leadership) are being constantly exercised with sham fights and surprises and being taught the ground the ground on the hill and round Valparaiso.

Exchange today reached 15 ¾ then fell again to 15 ½

Wednesday 15th April

The papers publish telegrams dated Paris 13th inst stating that the French Government has decided to deliver over the new Chilean warships detained in French ports, to the Chilean Government. On the supposition that this is true, what was written yesterday about the non-recognition of the closure of the northern ports being a step towards the declaration by Foreign Powers of the belligerency of the Chilean opposition, requires some modification.

As far as England is concerned, in the light of the Treaty of 1854 mentioned on 11th inst. It may be that the English Government through the very fact of their not recognising a state of war in Chile, will not consent to the closure of Chilean ports against their ships, but setting this and treaties which other nations may have with Chile aside, it is possible that England, France and Germany, simply regard the closure in the light of a blockade and are acting on the principle that a paper blockade is not recognised by International Law.

The United States' Minister in Chile (Patrick Egan) is known to be a firm supporter of Balmaceda and is believed to be one of his principal advisers in the matter of the closure of the ports.

Tomorrow there will be attest case, for the Pacific Steam Navigation Co have received instructions by cable from their directors in Liverpool to send out the 'Serena' SS on her ordinary itinerary. At present the Authorities absolutely refuse to despatch her, and if they maintain their attitude she will go out under the protection of a British warship.

A letter from Antofagasta dated 3 or 4 days ago says that owing to the lack of arms, the available opposition forces still do not exceed 5,000 men, but they have been drilling other men and if they had arms they could command 12,000 men. It is believed that the 'Esmerelda' and the 'Itata' have been sent north to meet and bring down a large supply of arms and ammunition ordered by the insurgents.

The Government troops under Camus laid down their arms in Huanchaca. Some of the men deserted but the main body of them in marching back through the Argentine Republic, and in view of the Argentine Government has sent a regiment to Jujuy (in the north of their territory) to keep a watch on them.

On the occupation of Arica and Tacna on the 8th inst. by the oppositionists, about 200 of the Government troops are said to have deserted to them, but the remainder (about 400) under Gana and Arrate have, according to their instructions from Santiago to retire before a superior force, been taken themselves to Peruvian and Bolivian territory, and laid down their arms there.

Railway rates on all the state railways have been raised by the Government 50% from the 1st May both for goods and passengers 'In view of the great fall in exchange and the fact that for the last two months the railways have been working at a loss'. This measure will probably fall more heavily on the wheat trade than any other.

Alejandro Vial, Juan Castellon, Alejo Harrios and Francisco Javier Riesco have been banished from the country by the Government under penalty of heavy fines if they return, and leave today on the 'Sorata' SS

Exchange rate today 15 5/8

Thursday 16th April

The new Congress has held its preliminary meeting.

The Senators (20) elected	Adolfo Eastman	President of the Senate
	Juan E Mackenna	Vice president of the Senate
	Francisco Herboso	Secretary of the Senate
The Deputies (41) elected	Eulogio Allendes	President of the Deputies
	Baldomero Frias Collao	Secretary of the Deputies

The President Balmaceda is said to be preparing a very elaborate statement of actions to present to the Congress on the 20th inst.

Referring to the immediate despatch of goods from the Customs House mentioned on 9th inst., the President has now decreed that those who do not despatch their goods within 20 days from the dates of their policies will pay 3% rent on their value for the 1st 20 days, but the rent to be raised every 20 days, till for the 4th 20 days it is 10%. After that the goods will be sold by auction for account of owners. The duties recoverable under the forcible despatch decree are supposed to amount to quite \$1,000,000 and probably some importers will be put in great difficulties by it.

The Government ceased to pay interest on their 3% Internal Bonds

The 'Almirante Lynch' and 'Almirante Condell' have been running trials in the bay. It is said that only 12 knots per hour could be got out of one and 8 out of the other, and that 30 workmen from Lever Murphy and Co's foundry who had been employed in repairing them have been arrested on suspicion of having tampered with their machinery.

Another Steamer the 'Mount Tabor' has put in to Coronel for coal after loading nitrate in Iquique and the Government are sure to try to enforce their decree of the 30th January and attempt to collect a second duty on the cargo. In the case of the 'Romulus' SS (mentioned on the 11inst.) the Chilean authorities not only discharged part of the cargo but also arrested the captain and tied up the chief officer, but the German Minister seems thoroughly to have impressed the Government with the probable effects of their actions, and they have paid the captain compensation and allowed the steamer to leave, taking a bond from the owners of the nitrate, that if after the country is settled again the law courts decide that the duty is legally recoverable by the Government, and if the Government cannot get the money out of the sellers of the nitrate, that then the owners would respond for it.

There is really no risk in the owners of the nitrate giving this bond and doubtless the owners and the German Minister allowed it for this reason, although the German Government have declared that they do not recognise the right of the Chile government to collect duties on goods which have already by force paid duties to the opposition.

As to the closure of the ports question, the PSN Co's steamer 'Serena' was permitted today to leave for the north without molestation, an arrangement having been come to by which the government try to save their dignity, the steamer being only officially cleared to Government ports, while it is understood she will call at the northern ports and that the Government will not attempt to enforce the provisions of the closure decree against the Company

News from Iquique up to the 10th inst. says that provisions had become plentiful there. The authorities were trying to start a silver currency by coining dollars of the value of 24d.

The disorganisation of the nitrate business occasioned by the recent troubles and fighting in Tarapacá, unless anything further occurs there, is expected to have very little greater effect on this year's production than would have taken place under the combination of nitrate producers arranged in January.

Friday 17th April

Exchange went up to 16d today on account of considerable sales against copper, wheat and nitrate business, and a rumour (false) that the 'Warspite' was bearing proposals of an arrangement from the President to the oppositionists.

Saturday 18th April

The 'Almirante Lynch', 'Almirante Condell', and 'Imperial' SS went out today, destination unknown. Exchange went up further today to 16 1/8d chiefly on a false rumour that the Fleet was attacking Coquimbo.

The Closure of the northern ports and double duties on nitrates question. The English Minister has not yet received his reply from the Chilean Government to the notification he has passed in to them of the attitude taken by the English Government with regard to these matters and has gone up to Santiago about it. He allows it to be known that the English Government have telegraphed to him that they do not admit the right of the Chilean Government to collect duty on goods which have already paid the duty once to the Chilean insurgents under force and after protest by the payers; and that they do not recognise the right of the Chilean Government to close by municipal decree, ports which are in the effective possession of the insurgents; that they hold the Chilean Government responsible for any losses to British ships or subjects arising from the decree, and that they have instructed their fleet in these waters to protect British interests from molestation.

The latter part of the message is particularly galling to the Chile Government, and the first hasty expression of one of the Ministers on reading it was 'well we will let the English Fleet bombard Valparaiso and it will serve the place right for the are all oppositionists there'.

Besides the English, French and German Governments, the Italian Government have also declared their intention not to recognise the decree in question. The matter of the second collection of duties on Nitrate is being fought out round the 'Mount Tabor' SS question, which is detained by the Chile authorities in Coronel, and HMS 'Espiegle' is holding herself in readiness to go down thither and see her safely out, if the Chilean Government will not give way.

Monday 20th April

Exchange today was forced up by speculators to 16 ½ d, and went down again to 16 1/8 d. The present higher level is maintained because it is believed that the President's message to Congress today will no scheme for a further issue of paper money, as had previously been thought probable

The 'Lynch, 'Condell' and 'Imperial' SS have been seen by a passing steamer lying in Quintero bay. It is supposed that they have gone there to be more free of observation than they would be in Valparaiso bay, in order that they may make a dash north without the oppositionists being able to get news by cable of their departure.

Tuesday 21st April

Balmaceda's message to Congress presented is published yesterday and contains no reference to the finances of the Government.

Summary of the President's message

He relates how the Fleet unconstitutionally started the revolution on 7th Jan, how they have only after bloody battles been able to possess themselves of the north which is thinly inhabited and cut off by the sea and deserts from the rest of the country, how the army has remained faithful, and the people in the populous districts have shown no sign of moving in favour of the revolution. He shows that Congress in which name the revolution has taken place has not even of its own accord held a single meeting and that even the deed of agreement supposed to have been signed by certain revolutionary congress men has not been made public. Admitting that a considerable portion of the members of Chambers are in insurrection, he states that they have not been able to invoke the authority they held as representatives of the people, and that the revolution has simply been started by political circles of different opinions, all aiming to make themselves the supreme rulers of the state.

'It is an anti-democratic revolution started by a small class, who, by their personal relationships and their fortunes consider themselves entitled to direct the Government of Chile, and engendered by personal politics, the incessant breaking up of the Liberal Party (who brought him in), by the accumulative vote, and by the excessive number of Senators and Deputies in a country of only 3 million people'

He recounts the party strife and conflict between himself and the Congress up to the end of last year. He points out that though at the end of the year the budget law and the law fixing the land and sea forces had not been passed, this could not be a cause for the revolution, because he himself on

former occasions and other Presidents in past times have been in the same case without censure. He recounts shortly the steps he has taken to preserve the safety of the State since the beginning of the year.

He states that the revolution would have been avoided if the reform of the Constitution proposed by him last year had been carried out, and proceeds to point out the matters with which the present congress ought to deal, as indicated in the following statements:

1. The extreme licence of the press helped towards the present conflict. Means should be provided by which it can be checked in accordance with the penal code, and by ordinary course of justice
2. The Taxes ('contribuciones') ought to be permanent, alterable only by laws in the ordinary way. (i.e. not requiring re-legislation at short periods)
3. The prohibition against the military forces being stationed within 10 leagues of the place of the sessions of Congress is unnecessary in these days of railways.
4. There is no object in fixing every 18 month by a special law the land and sea forces, since the annual budget ('presupuestos') law determines the money to be spent on them
5. The annual law necessary is the budget law, and discussion in Congress ought only to be allowed on the variable expenses included in it.
6. The budget ought to be discussed and approved in the ordinary period of the session of Congress, and if it is not carried through, the budget law of the previous year ought to rule

'With these reforms, ministers (as is right) can only be influenced or got rid of by parliamentary criticism, by refusal to authorise the variable items of the budget and by impeachment. With such a reform, peace between the Powers of the State will be established for ever. Government will cease to interfere in elections only when the existence of the executive depends alone on the Constitution and the laws, and when the executive does not fluctuate according to the passions, and currents of interests of unstable and transient majorities in a Congress without organisation, cohesion or discipline among its parties'

7. The 'Consejo de Estado' requires suppression
8. The question of jurisdiction between the President and his agents and the Judicature, and between the Legislative and Executive and the Judicial powers about the constitutionality of laws requires to be settled. He proposes a Tribunal of three men named by the President, three by Congress and three by the Supreme court to settle such conflicts without appeal.
9. The Judicature requires reorganisation

There is no important reference to the means by which Government hope to conquer the revolution, and the President appears simply to take it for granted that he will win.

Exchange today is at 16 1/8 d with a rising tendency on account of bill on the market and scarcely any buyers.

Wednesday 22nd April

Government Finances. It is now stated on seemingly good authority that the Government will not require more than \$15,000,000 to carry on till July, by which time they hope to have suppressed the revolution, and this sum they hope to obtain as follows:

\$1,700,000	From what the banks owe them
\$8,000,000	From the coinage of the silver in the treasury
\$1,000,000	From the 'Agricola' tax
\$1,000,000	From customs house duties
\$3,000,000 to \$4,000,000 as yet unissued out of the \$12,000,000 decreed	

Say \$15,000,000

Double duty decree The 'Mount Tabor' SS has been allowed to leave Coronel, on the owners of the Nitrate, who in this case are also the producers and the shippers, giving a bond to the effect that they will pay the second duty, if the courts eventually decide that it is due. This course was recommended by the English Government and is merely a nominal concession to the injured feelings of the Chilean Government.

Closure of the ports decree The difficulty of getting vessels cleared out to the northern ports still continues.

The opposition forces seem without doubt to have occupied Caldera and Copiapo. The Chamber of Deputies met yesterday and after electing their usual commissions and their members of the 'Consejo de Estado' they elected a special commission to study the reform of the constitution, composed as follows:

Julio Bañades Espinosa

Rafael Balmaceda

Nicanor Ugalde

Manual Salas Lavaqui

Manuel Aristides Zañartu

J Ramon Ravest

Alejandro Maturana

They then agreed to suspend their sessions till this special commission has prepared its report.

Exchange went up to 16 1/2d today

Thursday 23rd April

The Chamber of Senators yesterday held their meeting, and took the same course as the Deputies electing for their Special Commission on the reform of the constitution:

Adolfo Ibañez

José Velasquez

Adolfo Valderrama

Miguel Castillo

The 'Lynch', 'Condell' and 'Imperial' are said to have gone on to Huasco from Quinteros, and to have proceeded thence further north.

The papers report that the oppositionists took Caldera and Copiapo without fighting, the Government troops retiring to places whence they will be able to harass them afterwards.

Exchange rose further to 16 7/8d

Friday 24th April

Very startling news today and it appears to be quite true. The Intendente here has received a telegram from the Moneda in Santiago stating that HMS 'Warspite' had communicated to the governor of Coquimbo on arriving there from Caldera that on the 22nd inst the 'Almirante Lynch' blew up and sank the 'Blanco' with a torpedo and that she and the 'Imperial' SS were chasing the 'Aconcagua'. So far appears certain, but it is also stated that from 80 to 150 men perished including Enrique Valdes Vergara, that Goñi the commander of the 'Blanco' and Ramon Barros Luco escaped, and that Jorge Montt and Waldo Silva were not on board. There is also said to have been some fighting between the President's ships and the 'Magallanes' in Chañaral³²

Exchange this morning had gone up to 17d, but on confirmation of the news it fell without a transaction to 16d and then to 15 7/8d, but a reaction came, and the pressure of bills for the mail sent it up again in the afternoon to 16 5/8d a marvellous fluctuation for one day.

This evening it is said that the 'Aconcagua' has been captured

Saturday 25th April

The 'Almirante Condell' arrived here last night, and on Moraga and the other officers landing there was very little demonstration by the populace, and what there was, was mainly hostile. It is said that some of the soldiers (of the Limache Regiment) were ordered to fire on a group of the people who were particularly offensive, but refused. The 'Almirante Lynch' is expected but nothing is public yet

³² See Wikipedia's 'Battle of Caldera Bay' for a full account of this engagement

about the 'Imperial' SS. HMS 'Warspite' arrived here this morning, having passed Caldera just after the 'Blanco' was sunk.

A sum of \$25,000 deposited by the family of Antonio Subercaseaux Vicuña in guarantee that he would not take part in the present revolution, has been confiscated by the Government by decree. The 'Diario Oficial' publishes the names of sundry persons who are to be let out of prison on giving deposits or guarantees for considerable sums, that they will reside at certain specified places, or go out of the country and not return.

The Senate was specially convened again yesterday to discuss a project of the law brought in by Adolfo Ibañez *'to legalise all the acts of the Government since the beginning of the year in so far as they are contrary to the ordinary state of the country, the constitution, and the laws; and to allow the President, until peace is established, to arrest or remove persons from one part of the country to another, to fix their place of residence, to increase the land and sea forces as circumstances require, to spend public money without subjecting himself to the estimates, to obtain funds by pledging the credit of the State, to declare such parts of the country as require it under martial law ('asamblea'), to name and dismiss public employees and to suspend or restrict the right of public meetings and the liberty of the press.'*

The Senate passed the project and no doubt there will be no difficulty in the Deputies. The Dictatorship of the President will then be thoroughly established.

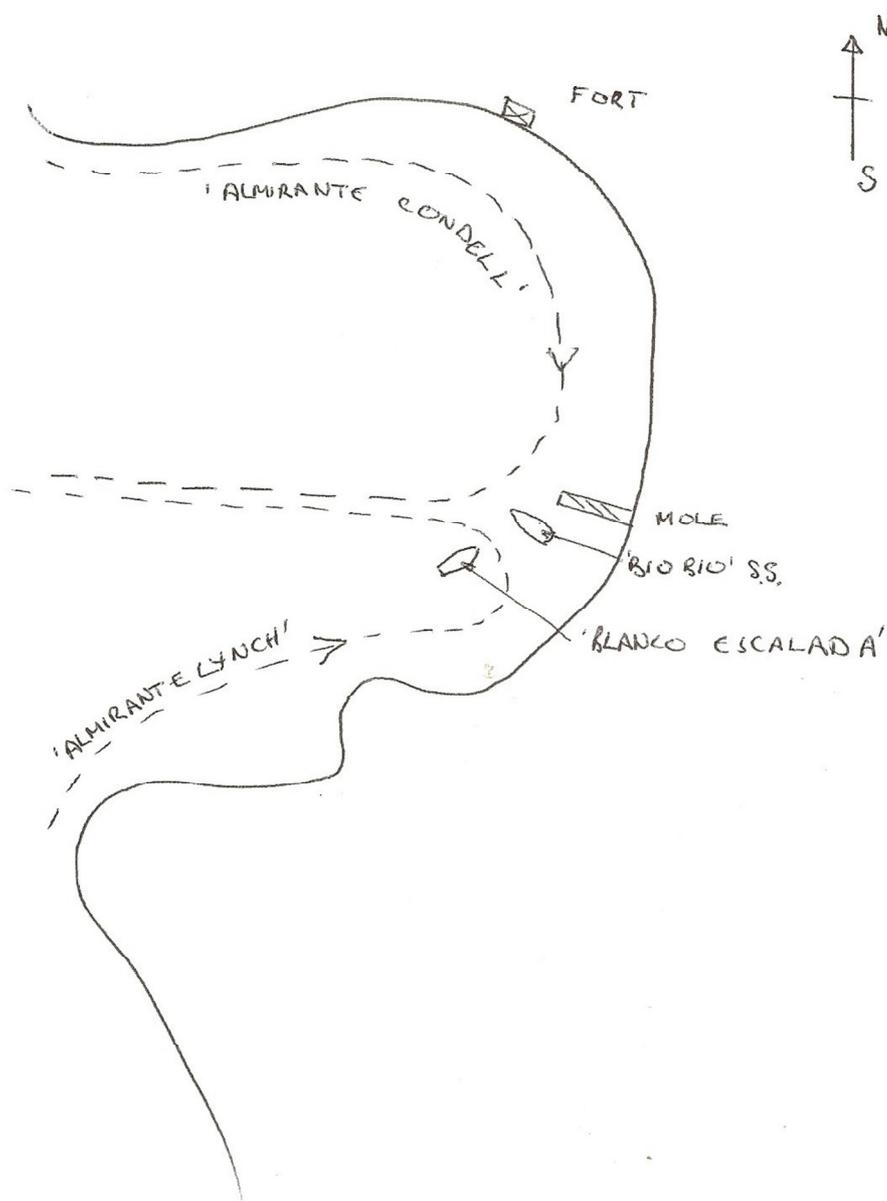
Exchange today 16 3/8d

Sunday 26th April

The 'Almirante Lynch' came back last night and was docked this morning. Several men on board are wounded and the ship has received some not very serious injuries. The 'Condell' also was slightly damaged. Moraga when he arrived here in the 'Condell' stated in his official report that he had sunk the 'Blanco' or the 'Cochrane', he did not know which, and the 'Huascar'. It was known by means of the news telegraphed from Coquimbo that it was the 'Blanco', but no one believed about the 'Huascar', and some substituted the name of a German Steamer, and some that of the 'Bio-Bio' SS for her. It has since been ascertained that the 'Blanco' was the only one sunk, that the 'Huascar' was not in Caldera but at Carrizal Bajo, and that the 'Bio-Bio' SS though in Caldera bay was practically uninjured. The 'Aconcagua' SS was not captured as reported on 24th inst.

The following seems to be more or less the history of the affair.

Moraga on leaving Quinteros went up to Coquimbo and then on to Huasco. All the telegraph implements had been removed in both places so that his advance could not be telegraphed north, but from Huasco an oppositionist messenger was sent overland to Carrizal Bajo, but did not arrive in time to warn the 'Huascar' and 'Aconcagua' which were landing troops there. The 'Condell' and 'Lynch' leaving the 'Imperial' SS some distance out at sea entered Caldera bay about 4 a.m. on 22nd, the night being clear but moonless. The following plan will roughly assist to describe their movements.



The 'Condell' entered the bay from the north and steamed round unnoticed in front of the fort till through the darkness she saw the 'Blanco' and then came within 150yards of her and fired her first torpedo and just missed her, the torpedo passing in front of her bows.

She fired her second torpedo at 50 yards distance and the 'Banco' seems to have been struck by it without serious injury. It was only then that the men on the 'Blanco' saw their danger and great confusion at once arose; their big guns do seem to have been ready. They were only able to bring machine guns to bear. Meanwhile however they had not noticed the 'Lynch' which came up upon her other side, along the south side of the bay, and fire one or two torpedoes at close quarters, striking her with one, and as they afterwards ascertained, sinking her in a few minutes. The 'Lynch' steamed round the 'Blanco' to the side where the 'Condell' was being fired on, and both steamed away to avoid the firing. At the entrance to the bay they met the 'Aconcagua' SS which was coming up from Carrizal Bajo in ignorance of what was taking place and she attempted to run the gauntlet into Caldera Bay where she expected to be protected by the 'Blanco'. She had machine guns on board and was able to keep the enemy ships at bay by sweeping their decks, but they hit her many times with their heavier Hotchkiss guns and though they fired high and did not damage her hull, they

would certainly have captured her, but that the 'Warspite' appeared on the scene coming from the north, and the 'Lynch' and 'Condell' taking her for the 'Esmerelda' retired, and The 'Aconcagua' got away into the bay. When the 'Lynch' and 'Condell' found their mistake they returned to the bay and saw the masts of the sunken 'Blanco' and beyond and through them the masts of a ship which they thought was also sunk, but which must have been the uninjured 'Bio-Bio'. It was now too late to attack the 'Aconcagua' SS again as the forts would protect her and they are small unarmoured vessels.

The 'Condell' then started back for Valparaiso and the 'Lynch' went in search of the 'Imperial' SS, it is supposed to give her orders, and then followed the 'Condell'. About 130 men perished in the 'Blanco', the captain Goñi escaped by swimming, Barros Luca was nearly drowned, most of the officers were not on board.

It is quite evident that the 'Blanco' was quite unprepared for an attack, no torpedo nets out, no big guns ready, no searchlights working.

The fact no doubt is that the oppositionists by their steady successes had become too confident, and were utterly incredulous that the President would be able to make efficient use of his torpedo cruisers, and listened only too readily to the reports spread purposely by the Government themselves with regard to their vessels, such as those mentioned in this diary on 16th inst, which have since proved untrue.

The insurgents will now have to be much more cautious about their movements at sea and especially will have to keep their transports constantly guarded by warships, for the transports are the natural prey of torpedo cruisers, and they can rarely hope to have a chance against a Man of War. At the present time too, the insurgent fleet is weak, for the 'Esmerelda' went up to Panama about the 7th inst to fetch the arms they are expecting, and has not yet returned, and the 'Cochrane' is at Iquique very dirty and has all the coast from Arica to Caldera to defend.

It seems not unlikely that they will attempt to destroy the torpedo cruisers before they leave Valparaiso, and there are even rumours of plots ashore in Valparaiso to disable them. On the other hand there are rumours that one or two of the new Chilean Warships are due here in two or three weeks' time and these with the torpedo cruisers would doubtless form a formidable fleet to oppose the insurgents.

The fighting with the 'Magallanes' in Chañaral, rumoured on the 24th inst appears untrue.

Monday 27th April

Exchange 16 ¼ d

Tuesday 28th April

About 11:30 last night there was an alarm in the bay. A steamer (not a Man of War) came in unnoticed or unexpected, to a part of the bay where she was surrounded by the foreign warships and English steamers. While there, 2 torpedo boats (not cruisers) which act as guard boats in the bay, steamed in front of her, and she fired on them, and the boats returned the fire with rifles and

the steamer retired out of the bay. It is supposed that the steamer's object was to pick up information as to the position or state of the torpedo cruisers.

The closure of ports The Government has given way another step to the foreign powers. Hitherto they have demanded bond from sailing vessels clearing out from this bay, that they would not go to or load in the nitrate ports. This is now not insisted on and vessels can clear themselves out to - for instance - Mollendo, and proceed to load at a nitrate port without hindrance, and without being subject to any future claim at the hands of the Government.

Letters from Iquique dated 20th inst. state that the insurgents had formed a provisional government with Jorge Montt as President, and Isidoro Errázuriz and Col. Adolfo Holley under him. The projected metallic currency had for the present fallen through.

A letter from Chañaral date 17th inst. speaks of great suffering among the people owing to the scarcity and dearness of provisions. The price of provisions in the northern provinces is aggravated by the imposition of Peru of an export duty from their territory of 5/20 per head of cattle, 5/2 per head of sheep and 8/2³³ per quintal³⁴ of flour, for no provisions can be shipped from ports in the hands of the Chilean Government to the ports held by the insurgents except via Peru, and Peru itself can afford to export but little

Exchange 16 ¼ d

Wednesday 29th April

The closure of the ports. A ministerial 'note' has been addressed to the Intendente dated 22nd inst. but only made public last night, stating that:

The Government in order to avoid complications with the representations of foreign powers and to organise the carrying out of the decree, has resolved to limit the range and interpretation of the decree of 1st inst., in order that for the future the measures which the Government is resolved to take may be clearly defined as follows:

- 1. The despatch of steamers or sailing ships will not be permitted from any of the ports of the Republic, to ports which the revolutionaries occupy or may occupy.*
- 2. No ships will be received in the ports of the Republic which proceeds from ports occupied by the revolutionaries, except in the case of a special concession, and such concession will be denied if the ship brings nitrate, iodine or other cargo which according to the laws of the state are owing export duties.*

This 'note' probably puts an end to the International difficulty which arose round the device of 1st inst, absolutely closing the ports and making ships and cargoes infringing it liable to confiscation

³³ Not sure what these figures denote, as copied from the manuscript, perhaps 5 sols and 20 centimos etc

³⁴ = 4 *arrobas* = 100 *libras* (Castilian), about 46 kilograms (approximately 101.4 pounds av.)

MAY

Thursday 30th April to Sunday 3rd May ³⁵

On 28th April the Bill of Indemnity and of extraordinary powers for the President was introduced into the House of Deputies in a slightly different form to that in which it passed the Senate. Julio Bañades E made a log speech in favour which has attracted a good deal of attention. Very little of importance has taken place in these days. There have again been reports, believed by some, that the insurgents had obtained their arms and intended to make an attack at or near Valparaiso, but HMS 'Daphne' on 2nd inst. from Iquique and quite dispelled the fear. She reports that the 'Esmerelda' and 'Itata' had not returned from their expedition to fetch the arms, and that the insurgents' ships were scattered along the coast they hold. Their plan appears to be to go to Talcahuano when they are strong enough, and work up the coast from there, picking up what men will join them until they can make an attack on Santiago, avoiding Valparaiso.

The sinking of the 'Blanco' naturally caused a great sensation in Iquique, and the insurgents seem not only to have despised the torpedo cruisers, but also to have been possessed of the extraordinary idea that Balmaceda would not go to the length of trying to sink a Chilean Man o' War: past events surely prove that no sentimental feelings will hinder him from adopting any means of suppressing the revolution. The insurgents are by many credited themselves with such feelings, but the same people call them weakness and point out that the longer the struggle lasts, the more the country will suffer. The insurgents vainly hoped that the destruction of the 'Blanco' would cause the people and soldiers in the south to rise in indignation against the Government, most people here think that the only chance of such an occurrence will be when the insurgent army begin to take active measures in this region.

HMS 'Daphne' called at Caldera, and reports that the 'Blanco' is lying half on her side with her hull completely underwater and that divers report that the torpedoes made a rent from the bridge to the forward gun and that there is little chance of her ever being raised. The rent is jagged but about 4 feet across in places.

Exchange during these 3 days varied between 16 3/8 and 16 7/8 d

Monday 4th May

Yesterday there was a rumour, which today has been confirmed, that the Government have received a telegram from the Chile Minister in Lima saying that the 'Esmeralda' is ashore in the Galapagos Islands with the arms she had gone to fetch on board. If the minister in Lima has not been deceived, that only plausible conjecture as to why she can have gone to those islands is that she was to take delivery of the arms there, as being a place where there is no authority strong enough to prevent (even if the inhabitants knew of) her taking contraband goods.

³⁵ For some reason this part of the diary is written in beautiful copperplate writing - Not JAG's hand. Perhaps a fair copy by a clerk?

Nothing is said about the 'Itata' SS which accompanied the 'Esmeralda'.

This morning there was a rumour, confirmed later in the day, that a conference was to commence this afternoon to endeavour to arrive at a basis for terminating amicably the present struggle.

The conference was allowed by the President in deference to a request made to him by the Ministers in Chile of France, Brazil and the United States, and he gave safe conduct for the purpose to the following leading oppositionists: Carlos Walker Martinez, Eulogio Altamirano³⁶, Gregorio Denoso, Melchor Concha y Toro, Pedro Montt, Belisario Prato, and E Montt. The meetings take place in the American (US) minister's house, and the Government do not seem to be directly represented, though no doubt the Foreign ministers who are intervening know their ideas pretty well.

At first the news gave colour to the 'Esmeralda' story, but later it became known that certain people have for several days known about the idea of a conference.

Exchange at first went up to 17 1/8d today, but fell later to 16 7/8 d on the impression gaining ground that no arrangement would be come to in the conference.

The Government are despatching more troops to Coquimbo. There are rumours of some fighting between there and Caldera.

Tuesday 5th May

The conference is still going on in Santiago

Congress held secret sessions yesterday at which laws relating to the Banks, the silver in the treasury, and import duties were passed.

The new Chilean ships in Europe: There is now good reason for believing that none of these have left or will be allowed to leave for Chile until peace is restored.

The insurgents undoubtedly have several agents working for them in Europe.

The long absence of the 'Imperial' SS from Valparaiso is causing much conjecture, and some believe that she has gone over to the insurgents, but it is more probable that she is simply waiting somewhere for the torpedo cruisers to join her again.

Camus' division marching from Bolivia has now reached the railway in Argentine territory. Some of the officers who were on horseback have already arrived in Santiago.

Closure of Ports: Since the 'note' of 22nd ulto. The Government have again been attempting to force ships, before clearing them for foreign ports, to give a bond that they will not go to, or load in Nitrate parts, but now they have given way, for the English Minister has telegraphed to the Consul-General in Valparaiso: *'All British and German merchant sailing vessels will be cleared for foreign ports without the imposition of any bond or written pledge'*

³⁶ Eulogio Altamirano was a Senator and eminent lawyer who was used by Antony Gibbs and Sons according to: *British Nitrates and Chilean Politics, 1886—1896: Balmaceda and North* by Harold Blakemore.

Several ships chartered to load Nitrate have accordingly been cleared out nominally for Mollendo in Peru. The Government however still insist that they will not receive in Valparaiso, steamers which have touched in the insurgent ports

Exchange today 17 – 17 1/8 d

Wednesday 6th May

The Conference in Santiago continues

Government finance: The new laws mentioned yesterday are

- 1) The Treasury Silver. The President is authorised to use or to dispose of the silver which has been deposited, and to coin from it \$1,000,000 of small money at 15d to the dollar. The articles of the old law which compelled the depositing of the silver are cancelled. This new law is apparently merely a legalisation of the decree with regard to the silver which the President issued before the assembly of his Congress. It is expected that the silver will shortly be sold by auction or tender.
- 2) Import Duties. Are made payable in silver or its equivalent at the rate of 38d to the dollar. This means that at the present rate of exchange of say 17d duties are increased by a 'recargo' of 123%. Instead of by the former fixed 'recargo' of 35%, so that this sudden and unexpected rise in duties affects imports very seriously. The law is fixed to commence at once and remain in force till 31st Dec.
- 3) Banks' issue of notes. The Banks are to retire monthly 10% of their emissions, and on the amount they do not so call in they will be charged 10% interest per annum by the Government. At the end of 10 months they are to pay to the Government in fiscal notes the amount they had not called in, to be returned to them as they get more of their own notes in. The Government will return to the Banks the deposits they have made in guarantee of their issue in proportion to, and as they retire their notes. The banks' emissions of notes will be replaced by a fiscal emission of equal amount, which will rank equally with former fiscal emissions. The effect of this law will probably be that the banks will further have to reduce credits and perhaps will raise their rates of interest. The Government will acquire by it (without increasing the amount of notes circulating within the country) an amount of money for their own use equal to the amount of notes that the banks retire.

The total amount of the Banks' emissions in circulation is about	\$17,500,000
To which add the fiscal notes in circulation about 22 ½ million	\$22,500,000
and fiscal notes recently issued about 12 million	<u>\$12,000,000</u>
Total notes in circulation:	<u>\$52,000,000</u>

Government Finances (continued)

It may be interesting to enquire what the occupation of the north (from Arica to Carrizal included), and the consequent deprivation of revenues from that region means to the Government.

The total expenses of the county authorised by the budget for 1890 amounted to: \$67,000,000

as against \$62,000,000 for 1889		
The revenue to meet this was estimated at	\$56,000,000	
And surplus from 1889	<u>\$11,000,000</u>	\$67,000,000

In 1889 the revenue amounted to	\$55,000,000
(of which \$41,000,000 was derived from import and export duties, mole duties and warehouse rent)	
deduct from this amount the country from Arica to Carrizal contributed	<u>\$32,000,000</u>
This leaves an amount of only	\$23,000,000

Derived from the country south of Carrizal, and this must further be reduced by the revenue derived from postal, telegraph and other services of the northern region. The revenue derivable from the southern region if the times had been normal would probably have not been greater in 1891 than 1890, and the depression of trade produce by the revolution must make it less.

The normal expenses for 1891 may be taken as the same as 1890 viz \$67,000,000, but now there must be deducted from this amount the expenses of administration of the northern region. These undoubtedly formed but a small part of the revenue derived from that region, the greater part of it being spent in the southern region and on the general service of the State. The Government are now deprived of this and in addition to the ordinary expenses of the southern region, and the general service of the State they have the enormously increased expenses of the army.

Exchange hesitated a good deal over the new laws, but finally went up 17 ¼ d

HMS 'Champion' arrived today from Coquimbo and HMS 'Warspite' left Valparaiso

Thursday 7th May³⁷

Two dynamite bombs were thrown at the ministers proceeding to the Moneda in Santiago.

There was a peace conference going on in Santiago at the time under the auspices of Egan to whom safe conduct had been given for the purpose in favour of certain revolutionaries in hiding. The bombs broke up the conference and they were made a pretext of by the Government for withdrawing this safe conduct so that the above mentioned revolutionaries had to fly for their lives.

Friday 8th May

News came of the 'Itata' SS which had loaded arms in San Diego for the insurgents having been taken possession of by the United States³⁸

³⁷ The Diary from his point on becomes much briefer. From 7th May to 24th August is in JAG's own hand

³⁸ See 'The Itata Incident' in Wikipedia for the full story

Balmaceda's Congress passed a law for indemnifying him for his past acts and giving him extraordinary powers

Saturday 9th May

Two bombs thrown into Claudio Vicuña's house burst without damaging anyone

A reign of terror exists in Santiago on account of the numerous political arrests.

The meeting of more than 2 or 3 persons in the streets is prohibited. Horse and carriage traffic at night is prohibited. Anyone out of doors at night is liable to arrest.

The government puts difficulties in the way of vessels clearing out of Valparaiso harbour to proceed to the Nitrate ports to load their cargoes there.

Sunday 10th May

The 'Imperial' SS arrived back after 18 days absence

Monday 11th May

The 'Imperial' SS, and 'Almirante Condell' have left Valparaiso.

Wednesday 13th May

The USS 'Baltimore' has gone to Iquique it is believed in connection with the escape of the 'Itata' SS from San Diego. The insurgents have retired their ships and nearly all their men northwards from Caldera and the province of Atacama

Thursday 14th May

Two insurgents in Santiago condemned to be shot for sedition. This is the first time that any public announcement has been made of such an event though shooting of common soldiers had believed to have occurred.

The USS 'Pensacola' follows the 'Baltimore' to Iquique and several other US ships are said to have been ordered there. The US demand restoration of the arms in the 'Itata' SS and that whether she has transhipped them to the 'Esmeralda' or not

People in Coquimbo who had already paid import duties to the insurgents are being forced by the Government to pay over again

Friday 15th May

Two oppositionists Pedro Montt and E Altamirano, who had taken part in the peace conference were shipped today under the protection of the US and Brazilian Ministers in a French Man o' War. The Ministers having insisted on this as a reparation for the safe conduct broken by the Government on 7th May.

Saturday 16th May

No one will bid for the silver which the Government have put up for sale

Sunday 17th May

Camus' troops returned from their long journey from Bolivia (1 ½ months) Calama to Uyini in Bolivia thence to Jujuy in Argentina, by train to Mendoza and then across the Andes to Santiago.

Gana and Arrate's troops who retired from Tacna to Peruvian territory early in April have not been allowed to leave by the Peruvian Government

Thursday 21st May

A new ministry formed in Santiago from which Godoy is excluded

Goods for Iquique from Valparaiso can only now be sent by despatching them to a Peruvian port from which they are re-shipped southwards.

What amounts to an official apology for the breaking of the safe conduct on the 7th May has been published.

Monday 25th May

A court Marshall condemned to death 5 men concerned in an attempt to take a torpedo boat from Valparaiso to the insurgents in Caldera and 4 of the were shot et Valparaiso publicly. The 5th drew the lot which according to the sentence was to save one of them.

Another bomb thrown into Vicuña's house without much damage

The 'Imperial' SS and the 'Almirante Lynch' which left on the 10th have been up as far as Iquique but have done no serious damage. They returned today and Moraga their commander reports that he entered Iquique Bay on the 17th inst. and fired a torpedo at a transport without effect, then with the 'Cochrane' approaching he went on to Pisagua in search of prey for his torpedoes but had no success - he was fired at off Caleta Buena. Retiring to Iquique he fired at the town for an hour and a half. (but actually did no harm whatsoever). He then landed at Taltal, its defenders retiring into the hills.

Wednesday 27th May to Tuesday 2nd June

Stephan's division of Government troops which retired by train into the interior on the occupation of Caldera by the insurgents on 24th April is now known to have crossed the Andes into Argentine territory to have released their prisoners and given up their arms there on representation of the Argentine Government and to be returning to Santiago via Mendoza

Extra precautions are being taken at nights in Valparaiso bay – search lights etc. – for fear of a torpedo attack

JUNE

Wednesday 3rd June

The 'Almirante Lynch', 'Almirante Condell' and 'Imperial' SS have again left the bay with troops

Tuesday 9th June

Stephan's division is re-crossing the Andes to Santiago

Sunday 14th June

The Three government vessels have returned. They fired some shots at Iquique and Pisagua, landed at Tocopilla, exchanged shots with Antofagasta and landed at Chañaral – a fruitless raid.

Saturday 20th June

Letters from Iquique of the 10th inst state that flour and provisions had arrived from San Francisco, and that Balmaceda's attempts to stop the provisions getting there from Valparaiso had been useless.

The 'Itata' SS had arrived at Iquique with her arms but negotiations with the United States were still going on about her. The 'Esmeralda' had not come back

The shots fired at Iquique in the last expedition of Government boats had done no harm, all falling short.

Monday 21st to Friday 25th June

News has come that the USS 'Charleston' is taking the 'Itata' SS with her arms on board back to San Francisco – a great blow to the insurgents

The 'Lynch' and 'Imperial' have now left Valparaiso

Saturday 26th to Wednesday 30th June

The 'Imperial' only went to Coquimbo and the 'Almirante Lynch' south to Talcahuano

The 'Maipo' SS, one of the transports has been spotted in the Straits of Magellan

The 'Esmeralda' has arrived back at Iquique without any supply of arms or ammunition after her long trip of over two months. Attempts were made to stop her on the Mexican and Colombian coasts

JULY

Thursday 2nd July

A plot discovered to blow up the 'Imperial' SS with dynamite in Valparaiso Bay and Ricardo Cumming, the head of a business house in Valparaiso, a man of English descent but Chilean birth, has been arrested.

A great number of political prisoners have been shipped off to Iquique, the Government seemingly being tired of keeping them and not fearing their influence in the north, or rather believing in their own strength in the south.

Sunday 5th July – Tuesday 14th July

Ricardo Cumming and two others have been publicly shot. This incident caused great excitement among the insurgents and helped to keep up the spirit among them against Balmaceda.

Many new arrests have been made in Valparaiso and Santiago and one or two clubs forcibly closed.

The 'Maipo' has arrived back in Iquique having taken a cargo of arms ordered from Europe on board off the Falkland Islands (10,000 rifles, 4 – 5 million cartridges, Krupp and quick firing guns etc).

This is the most important event for the insurgents since they obtained possession of the Northern provinces. (It really decided the war in their favour)³⁹

On 9th July, the 'Esmeralda', 'Cochrane', 'Aconcagua', and 'Amazonas' appeared off Valparaiso bay again and remained cruising about the next day. A shot was fired at them from a fort.

There have been several engagements round the valleys of Huasco, Vallenar and Fririma between Government troops marched from Coquimbo and insurgents from Copiapo – with doubtful results.

Wednesday 15th - Thursday 23rd July

The Government have been sending troops to Coquimbo where many expect the insurgents to make their first real attack

Friday 24th - Friday 31st July

The 'Almirante Lynch' has gone out again, purpose unknown.

News from the north is very scanty. The Government threatens anyone who brings letters with death

³⁹ Interesting comment indicating perhaps the diary was written up later, after the outcome of the war was known

Claudio Vicuña was elected President on the 25th inst to succeed Balmaceda at the end of the year.

AUGUST

Saturday 1st – Tuesday 4th August

The 'Almirante Lynch' has returned without doing anything in the north. There are signs of discouragement in the small northern towns from the long delay and scantiness of provisions, injury to business etc.

The Insurgents are said to be training 10,000 men and Balmaceda to have 40,000. Balmaceda reviewed 10/15,000 men near Santiago on the 4th

Wednesday 5th – Wednesday 12th August

The insurgents have concentrated their forces at Caldera and Copiapo leaving a small number in Iquique to guard the place. Their outposts extend to La Reina and their ships cruise north and south. The expectation of an immediate offensive movement on their part is becoming general.

Families from outside Valparaiso are moving into town. The expectation is that the insurgents will land at Quintero or Concón and make an attack direct on Santiago, not Valparaiso. The Government are taking special precautions against the cutting of telegraph wires, injury to railways etc by disaffected people. The Government troops continue to go out constantly on reconnoitring expeditions.

Oppositionists in Santiago have been wearing red ribbons as a sign of the faith that is in them, especially ladies, and the Government have had to stop it.

Thursday 13th - Tuesday 18th August

The attack was popularly expected on the 15th, and the insurgents are now looked for, from day to day.

The 'Almirante Condell' has had a narrow escape having had to run the gauntlet of several of the insurgents' ships all firing at her off Carrizal.

On the 18th the 'Esmeralda' appeared off Valparaiso Bay and fired three shots (afterwards known to have been a pre-arranged signal to their friends ashore that the attack was imminent) Later in the day she came so close that shots were fired at her from the fort and splashed into the water close to her. She retired, but coming in range again more shots were fired. She did not return this firing.

There has been much cutting of telegraph lines and attempts to blow up railway bridges on the part of the oppositionists and many arrests have followed.

The priests are being accused louder than ever of giving shelter to revolutionists and making use of their hold over the women of the country to fan the revolutionary flame and some have been arrested.

Balmaceda has ordered all private possessors of arms to give them up by the 18th

Wednesday 19th August

The attack of the insurgents is expected with a greater appearance of certainty tomorrow

Thursday 20th August

The news is that the insurgents have effected landings north and south of Valparaíso at Quintero and at Algarrobo (the latter was false)

Aug 20⁴⁰

.....and 5,000 came from Santiago and 9,000 from points on the railway.....this gave a fighting force on Balmaceda's side of 14,000 men.....marched on Concón.....opposition seen today were the 'Esmeralda', 'O'Higgins', 'Aconcagua' 'xxxxxx' 'Amazonas' and 'Cochrane'

Aug 21

The fighting began about 12:00 (noon) and lasted till 4p.m. after which no more firing could be heard. In the evening several wounded and disorganised bodies of men reached town and the news soon spread that the opposition had secured a complete victory. It appears that the fighting began on the banks of the river at Concón and that by feigning to retire their right wing, the Opposition drew the Government troops under the fire of the 'Esmeralda', the 'O'Higgins', and the 'Magallanes', the shells from which vessels caused fearsome slaughter. The opposition appear then to then to have thrown forward their cavalry and to have captured almost the whole of the Government artillery. From what some of the beaten soldiers say, they must have been heavily handicapped by the fact of the opposition being with Mannlicher repeating rifles, which not only mowed them down at a distance beyond the range of their own weapons, but also threw four shots to their one. Towards the end of the battle the opposition threw forward a small body of cavalry which succeeded in reaching the rear of their opponents where they intercepted the reserve ammunition which was being sent to the front. With their ammunition run short, having lost some 4,000 men, and with a foe in front of them they could barely see and much less reach though suffering from a well-directed fire, the Government troops utterly lost heart, turned and fled back toward Viña in utter disorder.

⁴⁰ At this point and for the next 10 days' entries, the diary becomes typewritten and seems to have been written at least in part by one the partners, Mr H.G. Daubeny (who had been in Chile since 1875 and was made a partner in 1890). see Aug 30th entry. During this period the office was closed and the ex-pat staff were in their homes in the British Quarter.

The entry for 20th Aug has faded to the point of illegibility.

An idea of the slaughter may be formed from the fact that two of Balmaceda's crack regiments went into action each 1,200 strong and had each only about 220 men fit for service at the end of the day. This may, in a great measure, be attributed to the bursting of the 'Esmeralda's' shells on the rocks, though it is also attributable to the far superior rifle in the hands of the opposition troops who seem to have been well drilled in its use.

August 22nd

The mixed remains of several regiments which arrived during the night have, after their numbers were taken off their caps, been formed into a fresh battalion again and sent out to Viña. During the night the opposition have advanced toward Viña but are not visible. On shore nothing of importance has taken place, but it is said that reinforcements have arrived from Santiago and that Balmaceda is himself in either Limache or here.

The forts have fired several times on the ships but have not reached them. Last night the 'Imperial' SS and 'Almirante Condell' slipped out unseen by the Fleet and are said to have gone to Coquimbo for reinforcements.

August 23rd

Firing could be heard at 7:00 a.m. and from the terraces in the town we could see the smoke of the opposition's artillery firing on Viña from the hills on the opposite sides of the valley behind the race-course. The Government artillery replied from the Viña while the 'Cochrane' and 'Esmeralda' came in and threw shells most of which however fell short. The forts again tried unsuccessfully to hit the ships. No troops of the line have been engaged today, all the work having been confined to an artillery duel.

This evening it is said that Balmaceda's army has now been reinforced and that for the battle expected at Viña tomorrow he will have in the field from 16,000 – 18,000 men

What the opposition losses were on the 21st is not known and reports vary from 1,000 to 3,000. They are said to have 3,000 in reserve which have not yet been landed but from the movements of the transports on 21st it is also thought that these men were landed at Quintay and that they are marching round behind Placilla to take the Government forces in the rear. The 'Almirante Lynch' slipped into the bay last night and fired eight shots, at what is not known, the last of which blew out the breech of the gun killing her second lieutenant and two men. The Fleet are cruising right across the bay tonight, evidently on the lookout for the 'Imperial' SS returning with troops from Coquimbo.

August 24th

The town continues perfectly quiet. The banks which closed their doors on the 21st were ordered to open on the 22nd, but today banks, shops and all business houses have been ordered to keep closed, The morning passed without any news being obtained and only a little desultory firing was heard in

the afternoon round Viña. A report that the opposition had men marching round the rear of Valparaiso from the south is not so much believed now. The 'Imperial' SS returned from Coquimbo to Talcahuano yesterday and is said to have landed 2,000 men at the latter. This evening it is reported that the opposition have worked along to Quilpué, cut the railway bridge beyond Salto, captured a train of ammunition on its way from Santiago to Valparaiso and also a train of 3,000 of Balmaceda's forces at Quilpué. It thus seems as if Balmaceda's forces have been flanked and their communications with Santiago cut.

The Neutral Men o' War here are:

English: 'Champion' and 'Daphne'

German: 'Leipzig', 'Alexandrine' and 'Sophie'

United States: 'San Francisco' and 'Baltimore'

French: 'Champlain'

In case of rioting, the Germans are to land about 300 men to protect the Cerros Concepcion and Alegre; the British 76 men to protect the English and German consulates in the Calle Blanco and the Yankees will doubtless do something. There is an urban guard on these hills⁴¹ at night composed of English and Germans

A report puts the opposition forces at nearly 20,000; these are the ideas of Men who have had opportunities of watching their movements through strong glasses

August 25th 1891

8:00 a.m. Ships in sight are the 'Cochrane' coming up from the south, 'Limari' xxxxxxxxxx, the 'Amazonas' off Quinteros. It is dull with a sharp northerly breeze.

It is reported that Government officers have lost almost all control over their men at Viña and that a good deal of sacking there and in Miramar has taken place. One story is that Mr Schmit-Ern was nearly shot by a drunken soldier in the street; the production of a \$2 note diverted the soldier's ideas and he declared Mr S to be his best friend. Unfortunately a poor woman passed by at the time and the soldier said he felt bound to shoot someone and fixed on her as a target and shot her dead there and then.

An Englishman riding near Viña asked a soldier about his experience of the battle, to which he replied that he at present felt very much like shooting a 'gringo'. The 'gringo' dropped him a dollar and was glad to get round a turn in the road.

The 'Esmeralda' came from the south and went into Concón about noon, 'Cochrane' also went in there. A train of artillery is still lying idle the Bellavista. No one seems to have any news of the

⁴¹ The British settled on the hills in the suburbs of Valparaiso, Cerros Concepcion and Cerro Alegre (Mount Pleasant) (from Wikipedia)

opposing forces today. They are supposed to be fighting beyond Salto, but this is mere conjecture. Government artillery is still visible on one of the hills between Viña and Las Zorras.

At 2:00 p.m. it began to rain and by 3:00 it was raining hard which must make it wretched work for the troops. From high up the Cerro Alegre with a good telescope the opposition's tents can be seen on the plateau above and behind the race-course. The banks were ordered to open again today – a regular farce as no one else thought of doing so.

It is said that on the 21st, when the Government were so thoroughly thrashed at Concón, the opposition only had 3,000 men engaged against Balmaceda's 12,000 to 14,000. If true it shows more distinctly than ever the immense superiority of the Mannlicher rifle over the Gras; the fact of the ships' guns being brought to bear must not however be forgotten. Some people assert that the bulk of the opposition are already two days on the march to Santiago; that city is supposed to be destitute of troops and the opposition would have it all their own way, if they could attack it now. It however sounds too risky a plan for the opposition thus to divide their forces. Still the fact remains that no reliable news can be obtained as to the whereabouts of the bulk of the opposition men. No traffic except on foot was allowed in the streets yesterday, out today a few cabs are to be seen about. The town is noticeably quiet.

The position of the opposing forces are said now to be as follows:

Balmaceda's left wing rests on the fort at Miramar and his right somewhere about Quilpué, his line however is cut in two at Salto.

The opposition's right wing is on the hills above Salinas and they hold all the hills on that side of the estuary facing Viña. How far their true line extends is not known but they have thrown forward at any rate part of their left wing and seized Salto, cut the small railway bridge just beyond the station and burn the 'Cucharas' bridge across the estuary. To unite Balmaceda's forces again his right wing now has either to fight its way back from Quilpué to Viña or else to make a detour over the hills and get back to Valparaiso through Las Zorras. Possibly the reported fighting today beyond Salto is really near Quilpué and Balmaceda's right wing is trying to cut its way back along the railway line

4:30 p.m. It is said that all the fire bells in Valparaiso have been taken down (meaning no doubt that the means of ringing them have been taken away). This may prove very serious in case of fire, either intentional or accidental. The object no doubt is to prevent the bells being used to call the people together to obstruct the authorities' actions.

A terrible report is circulating among the poorer classes in town this evening regarding the doings of the soldiers in Viña. It is that with the promise of sacking held out to them if they beat the opposition, having made up their minds that they cannot win, they have given themselves up to not only sacking, but to licentiousness of all kinds and that the scenes in Viña can only be compared to these of the Indian mutiny. As there are still some English ladies in Viña, considerable anxiety is felt as to their welfare. And it is only to be hoped that the report is unfounded or greatly exaggerated. It may be taken as unfounded unless subsequently mentioned as correct.

9:00 p.m. Occasional sounds like distant field artillery are heard. It is still raining.

Another report is that the opposition have seized the trains at Quilpué and have arrived in Santiago without meeting resistance. This may be true, but as the wires are all cut, it cannot be known for a fact.

The 'Imparcial' the only paper which now comes out, contains an advertisement to the effect that the banks are to be open daily from noon to 3.00 p.m.

Meat is still plentiful in town, but the price is up about 50%. Vegetables have risen 150%. 10cents worth of potatoes and turnips now cost 26 and 30 cents respectively. The tramway horses have it is said, been taken for the army, and cab horses also.

Outsiders are so in the dark regarding the whereabouts of the opposition forces that we should not be surprised at their appearing on the hills behind Valparaiso at any moment. The state of suspense is becoming trying.

August 26th

There has been nothing of interest to record today. The rumour of the sacking of Viña must be untrue as no more has been said about it. Some of the opposition officers are said to have dined with their friends at Quilpué last night.

August 27th

News has today reached Mr Sanchez that his estate, the 'Retiro' at Quilpué has been seriously damaged by the opposition troops and the house there burnt down. The rumours are still as conflicting and untrustworthy as ever. It is now said that the two armies are facing each other near Placilla, that the Government outpost at Las Palmas (Claudio Vicuña's hacienda) have been driven in with heavy loss and that a general engagement is expected this afternoon. A defeat of the Government at Placilla might be very serious for the Valparaiso, as the defeated troops would pour in over the hills to sack to their hearts content, unless restrained by the Neutral Squadron's men. The Concepcion and Alegre hills could, and no doubt will be protected by the ships' men, but there is not sufficient foreign forces here to prevent looting in the Almendral⁴²

The ships in sight today have been: 'Cochrane', 'Esmeralda', 'Aconcagua', 'Maipo' and 'Amazonas'.

The 'Aconcagua' stopped a French steamer just beyond the range of the fort guns, but let her come on in to Valparaiso after a short time. The weather is perfect.

9:00 p.m.

Firing can be heard but so distant that we cannot make out whether it comes from the sea to the southwards or from the Placilla over the hills at the back. By 10:00 p.m. it had ceased altogether.

⁴² **El Almendral** is a mainly commercial neighbourhood that covers a large part of Valparaíso. It is bounded by Edwards streets to the west, Errázuriz Avenue to the north, Argentina Avenue to the east and Colón Avenue to the south

It was said this afternoon that the opposition have within the last 24 hours landed some 3,000 men at Algarroba and that they should join the main body tomorrow at Casa Blanca.

The last estimate of losses in the Concón fight is opposition 150 killed, 400 wounded and 1,000 gained by desertion of the enemy to them; Government 3,000 killed and wounded and between 1-2 thousand by desertion. A story is current that the opposition, before leaving Iquique, held trials on several of the Government men who have of late taken an active part against oppositionists here, and passed sentences of death on some of them. The Government officer who presided at the trial here of Cumming (for attempting to blow up the 'Lynch' etc) is sad to have been one of them, and on his being taken prisoner at Concón, he was summarily shot in accordance with the sentence of death previously passed on him. Such a proceeding however cannot be believed in without confirmation.

Eight days have now passed since the opposition landed at Concón and though they won the decided victory, there has nothing reliable since been reported of them. Valparaiso continues shut up like a city of the dead, and the suspense is becoming very irksome. Not only are all business places (except the banks for 2 hours each day) shut up, but all traffic except on foot is prohibited and no two persons are allowed to stop and talk in the streets. The fire bells, at any rate those on the hills, have been fastened in such a way that they cannot be used, the ropes or chains for ringing them have been disconnected, and the clappers fastened with wires.

August 28th

This morning, heavy artillery firing could be heard from the direction of the Placilla which increased in volume and was within half an hour accompanied by furious rifle and machine gun rattle. It appears that the first engagement began as early as 3 a.m. but nothing could be heard in town till 7. From that hour the roar of the field pieces and rattle of small arms increased till 10 a.m., then the firing seemed to slacken a little and by 10:30 the artillery had completely ceased firing. The rifle fire then broke out with redoubled vigour and continued for another hour when it at last began to slacken and finally to resolve itself into desultory discharged till at noon it ceased altogether. The suspense in town was very trying as the battle continued for four and a half hours before a word of news could be obtained. About 11 a.m. the first men began to arrive from the field, mostly mounted officers, followed by runaway riderless horses, some saddled, others with artillery harnesses dangling behind them. This we could see from the Cerro Concepcion as the runaways came down the Santiago road. Very soon it was ascertained that the opposition had won another complete victory and that the whole of Balmaceda's troops had been cut up and dispersed. The opposition threw out so extended a line that they entirely overlapped their opponents, then threw forward their wings and poured a murderous fire from three sides at once on Balmaceda's artillery which, though the gunners fought well, was finally taken intact by the opposition.

At noon the Intendente (Oscar Viel) handed over Valparaiso to the Neutral Squadron and he himself, according to all accounts, must have gone on board one of the foreign men o' war. The English, Germans and Americans at once landed their men, the English taking charge from above the English Hospital, down to the Cerro Alegre terrace, the Germans from the top of the Cerro Concepcion down

to the Banco Nacional on one side and the Plaza del Orden on the other. The Yankees took the Almendral.

About 3 p.m. Don Juan Walker Martinez, at the head of 100 cavalry, rode into the port amid violent cheering and waving of flags and handkerchiefs from the balconies and housetops. The excitement in the town at this time was intense and the streets were crowded with men of all classes. An hour later some of the opposition infantry began to arrive, in fair order though much mixed up with the crowd who cheered them all along the esplanade. The leading men had reached just beyond the passenger mole when a shot or two were fired (it is said by rogues) at the 'Almirante Lynch'. No doubt these shots were intended as an intimation to surrender, but instead of hauling down her flag, she opened fire with her long stern gun on the people near the landing place. In an instant a furious rifle fire was opened on her from the shore which swept her decks from end to end. This lasted about 10 minutes, during which time with glasses on the hill we could watch her crew hiding on board, as several of them jumping overboard dyeing the water with their blood as they swam away to buoys or other ships for shelter: we did not however see any killed on board, though some of those in the water failed to reach shelter, either sinking from exhaustion or being hit from the shore. At last one of the crew appeared on deck and waved a handkerchief, the firing ceased and he ran along the deck and hauled down the flag, replacing it with a white one. The ship was alongside the big mole, but her mooring ropes must have been shot away as she drifted over to the floating docks, where she was boarded by a number of fleteros⁴³ and at last taken charge of and moored by a small party of soldiers. Up to this time none of the opposition ships had been seen, since about ten when the 'Cochrane' went in to Concón.

The flag at the saluting battery was lowered and replaced by the dark blue with one star in it which the Chilean flagship always uses. The flag was run up and down till the 'Cochrane', coming out of Concón saw it, when the customary flag was again hoisted, and the 'Cochrane' after being met outside by one of the torpedo boats, came into the bay.

Promiscuous rifle shooting was going on from one end of the town to the other and as it became dark the firing increased at both ends. At about 7 p.m. a fire was started in the Plaza Echaurren and two more broke out at the Almendral. Before the night was over there had been ten fires which were allowed to burn themselves out, as the fire brigade was guarding certain parts of the town. The American marines seem to have been of very little use as the Almendral was a regular shooting gallery all night. The Yankees probably thought it more prudent to keep out of the way as the opposition people are considerably annoyed with them for their unconcealed espousal of Balmaceda's cause.

Regarding the firing on the 'Lynch' it is doubtful whether she or the shore commenced it. To those who were watching from the hill, it seemed like treachery on the ship's part in firing after the town had been surrendered, and we did not hear any rifle shot at her till she had fired her first gun; she only fired twice.

⁴³ stevedores

August 29th

About 300, mostly 'rotos', were killed in the streets last night and carts have been collecting the bodies this morning. A great deal of sacking was done at both ends of the town, but the business part of the port was fairly quiet while the foreign guard kept perfect order on the hills in their charge.

Don Eulogio Altamirano has been named the Intendente of Valparaiso, pro tem.

Soon after daylight, the Fleet assembled and came in, the 'Cochrane' among them as she went out again last night. The following ships have come in and anchored: 'Cochrane', 'Esmeralda', 'O'Higgins', 'Magallanes', 'Abtao', 'Bio-Bio', 'Aconcagua', 'Maipo', 'Cachapoal', 'Limari', and 'Carlos Roberto'.

Before dark the 'Cochrane' and the 'Esmeralda' left the bay and the 'Amazonas' came in from Concón with a large number of men on board. It was too dark to make out who they were, but probably they are the wounded from the Concón fight.

Mr Sanchez has disappeared; probably gone on board with Viel. It turns out that Mr Sanchez' place the Retiro at Quilpué was not harmed at all. All the livestock was however taken for the troops.

The last story tonight is that the President is in Santiago and that he has given up all further resistance. The fires last night destroyed portions of the Cable Co's line and as the old west coast cable goes into Coquimbo which is still in favour of Balmaceda, we are completely cut off. This does not so much matter as directly the battle was over yesterday, the censor bolted and most houses had telegrams ready which got away before the fires began. There is no censorship now on telegrams, nor is any objection made to the telephone being used.

It was said today that a force is to start tomorrow against Santiago.

10:00 p.m.

It has begun to rain steadily. There are some 3,000 between dead and wounded still on yesterday's battlefield, several carts were sent over this morning and it is to be hoped that some of the wounded are now under shelter. Parties of men, mostly Europeans, rode out to take what assistance they could to Dr Bredin and Dr Cooper on the field. Dr Page is head of the opposition medical staff and is there too with it is believed a few other doctors.

Nothing is yet known of the 'Imperial' or 'Almirante Condell'.

August 30th

The rain continued through the night and till nearly noon. A train has come through from Santiago bringing the welcome news that Balmaceda has handed over the city to General Baquedano and has himself fled no one knows whither.

Talcahuano has not yet adhered to the opposition, but as all that part of the country has all along been in their favour, no resistance can be apprehended from the few Balmacedistas in those parts. The Coquimbo garrison has not yet been heard from, nor is the whereabouts of the 'Imperial' or

'Condell' yet known. Apart from this one port and the two ships, the civil war may be considered as at an end.

At **11:30 a.m.** the neutral troops were re-embarked and the police took charge again. The trams are running and everything is orderly and quiet. The Central Co's cable is repaired and it is said that the authorities are now using the old cable to Coquimbo. The writer (Mr Daubeny) called on the Intendente this afternoon and found with him Don Daniel Feliu who quite recently went north. At sundown HMS 'Daphne' went out, apparently to the south.

The 'Amazonas' did bring wounded from Concón, but as the hospitals are full, she is keeping them on board.

The foreigners were at first a little alarmed at the withdrawal of the neutral troops but it does not look as if any more shooting or sacking need be apprehended and up to 10:00 p.m. the whole town is perfectly quiet.

Mr Altamirano speaks of going to Santiago tomorrow; his family is there and he believes all is well. There seems however to have been some sacking of Bamacedista private houses and of some newspaper offices. The 'Mercurio' newspaper has re-appeared in Valparaiso. Business should be resumed tomorrow (Monday)

A small force has been sent up to Santiago to receive the city from General Baquedano and to keep order.

Author's note: The foregoing pages (from 20th August) were hurriedly printed as opportunity permitted, while events there related were taking place. They were intended as preliminary notes and the following is a more detailed account of what has happened since August 19th

August 29th to September 3^d

In the first ten days of the period the opposition forces have made the attack on Balmaceda's country for which they have long been preparing and have gained a most brilliant and rapid success, winning two great battles against Balmaceda's forces which have resulted in the otherwise peaceful surrender of Valparaiso and Santiago, the abdication and flight of Balmaceda, and in fact, the acquisition of the whole country, including Coquimbo.

The ease of this conquest in the light of what has been previously written in this diary may seem sufficiently surprising but it is mainly accountable to the following causes which have been greatly underestimated by neutrals and in which even many Chilean partisans of the opposition have been deceived.

- The spirit of enthusiasm and subordination, and the generalship of the opposition troops.
- The want of heart and in some cases the actual revolutionary tendencies of the Balmaceda troops increased in since it appears by profuse bribery on the part of the opposition.
- In Balmaceda's army, regular pay failed to give his new soldiers the spirit to fight well for him and in the case of some thousands who deserted in and between the two battles, the spirit to fight on the other side has shown itself.

In the opposition army want of pay (for many of them have not been paid anything except \$10 each on account in June) has not checked the springing up of a wonderful spirit of enthusiasm for their cause; a spirit which has no doubt been fostered by exaggerated accounts of the wicked doings of Balmaceda and his men, and by free prophecies of the tyranny under which they would be ground if he wins, and of the blessings they would enjoy under the opposition rule; but a spirit which is nevertheless there, and very active too, to serve the interests of their leaders.

Confidence in their officers and implicit faith in General Canto their leader, and in Emilio Körner the German officer who has taught them all their drill and how to fight with modern implements, and Canto's good Generalship, assisted by Körner's thorough knowledge of tactics, offer other contrasts to Balmaceda's army; while last but not least must be mentioned the Mannlicher rifle with which several of the opposition regiments were armed, which rifle inspired great fear into their enemy by the length of its range and the almost smokelessness of its ammunition.

Really little has been known about the opposition army since the 'Maipo' arrived in Iquique with its arms and ammunition and when it only numbered 6,000 to 7,000 men, but the hanging back of men from joining them when after that they began to increase their army seems to have been due to disbelief that there were arms and space for all.

10,000 to 12,000 men only were brought down to Quinteros because the transports would not hold more but they say that 20,000 could easily have been obtained. Such a small number to meet Balmaceda's forces is evidence of their confidence, but a great many of them had been soldiers in the Peruvian war and nearly all of them had passed sometime or other through Körner's hands.

The whole Fleet, except the 'Esmeralda' which had gone on to fire the warning shots in Valparaiso Bay mentioned in the diary for *Thursday 13th - Tuesday 18th August*, with the transports started south from Caldera on the morning of the 17th August. The whole army except the leaders being in the dark as to whither they were going, but thinking Santiago was the immediate object of attack. On sailing they were told that it was Valparaiso and their delight is said to have been unbounded. The officers then had especially prepared plans of the district served out to them. The sea was perfectly calm all the way and on the morning of the 19th they arrived in Quinteros Bay.

After the anchorage had been dragged for fired torpedoes, landings began on the morning of the 20th, and went on all day. Meanwhile the news of the landing reached Valparaiso early in the day but reports also said that another landing had been effected at Algarrobo, south of Valparaiso and the Quinteros landing was supposed to be the least important. It was only after several days that it was generally known for certain that there was no other landing except that of the 10/12,000 men in Quinteros.

Before 10:00 a.m. 5 trains of troops had been despatched from Valparaiso to Viña del Mar to march to Concón and others followed during the day. Troops were brought down from Santiago and others ordered up from Concepcion to Santiago; but the latter were greatly delayed by rails and bridges having been broken on the railway. Troops were also sent to Laguna to watch against a landing there.

A proclamation was issued in Valparaiso encouraging and inciting the people to fight against the oppositionists, based on a false assertion that 2,000 Bolivians, with the President of Bolivia's assent were with the army; and another proclamation stated that as soon as fighting began in or near Valparaiso all traffic in the streets must cease and that no one must leave his house, but the provisions of this notice were never carried out with effect except as regards vehicular traffic.

In the afternoon the US warship 'San Francisco' steamed over to Quinteros bay and after waiting there awhile lying close to the opposition ships and watching the landing of the opposition troops she returned in the evening. She is generally said to have had two Chilean officers on board, to have repeated what she saw, and especially that the opposition were landing their artillery, a fact which persuaded Alcérreca that the landing was no feint to cover a real attack through a landing at some other port. The oppositionists themselves were so angry at their coming to spy that they seriously thought of firing at her, and her action is looked on as at least bad form by everyone, and has increased greatly the bad feeling against the Yankees which their support of Balmaceda had already stirred up among the oppositionists.

All the 20th was occupied by the oppositionists in landing and in the night the whole army marched southwards to meet the enemy which they were surprised to hear had advanced so far to meet them, as they expected to fight their first battle near Viña del Mar.

Balmaceda's forces (9,000 – 10,000 strong) were placed in a strong position on the south (left) bank of the Aconcagua River, a few miles from the mouth. They were well entrenched in the hills and their artillery was placed on their extreme right on a difficult hill, and commanding the river down to the sea. Canto's army had to cross the river before engaging them, but his artillery posted on the north side of the river could play on the enemy's artillery on the other side. The men had to wade across, some up to their necks and about 200 were drowned. When across they charged up the hills

and in certain places they were able to hide themselves and play on the enemy with their Mannlicher rifles at such a distance that they could not be reached and scarcely be seen themselves.

At the same time the 'Esmeralda' from the sea was able to drop shells into the enemy lines and later in the day when Alcérreca thought that the opposition right was retiring and his troops in consequence got nearer the sea, the havoc played with them by the ships was very great, while the cavalry which had crossed the river near the mouth came round to complete the rout.

The day ended in a complete victory for the opposition, all the enemy's artillery being left with them and 2,000 prisoners including deserters. Their cavalry chased some of the enemy right into Viña del Mar before they retired.

1,500 to 2,000 of Balmaceda's troops with the Generals Barbosa and Alcérreca among them fled to Quilpué where they were again despatched next day to Valparaiso. The greater part of the rest of the troops returned to Viña and Valparaiso, many completely worn out, and among them the troops who had been marched out to Laguna the night before, who had been brought back in the morning and sent out to the battle without breakfast; but many soldiers dispersed through the town and on the hills, hiding in holes and corners and getting rid of their uniforms in order not to serve again.

The losses in the battle are estimated at about 150 dead and wounded on the opposition side and 4,000 to 5,000 on Balmaceda's side, but the latter's figures include about 2,000 men, some of whom were taken prisoner by, and some who went over to, the opposition side. Balmaceda was in Quilpué when the news of the defeat came, and instantly retired back to Santiago. Before the news reached Valparaiso, the 'Esmeralda', 'Aconcagua' and 'Amazonas' steamed across Valparaiso Bay with enormous flags flying in sign of victory.

In the night the 'Condell' and 'Imperial' were dispatched to Coquimbo for more troops, and troops were ordered to march overland from Coquimbo.

That night and the next day (22nd) the opposition army occupied themselves in taking up their positions on the plateau on the top of the hills between Concón and Viña del Mar and on the slopes facing Viña and Salto. They had brought no tents with them and the soldiers had their first experience of sleeping in the open. They had thrown away before the battle parcels of food which had been distributed to each man and this made some difficulty in feeding them, but throughout the campaign the men bore long fasts cheerfully saying that they would get plenty to eat in Valparaiso.

There was some firing from the forts at the ships on this day (22nd) and in the early morning the ships were firing without success at two torpedo boats which had been sent to Quinteros to watch their movements.

Barbosa and Alcérreca were engaged in collecting the remains of their army of the day before in Viña and posting them on the hills over Viña and between Viña and Salto, and in getting reinforcements from Santiago, while the opposition army was engaged in making preparations for an attack on Viña the next day, for their plan was if possible to win a decisive victory there and march straight into Valparaiso.

Firing began at daybreak on the 23rd and was kept up for a long time between the artillery of both sides and the 'Cochrane' and 'Esmeralda' came in as close as they dared and fired shells at the Viña and Miramar forts, which did no particular damage, and after they had retired in the afternoon the 'Lynch' which had been away when the landing took place and had slipped into the bay the night before, went across to Viña and fire a few shots at the hills, the last of which burst the gun and killed the 2nd officer and two men. The losses on both sides were small this day but Canto discovered that the forts were too well served, and the army before him too strong to enable him to win such a battle as would let him take Valparaiso without hard fighting right into the streets, and wishing to avoid this he decided to adopt the alternative plan of which had already been formed of attacking Valparaiso from Placilla. Accordingly in the night he withdrew all his forces to the plateau on top of the hills where they were posted (the same as that already mentioned) and kept his fires going to make the enemy think he still occupied the same positions. So successful was he in this deceit that more men still were got down from Santiago for the battle expected the next day and nearly 10,000 men were said to have been posted by the morning on the hills over Miramar, Viña, and to beyond Salto.

The next morning, 24th Canto's main army marched along the plateau where they were posted and got down into, and took possession of, Quilpué without the enemy knowing it, while one battalion was sent down into the valley to cut the railway and telegraph lines between Salto and Quilpué, which they did efficiently, blowing up a bridge and causing a locomotive to enter tunnel at full speed and be smashed up in it. They were under fire all the time, but were protected by their artillery on the hills behind them.

These movements put them out of easy reach of Balmaceda's army which was all posted together on the other side of the break in the railway and which moreover had as yet no idea of the projected march to Placilla. It continued to expect the attack to be made on them where they were.

Claudio Vicuña and Domingo Godoi were constantly riding out to Viña from Valparaiso to inspect the troops on this and the following day. The night of the 24th and all of the 25th Canto remained quietly in Quilpué. His soldiers were on the whole mostly orderly and measures were taken to prevent them getting drunk including the spreading of a report that some men who had taken drink there had been poisoned, but this report had the unfortunate effect of causing the soldiers to sack one of the public houses.

In the middle of the night of the 25th the whole army was marched away and no outsiders knew of their destination, and Balmaceda's troops were left outwitted in their old positions.

Canto's march on the first day was from Quilpué to Las Palmas – Claudio Vicuña's hacienda – and it is creditable to his army that they did no sacking of the houses and only took what cattle and sheep were required for their own consumption, for Vicuña and Godoi, next to Balmaceda, are the two whom the opposition soldiers have been taught to abhor above all others of their opponents.

The next day's march brought them to Las Cadenas, near Placilla and there they slept. Hitherto they had been unopposed since taking Quilpué but now they were again nearing Valparaiso (from the land side this time so that they were cut off from their ships), their movement had of course become known, Balmaceda's army opposed their further progress and a decisive battle must take place the next day. Generals Barbosa and Alcérreca had with 10,000 to 11,000 men taken up an exceedingly

strong position from which it would seem almost impossible for Canto to dislodge them. The road going from Valparaiso to Placilla ascends to nearly 1,500ft. above these when it comes out onto a plateau, and crossing the plateau, descends a steep hill in a zigzag into Placilla at the foot of it. Placilla is a little village at the head of a large plain which opens out wide and long right at the foot of the hill above mentioned, along this plain Canto's army advanced and on the steep hills down which the zigzag comes were the enemy facing them. The artillery of Barbosa's army was placed in three positions on the top of the hill overlooking the plain. Canto's artillery was on two small hills to the rear. Barbosa's infantry occupied the sides of the hill, the zigzag road, and the side of the plain nearest the hill. By daybreak Canto had moved the main body of his troops in open order close up under the hills on his left and on his right without the knowledge of the enemy, so that they began to fire not on them but on some regiments which were still marching up along the plain. And some of whom never engaged at all in the battle, so that the battle was really won by only about 8,000 men. Canto's troops dashed up the hills on the right and the left, meaning to outflank the enemy and capture the artillery and in this they succeeded. One battalion of 580 men lost half its members in the assault, but being reinforced by another battalion, took the artillery on their right. The final capture of the artillery on the left was made by a dash of cavalry. Generals Barbosa and Alcérreca were both killed and the battle became nothing but a rout. The number of killed and wounded on the opposition side seems to have been about 1,000, and on Balmaceda's side about 2,000.

Canto's troops after the victory never stopped but went straight through on to Valparaiso down the Torros road, pursuing those of the enemy who had taken the same way. From Valparaiso the pursuers and the pursued could be seen covering the hills coming down towards the town. At about 11.00 a.m. the news of the defeat and death of the generals was known to Oscar Viel, the Intendente of Valparaiso, and at 11:30 seeing that resistance was useless, though he had several regiments in Valparaiso, gave up the town to the foreign men o' war, and half an hour afterwards the Germans, English and Yankee men o' war landed their men.

The news spread like wildfire and the Government troops on the streets, which hitherto had been looked on with fear, were jeered by the mob. One officer on foot turned round and fired his revolver at the people. About 2.39 p.m. the oppositionists began to enter the town. Two boys on mules came in first chasing some of the defeated cavalry and shouting 'Viva la opposition'.

As the troops came through the town they were cheered most wonderfully, every house hanging out flags or red cloth (the colour of the opposition) and the embracing was wonderful to see. The enthusiasm was such as cannot easily be forgotten, or described.

Claudio Vicuña, Domingo Godoi and Oscar Viel, fortunately for their lives managed to get away in boats just in time to a German man o'war. One large body of men came in straggling along the esplanade and among them a great number of Balmaceda's soldiers with their coats turned inside out. As the leaders of this body got opposite the 'Lynch' which was lying close by the big mole, they noting that she had not hauled down her flag, and commenced firing at her, foolishly the 'Lynch' replied with two shots from a Hotchkiss gun, and then the whole body on the esplanade, from the Luna Club to the bog mole took it up and for several minutes there was an uninterrupted roar of musketry till the flag of the ship was hauled down. Some of the men jumped overboard and were afterwards picked up, and Fuentes, the captain, and some of the officers got away to a foreign man o' war in a boat. The 'Lynch' and the torpedo boats were then taken possession of.

As a matter of fact the 'Lynch' ought to have slipped away with Claudio Vicuña and the others, but the progress of the opposition was so rapid that she had not raised sufficient steam to allow her getting away. Late in the afternoon the 'Cochrane' saw a signal made that the town was taken, and a torpedo boat went out to meet her and came back with her.

All these days and nights since the landing at Quinteros on the 20th, Valparaiso had been perfectly quiet and no rioting or disorderliness of any kind had taken place. Business was quite suspended since the morning of the 21st when a panic took place owing to a report that the opposition troops were marching into Valparaiso, and the cavalry were riding through the town cutting people down who did not get quickly enough into houses.

All offices and shops being closed except that the banks were by order open 2 hours each day. Trams and carriages were not running. The noise and smoke of the battle at Concón and the fighting near Viña, the movement of the troops in the town and of the ships and the rumours, true and false, which went from mouth to mouth were sufficient distraction from the monotony and idleness of these days.

In Miramar there was a great deal of sacking and looting by dispersed and drunken soldiers after the battle of Concón and a little too in Viña del Mar. Fortunately nearly all the English families had left their places in time.

Every night in Valparaiso, amateur German and English guards turned out on the hills and found no disorder. The night of the taking of Valparaiso on the 28th was however different. The victorious soldiers to a great extent were dispersed still about the town, there was no police and no one to keep order, except that the German and English Marines and sailors on this night and several succeeding days and nights, together with the amateur guards patrolled the hills of Concepcion and Alegre which are mostly inhabited by foreigners and that the Yankees were posted in the Edwards' house in Plaza Victoria which is occupied by the Yankee Consul, but they were useless as the mob would have attacked them if they had appeared on the streets. All that night of the 28th rioting and sacking, principally of small shops, public houses and pawnbrokers went on in the lower parts of the town, to the north of the Plaza Victoria and to the south of the Plaza de la Intendencia, and the firing of rifles never ceased. 14 fires occurred which had to burn themselves out because the Firemen could not work for the mob. One German fireman was shot dead. Fortunately there was no wind or half the town must have been burnt.

In the morning about 300 dead bodies were picked up in the town. There was no disturbance where the English and German guards were, they disarmed any soldiers coming with arms and arrested suspicious characters. Bullets often whistled by and some people had narrow escapes, but none was hurt.

The next day, the 29th, Eulogio Altamirano was appointed Intendente (temporary) and Carlos Lyon⁴⁴, Daniel Felici and Felix Bazan Alcaldes, Deputies in Valparaiso. The police were turned out again (serving new masters now) and the officers of the army were employed on collecting their scattered forces. Viña del Mar was now occupied and preparations were commenced for an immediate attack on Santiago.

⁴⁴ Carlos Lyon Santa Maria

During the day all the Fleet with the transports came into the bay to which they had been strangers so long and anchored there. In the evening news came that the President Balmaceda had surrendered, but it was not generally known and the rain coming down in torrents, the town was nearly quite quiet, and has been so every night since.

This day of 29th was a great day in Santiago, for in the morning a proclamation was read in the streets: the notice of Balmaceda's surrender and his last declaration to the people, and these were his words:

- Seeing that in resisting the armed revolt of the Fleet last 7th January, I have complied with my prime duty of maintaining the principals of authority without which no Government is possible.

- Seeing that my patriotism and duty as a Chilean have placed a limit on my powers since it does not become an honourable Governor to prolong a struggle which cannot be maintained without reasonable hope of success.

- Seeing that the fortune of war in the late battle at Valparaiso has not been favourable to the cause I support, I for my part have resolved to put an end to a contest so detrimental to the credit of the state and to the common welfare, and

I decree that the citizen, General of Division Manuel Baquedano be at the head of the Government, and in consequence I enjoin that all chiefs, officers and soldiers of the provinces, Governors and other functionaries extend to him all due recognition and obedience.

The reading of this notice caused the wildest excitement in Santiago, and the most extravagant demonstrations of joy, which however spent themselves in a practical way by a general sacking of houses belonging to Balmaceda's chief supporters, not robbery at first but simple destruction. For instance outside one house the streets were strewn with bonds of the Caja Hipotecario⁴⁵ which remained untouched. Among the list of the 49 house sacked published in the papers, maybe mentioned the offices of the newspapers, the house of Balmaceda's mother, his brother Rafael, Eulogio Allendes president the House of Deputies, Juan Mackenna, Julio Bañados Espinosa, Minister of the Interior, Claudio Vicuña President Elect, Valdes Carrera, Manuel Aristides Zañartu, General José Francisco Gana, Adolfo Eastman, president of the Senate, Acario Cotapos⁴⁶, Alfredo Ovalle Vicuña and the Godoi Family. The political prisoners were released as of course they had been in Valparaiso and the clubs reopened. Balmaceda was burned in effigy.

Baquedano appointed an Intendente of Santiago and of various other provinces and telegraphed to Paris dismissing Joachim Godoi from the legation and appointing Augusto Matte⁴⁷ in his place, and to Buenos Aires substituting Guerrero for Gabriel Vidal.

In the evening the firemen were called out and the troops employed to restore order, which they did effectively and with considerable bloodshed.

⁴⁵ The **Caja de Creditor Hipotecario** was the first Chilean state credit institution. Created in 1855, it ceased to exist in 1953 when it merged, along with other similar public financial institutions, into the Banco del Estado de Chile.

⁴⁶ He was a Deputy, perhaps the father of the Chilean composer of the same name?

⁴⁷ Name may not be corrected: manuscript vert faded

Balmaceda had absconded at 2:00 a.m. leaving his decree behind him, and all search for him has proved unavailing. He was reported to have arranged with a ship to take him from San Antonio or some place near there and the 'Esmeralda' cruised about to catch him,. The general opinion up to 4th September is that he is still hidden somewhere in Santiago.

The fact is that neither he nor the leading men on his side even for a moment expected this disastrous fiasco and none of them made their preparations for it.

It is appropriate to record here that on the 19th, the day before the landing in Quinteros, Balmaceda's agents got wind of an assemblage of young men in an Hacienda close to Santiago called 'Lo Cañas' belonging to Carlos Walker Martinez⁴⁸, and troops were sent to disperse them. The troops behaved with the greatest barbarity and shot about 20 of them, some of whom were not more than 14 years old, and afterwards piled the bodies of the dead and wounded and burnt them together. The manager of the place was required to say where Carlos Walker was hidden in Santiago and on refusing was, it was said burnt over slow fire with other refinements of torture which it is impossible to mention. This incident, exaggerated though it may be in the facts about the manager, though it is true enough in the main, has naturally excited the oppositionists more than ever against Balmaceda and his people.

The retirement of Balmaceda is the end of the civil war. In Concepcion and Talcahuano as soon as the news was known the troops killed their officers, and there was sacking of Government people's houses and general rejoicing. The latter was an event in every town of the south accompanied by more or less disorderly proceedings. The 'Condell' and the 'Imperial' which went to Coquimbo on 21st to fetch troops, landed 2,000 men in Talcahuano and returned to Coquimbo, but on learning the fate of the Government, Moraga took them up to Callao⁴⁹ and delivered them up to the Chilean Legation.

Some 400 to 500 Cavalry arrived near Calera from Coquimbo under Stephan, and committed some abuses refusing to give themselves up, but soon dispersed and Stephan is in hiding.

The troops in Coquimbo itself have surrendered though at first they could not believe in Balmaceda's end. Ships have been sent from Valparaiso to take possession.

With the Fleet had arrived here Jorge Montt and Joachim Walker Martinez and on the 2nd September the remaining members of the 'Junta de Gobierno'⁵⁰ arrived in Valparaiso from Iquique, viz

Manuel J Irrarázza, Isidoro Errázuriz, Waldo Silva, Ramon Barros Luco and were received with a salute of 21 guns while all the Chilean ships were decked with flags in their honour.

Political refugees are hurrying back to Chile. Agustin Edwards is coming in the 'Mapocho' from Callao (about this steamer it may be recorded that early in August there was another well organised but unsuccessful attempt made by Arrate and his soldiers interned in Peru to take possession of her and bring her down for the President's use)

⁴⁸ See the link https://www.archivonacional.gob.cl/616/w3-article-8088.html?_noredirect=1 for details of this massacre

⁴⁹ In Peru

⁵⁰ Governing board

Canto has announced that all the soldiers who have come over to the opposition side will be paid in full

Several arrests have been made, one of the most important of which on account of his cruel behaviour is that of Pio Fierro, and one Leon Levin editor of a newspaper who was caught printing sheets inciting the people to burn and sack in the name of Canto has been shot.

The Junta who have of course received the Government in Santiago from Balmaceda, have a difficult work in front of them to restore the government of the country and to settle claims and disputes, but the actions and intention must be left to future pages of the diary.

But one other matter that requires mention here is the treatment of the wounded after the battles. At Concón the opposition ambulance seems to have worked well and to have collected and put the wounded under cover whence as soon as possible steamers took them away to Valparaiso. At Placilla however the excitement of victory and the attraction of Valparaiso were too much for the Chilean doctors and officers. There was no ambulance on the field and it is no exaggeration to state that if it had not been for the Englishmen and some Germans in Valparaiso who for three days worked at finding and having the wounded carried in stretchers to the road and procuring carts to take them to the town, but few would have lived. The common people worked well enough under direction, but left alone their only idea was robbing the dead. There are at this moment over 3,000 wounded in hospitals.

Postscript to the Revolution

September 4th to 14th

The Junta de Gobierno has established itself as the provisional Government in Santiago and two other members have been added to it. It now consists of:

Captain Jorge Montt, President, and associated with him Waldo Silva, vice-president of the 1890 Senate.

Ramon Barros Luco, president of the 1890 Deputies
also

Manuel J Irrarrázaval as Minister of the Interior

Joaquim Walker Martinez as Minister of Hacienda

Colonel Adolfo Holley as Minister of War

Isidoro Errázuriz as Minister of Justice

Manuel A Matta as Minister of Foreign Affairs

Agustin Edwards as Minister of Public Works

They have further associated themselves with, as a consulting body, the senators of the 1890 Congress whose term of office did not legally expire this year. With regard to the re-establishment of a Constitutional Government, they have decided not to convoke the congress of 1890 (holding that although it was prevented from sitting, its functions expired on the date on which it would have expired under ordinary circumstances), and have decreed: that new elections shall be held on 18th October for Senators, Deputies, Municipals, and for Electors of the President; that the Congress and Municipals elected shall be installed on 10th November; that the president of the Republic shall be elected on 18th November and that he shall enter on his duties on 26th December.

Meanwhile the Senate composed as above will exercise the executive powers in the country.

One of the first acts of the Junta was to notify members of the foreign diplomatic corps in Santiago of their establishment as rulers over the whole country, and there is little doubt that they will soon be recognised officially as the Chilean Government by all foreign nations.

The Junta dismissed a number of Balmaceda's foreign representatives and have appointed new ones. Among the latter they have made Agustin Ross their Minister in London.

The manifesto of Congress of the 1st of January which authorised the revolution and deposed Balmaceda, already published in Iquique (of which a translation was given in this diary under the date 8th May n) has been re-published here and this time with the signatures of the majority of Congress in full. In the light of that document, all acts of Balmaceda since 1st Jan, of his Congress, and of his agents, are, in the eyes of the Junta, illegal. Accordingly all Balmaceda's reforms of the Courts of Justice and the whole new judicial machinery which he established in the country, are knocked on the head, and the Junta has decreed that the order of things before the 1st Jan is restored, except that those judicial functionaries and employees who accepted judicial posts under Balmaceda are dismissed.

The 'Corte Suprema' and the 'Corte de Apelaciones' in Santiago have already resumed their functions.

A very important question has had to be settled by the Junta, viz as to how they should deal with Balmaceda's emissions of paper money. By a decree in Iquique of 9th March, the Junta declared the first emission (\$12,000,000) which Balmaceda made, illegal, and were very loth to retire from the position they had taken up, and some of them wished to entirely repudiate the new emissions, a course which would not only have been unfair (seeing that the banks and people of Balmaceda's country had been compelled by Force Majeure to accept it and the Junta had at that time no manner of jurisdiction over his part of the country) but also would have caused ruin to many people and possibly much rioting and disturbance, besides shaking the confidence which everyone is prepared to extend to the new Government. For many days the discussion went on and the leading banks, merchants and lawyers all used their influence to stop the measure. Eventually the Junta assisted by the fact which they had come to realise that they required to make use themselves of Balmaceda's paper money to pay their soldiers etc, unless they made an issue themselves, and gave way, but only after forcing the banks to become responsible for the 1891 notes which they at present hold until the new Congress should meet and regulate the matter, and this the Banks did in the form of a petition reserving to themselves whatever rights they might have at law.

At the same time the Treasurer reported that the Government had \$3,000,000 left by Balmaceda's government, and also £196,000 in drafts on London, the greater part of which the Balmaceda government had not remitted out of the country and of which, what had been sent away, they had great hopes of stopping. In view of all this, and the fact that judicial proceedings were to be taken against those responsible for the illegal issues, the Junta stated by decree that they considered the fiscal interests sufficiently protected and suspended their Iquique decree of the 9th March.

This was on 10th September, and the banks opened for the first time since the end of the war on the 11th after Government officials ascertained the amount of 1891 notes which each had. They been kept closed by order for the first 2 or 3 days after the end of the war, so that the Government might ascertain from their books the state of the accounts of Balmaceda's followers, and since then they had remained closed fearing that the repudiation of the 1891 issues would be carried out. The total amount of the Balmaceda's issues is about \$22,000,000 and the amount of that paper held by the banks is between \$9-\$11,000,000.

The measures which the Junta is taking to punish Balmaceda and his followers and to make them respond for the consequences of the war are entirely judicial. Two men were shot off hand about 29th caught red handed in trying to stir up the people to incendiarism and pillage, but there has been nothing more of that sort.

The Junta has addressed a circular to the civil public prosecutors to take measures to put an embargo on the properties and money of Balmaceda's Congressmen and others responsible for the prejudices which the state has suffered and a writ has been granted with regard to:

- J M Balmaceda
- Claudio Vicuna
- Manuel Maria Aldunate
- Pedro Nolasco Gandarillas
- Jose Fructuoso Cousiño
- Canonigo Garcia
- Moises Vargas

- Gabriel Vidal
- All the Deputies and Senators of Balmaceda's congress

Forbidding the sale or mortgaging of their landed properties or shares, the retention of the money which they may have in the banks and other places and the suspension of payment of all debts to them.

Another circular has been addressed to the criminal public prosecutors ordering their special activity in finding and bringing to justice those who participated in the following crimes:

- In the assassination of Isidoro Ossa (December last)
- The violation and sacking of private property done by order or with the tacit assent of the authorities
- Floggings and torturings inflicted as punishment for political opinions or as a method of examination
- Violation of private correspondence and of the correspondence of the foreign ministers
- The judicial assassinations of the sergeants of the 7th regiment, of the crew of the (torpedo boat) 'Guala' and of Ricardo Cummings and his companions
- The massacre of Lo Cañas
- The misappropriation of public money, and in the usurpation of the faculties of the several branches of the administration

Details of several instances of flogging and horrible torturing by some of Balmaceda's men have been published in the papers, and with regard to the massacre at Lo Cañas, the facts mentioned previously are confirmed with this addition that after some of the boys had been killed and some had been brought away as prisoners, Balmaceda himself ordered the latter to be taken back to the farm 'for the law to be carried out on them in full'.

As to the violation of correspondence, a regularly organised system for the examination and opening of letters in all of the principal post offices has come to light.

As to Balmaceda's army, officers of the rank of captain and higher are ordered to be arrested and those of lower grades are sent to any place of residence they may fix, giving their word not to leave it. The majority of his common soldiers are disbanded being paid \$10 each and sent to their homes at the expense of the state, but those who went over to the opposition are to be paid the full wages due to them, and those who have certificates to show that they served in the Chilean army in the Peruvian war are to be allowed to retain their position in the army.

Many prisoners besides the sub-officers have been permitted to retire to fixed places of residence, but bonds for a considerable amounts, signed by third parties have been required from them.

Among some of the prisoners most notable for the ferocity they displayed under Balmaceda may be mentioned Pio Fierro, Valdes Calderon, and Colonel Stephan

In no instance have the populace carried out lynch law on anyone, though in 1 or 2 cases they were ready enough to do so, but were prevented. Manuel Maria Aldunate, Balmaceda's last minister for foreign affairs, has certainly been murdered by some of the soldiers coming with him from

Coquimbo, but the motive here was robbery of a considerable sum of money which he carried with him.

Balmaceda himself has not been discovered but is supposed to be still in Santiago. He was traced to have stayed two days in the house of Eusebio Lillo.

Claudio Vicuña, Oscar Viel, Captain Fuentes and Domingo Godoi who took refuge in German and United States men o' war on August 28th have been conveyed in those ships to Peru.

A host of new Intendentes, Governors, etc have been appointed, among the former, Juan de dios Arlegui has been appointed to Valparaiso in place of E Altamirano who was made Intendente on August 29th.

Diego Barros Arana has been restored to the post he occupied before the revolution as chief of the commission appointed to fix the boundaries between Chile and the Argentine.

The rectors, professors and employees of schools and colleges dismissed by Balmaceda have been re-appointed and those who served under him, except the professors under contract, have been dismissed.

The fares on the state railway which Balmaceda raised by 50% have been reduced to their former rates. The cables, telegraph lines, and telephones are all open again for free use by the public and difficulties in the way of shipping are over.

The transports made use of by the opposition during the war are being returned to their owners.

Another Cargo of arms has been received by the Junta, which they had ordered for the chance of Canto being defeated in his first campaign against the south.

All the telegrams which passed between Balmaceda and his generals and others during the campaign have been published and it has come to light that the opposition and committees on shore not only possessed a copy of Balmaceda's code but also received from the telegraph office a copy of every message received and sent by him. His telegrams show that he was by no means content to leave matters in his generals' hands, but endeavoured to regulate things himself, more than it seems right that a civil ruler should do, if his generals are good and trustworthy. That they were not so is clear from the fact alone that Balmaceda had given strict orders that the enemy should not be faced with less than 14,000 men. This is the number which Barbosa and Alcérreca would have had by the morning of the 21st, had they not advanced so far, and brought on the battle of Concón that day with not more than 9,000 men and those many of whom tired, fasting and in part disaffected.

Admiral Brown has written a letter to P Egan the US minister, denying that the 'San Francisco' took Chilean officers to watch the landing of the opposition at Quinteros, or that he gave information to Viel, but the explanation he gives is considered very lame.

A subscription has been raised in Valparaiso alone of £90,000 for the benefit of those wounded in the battles.

In the sacking of the houses of Balmaceda's followers which took place in Santiago on 29th, the organisation of the affair is remarkable. For instance the leaders had plans of houses where several

families lived and the property of opposition families in those houses was thereby saved. No fires took place, though Balmaceda's new house, building and nearly finished, was destined to the flames, but on getting to it the people cried out that it should be kept as a present to Canto, and thereupon they wrote of the doors and walls 'El pueblo á Canto', 'El pueblo para el bravo Canto' and other such expressions and left it.

Exchange The price just after the landing of the opposition was $16\frac{1}{2}$ and when business was resumed on the 31st it went straight up to 18, and continued advancing till 3days later it was $19\frac{3}{4}$. Since then it has fluctuated a good deal around $19\frac{1}{2}$.

The Final Chapter

September the 15th to the 25th

The great national Feast Days, connected with the 18th of this month, the day when every 5 years the President of the Republic should retire from his office and the new President be installed, were celebrated in the capital this year with more than the usual festivities. This 18th was the day when Balmaceda would have given over his office to Claudio Vicuña, the president-elect of his party, but now the act of deposition of Balmaceda have been carried out and he is hiding in Santiago, Vicuña an exile from the country, and in their stead their enemies, amidst the rejoicings of the people of the country, had set up a provisional Government with intent, as soon as might be, to establish a new Congress and a new President.

On the 18th a grand 'Te Deum' was, in thanksgiving, sung in the cathedral in the presence of the members of the new Government, and the chiefs of the army and navy, whilst all the soldiers were drawn up in the square outside.

On the 19th the army was marched in review on the racecourse past members of the new Government and while the ceremony was taking place, the people assembled there were startled by the news that Balmaceda had committed suicide by shooting himself with a revolver.

It had happened at 8 o'clock that morning in the house of José Uriburu, the Argentine Minister⁵¹, who it then became known, had given him shelter there ever since his flight. It also came to light, that during the last few days he had, through Uriburu, proposed to the Government, on condition that they would guarantee his safety from violence of the people, that he should surrender himself to be taken to the penitentiary to await there his trial, and the matter was on the point of being arranged.

In the matter of his change of purpose Balmaceda speaks for himself in the following letter which he left addressed to Uriburu:

As we have spoken together, and as you know, I have to put an end to the situation in which I find myself. I must no longer take advantage of the safety which you have so generously afforded me in moments which I commend to my friends, as those in which I have received the greatest service in my life. The rage of my enemies is capable, if they discover my place of residence of extremities which I will avoid even with the greatest sacrifice which a man of whole mind can make.

You know that I have scorned the way of vulgar flight because I consider it unworthy of the man who has ruled the destinies of Chile to shun the land of the revolution in its triumph. Therefore I had decided of my own will to place myself in the hands of the 'Junta De Gobierno' hoping that in the end the constitution and laws would prevail to save all.

But with all the chief officers of the army, all the Senators and Deputies, the town councillors, the judges and the public functionaries of all of the services, accused and indicted, prisoners or fugitives, and myself whom Congress alone has the right to judge,

⁵¹ Presumably the same José Uriburu that went on to be Vice-President and then President of Argentina in the 1890's

thrown to the justice represented by special judges, partisans of the revolution, to answer in our own persons and our goods, for all we have done in Government, as we had not been the Government, arbitrary procedure has been established in such a form that I have lost all hope of justice being meted out.

Seeing the spirit and tendency of the revolution (now become the Government) no way is left to me but either to prolong my refuge here, a thing which I ought not to, and cannot do, or sacrifice.

God grant that this step may bring an alleviation to my friends from the persecutions which they inflict on them in the hope of thus overwhelming and injuring me more.

May there be mercy for the man who falls by the blows of misfortune.

And I bless you and your holy wife so may my children also bless you always.

Ask Arrieta who is a good man and closely allied to mine to carry out the last offices of charity without ceremony or any attendance.

May you and your wife and children be always happy.

He also wrote letters to his wife and mother, and to his friend Eusebio Lillo which are not public property.

His body after the proper declarations had been drawn up, was for fear of the people, taken quietly away in a carriage at half past seven in the morning, the crowd who had assembled outside the house having dispersed, and was buried in the cemetery without any disturbance in the presence of the Intendente of Santiago, Arrieta, and a few other persons.

This is the end of the man who has brought immense trouble on his country, believing, let him have that credit, all the time that he was doing his duty by the constitution, but prevented by his vanity, arrogance, and ambition, from seeing that his interpretation of the manner in which he should exercise his power was distasteful to and could not be forced on the people of the country from whom he held that power. Hence it was that the majority of his servants were men of ill repute for none others were available to him and hence it was that to carry out his purposes he found himself compelled to wink at their cruelties and to tacitly encourage their corruption by distributing intensive reward for deeds done by them and giving excessive salaries.

His own character assisted by the interest that so many unscrupulous men under him had in lying to him, deceived both him and his chief followers as to the state of affairs in his own country, and in the opposition camp. The massacre of Lo Cañas, in so far as it consisted in the shooting down of an armed body of men (young men though they were) was excusable as the act of a man believing in his own cause and determined to, and firmly believing he would, put down the revolution, and so was the shooting of Cummings and of the crew of the 'Guala'. But the torturings and mutilations which accompanied the slaughter at Lo Cañas and were practiced in other cases, though directly imputable to those who did them, are nonetheless morally so to Balmaceda because it must be a bad cause nowadays in which men however bad will dare to do such things.

It would have been nobler perhaps, if he had stood his trial at law, though the result might have been death all the same. How could he believe that he would get a fair trial: he had instituted a new order of judges, men pledged to his service, his enemies had uprooted them and replaced those whom he had discarded: how could he believe in their justice?

Nonetheless leading Chileans say that eminent lawyers, in defiance of dangers from the people were prepared to take up the case, and that the judges would have judged him fairly to the best of their ability; but perhaps he was not altogether wrong for judges with the best of intentions are but human too.

The whole country however feels it a relief that he has taken upon himself his own condemnation and removed from them the responsibility of dealing with him and all the troubles that might have accompanied his trial, and the schemings in which for years he might have been involved had his life been spared by his judges.

There has been some trouble in Santiago with the northern soldiers who have been clamouring to be paid off and sent back to their homes, saying that they only joined the army to fight for liberty and not to lead a soldier's life afterwards.

Several regiments marched out of their barracks with their rifles and matters looked very serious but they were met by Jorge Montt who faced them almost alone and simply said 'Your pay or whatever else you want, you will never get by force; if you want my life here it is' and thereupon they cheered him. And officers arriving, they were got back to their barracks, but the Government wisely at once made up their mind to ship them back to their homes and pay them off. However the next day there were further disturbances of a similar kind, but they were again quelled, mainly by the influence of Jorge Montt who addressed the men in a similar bold manner, but telling them what had been arranged for them. The alarm in Santiago those two days was very great and business was suspended.

During the holidays connected with the 18th there was scarcely any rioting or disturbance in Santiago or Valparaiso as was much feared, except that one day in Santiago, a body of men sacked the lodge and a booth in the park and had to be fired upon before they could be dispersed. With regard to the officers and men of Balmaceda's army, a commission is investigating which of them from having been in prison for their opinions, or who, though being on the roll, did not serve, or who remained in his army merely to serve there the other side, are therefore worthy to remain in the army.

By order of the Junta, Colonel Canto the commander in chief has ordered writs to be drawn up against Balmaceda's officers of the rank of Captain and higher, in 2 classes:

- 1 Against those whose only offence was to have served in Balmaceda's army
- 2 Against those guilty of additional offences either of a military or common kind.

As to civil trials and the procedure regarding Balmaceda's servants (in continuation of the topic on page 88), the public prosecutors of Santiago have been ordered to proceed against Balmaceda, his ministers, and counsellors, the members of his town councils, his rulers of provinces and governors of departments, his judicial functionaries and to obtain their punishment and to obtain compensation for the damages done to the state, without prejudice to the rights, which by the constitution, Congress has to impeach and try certain of them, and in consequence, orders issued by

a judge of crime are being, or rather have in a great part been, carried out of the arrest of all senators and deputies of Balmaceda's Congress, his town councillors, the judges and officers of his supreme court and courts of appeal, and his public prosecutors, judicial secretaries and notaries, on the charge of usurpation of functions.

A judgement order has been obtained to compel the banks to retain the money and shares held by them on account of persons of whom a list is given. The money amounts to about \$700,000.

A writ for the trial of Calderon and Stephan and their accomplices on a charge of sundry floggings and torturings enumerated in it, has been issued.

Martin Larrain has been arrested for the slaughter among the 3,000 men in the pampa reported in the diary on 5th Feb. These men, it seems to me, were marching to Iquique primarily as a deputation, but if they had got there the danger to the town would have been very great and Larrain's harsh measures had reason to them.

The Bank of Edwards, Besa and Co who were liquidating under Balmaceda's orders, have resumed business.

The Torpedo fired at the 'Imperial' on 28th June which at the time was believed by many to have been a myth, turns out to have been a fact.

The bomb throwing at Godoi and the ministers, which broke up the peace conference in Santiago on 6th May also turns out to have been genuine and not to have been ruse (as was supposed even by Altamirano) got up by Balmaceda's men for the purpose of giving an excuse for arrests. After this event the decision was come to, to shoot 1 in 5 of the political prisoners in Santiago, but it was fortunately never carried out.

The 'Aquila' which Balmaceda bought in Buenos Aires from the Lavarello Co⁵² ought to have been delivered to him there about 2 months before the end of the war, but for the difficulty about the arrangement for payment which Balmaceda eventually got over by the shipment of the 25 tons of silver by HMS 'Espiegle'. On arrival of this silver in Buenos Aires and its trans-shipment to a trading steamer, destined to their branch in London, the London & River Plate Bank gave bills in payment of the steamer, which it seems that the owners had agreed to accept in payment, after they had been endorsed by telegraph by Messrs Rothschild⁵³

This was on the 28th August, the day before the battle of Placilla on the 29th. The opposition minister in Buenos Aires declared all the acts of Balmaceda's minister illegal and started a suit to endeavour to cancel the sale, but it appears that he was unsuccessful and that the 'Aquila' therefore belongs to Chile.

The shipment of silver in the 'Espiegle' appears to have made a great stir in England. The silver has been embargoed

⁵² Soc di Nav Italia Fratelli Lavarello, Genoa, was an Italian shipping line which went into liquidation in Feb 1891. The Aquila 2627 tons, was built in 1889 and was eventually sold on Ecuador for use as an armed merchantman (Auxiliary Cruiser)

⁵³ Notice the detail: right up JAG's street!

The 'Presidente Errázuriz' has arrived in Montevideo and a new crew sent to man her.

The 'Presidente Pinto'⁵⁴ after wandering, before the end of the war, all round Europe in search of a port where she would be allowed to arm, is of course now at peace and the interest in these ships now being over, their movements need not be followed further here.

The 'Itata' is understood to still be under arrest in the States and trials with regard to her to be still proceeding. She was delivered up in Iquique with all her cargo on board and none was taken out subsequently as was currently reported at the time. Montt has been heard to say that this was the greatest sacrifice which he ever made.

The 'Mapocho' has been released from Callao and has returned to Chile, as have the 'Imperial' and the 'Almirante Condell'.

N F Linnick has been restored to his post of Austrian Consul General of which he was deprived by Balmaceda at the beginning of the war.

In Punta Arenas a curious incident happened on 9th September on the arrival of the 'John Elder' SS there with Chilean political refugees from Buenos Aires who had embarked on hearing by telegraph of the end of the war, for Balmaceda's governor in Punta Arenas had not received the news and it was with difficulty that the passengers could prevent his detaining them as prisoners. On the arrival of the 'John Elder' in Valparaiso, a force was sent down to take possession of Punta Arenas.

The coming elections The Junta has addressed a circular to all Intendentes enjoining their co-operation on obtaining absolute purity of the elections.

⁵⁴ A second Errázuriz class cruiser

Appendices included in JAG's diary

An Account of The Battle of Pozo Almonte (unsigned)

Letter from Iquique from the revolutionary forces (unsigned translation)

Chilean Fleet details

7th January Congressional declaration (in Spanish)

5th Sept Supplement to the Chilean Times on the Battle of Placilla

Pamphlet entitled 'A Challenge -Chili's Vindication' by John Trumbull.

This document by an American living in Valparaiso seeks to put the record straight to his fellow American citizens concerning the unfair dealings by US Government officials with Chile during and after the civil war

Other useful reading (with several Gibbs references):

British Nitrate and Chilean Politics 1886 – 1896 Balmaceda and North