

**AN APPEAL ON BEHALF OF THE
BRITISH SUBJECTS RESIDING IN
AND CONNECTED WITH THE
RIVER PLATE, AGAINST ANY
FURTHER VIOLENT INTERVENTION**

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An Appeal on Behalf of the British Subjects Residing in and Connected with the River Plate,
against any further violent intervention by Various

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VARIOUS

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70. 7. General F. C. Mowbray

AN APPEAL *Page:*

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IN BEHALF OF THE

BRITISH SUBJECTS

RESIDING IN AND CONNECTED WITH

THE RIVER PLATE,

AGAINST

ANY FURTHER VIOLENT INTERVENTION

BY THE

BRITISH AND FRENCH GOVERNMENTS

IN THE

AFFAIRS OF THAT COUNTRY.

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1846.

AN APPEAL,

ETC. ETC.

THE public have long been accustomed to hear of the unsettled state of affairs in the River Plate; yet but very few persons have felt sufficient interest in the matter to induce them to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with it. Nor was this at all to be wondered at, so long as this country abstained from interfering in the quarrel there; but now that Government have shewn a disposition to take a part, the case is changed, and it becomes the duty of those who from their position have a voice in the conduct of public affairs to inform themselves correctly on the subject. Nor should this duty be omitted on the plea that Government have better means of information than private individuals can have, and would not act without good grounds; for it is believed a very slight examination will shew that Government are acting in this matter under a misapprehension with reference both to the justice of the case and the true interests of all concerned.

Aware of the importance of brevity, we shall with these remarks proceed at once to our narrative, taking it up at the year 1838, from which period dates the origin of all the recent disasters in the River Plate. At that time General Rosas was at the head of the government of Buenos Ayres, which is the chief province of the Argentine Confederation, on its south bank ; and General Oribe at the head of that of the republic of the Uruguay, of which Monte Video is the capital, on the north bank.

In the beginning of that year, the French commenced their blockade of Buenos Ayres, and having no port of their own in which to condemn or sell their prizes, they wished to make use of Monte Video for that and other hostile purposes against Buenos Ayres, but General Oribe refused to join in this attack upon the sister republic, and determined on remaining neutral. The French agents thereupon stirred up an armed revolution against him—he was defeated—signed a forced abdication—and retired to Buenos Ayres.

In his stead was placed in the presidency General Rivera, who, indebted for his elevation to the French, repaid them by lending himself entirely to their plans. The defeat of General Oribe had been owing mainly to the help of a body of disaffected Buenos Ayreans who had taken refuge in Monte Video, and had joined Rivera and the French. By this triple union hostilities were carried on against Buenos Ayres with the greatest vigour—an army

was marched into her territory—and reached almost within sight of the capital. Thus powerfully assailed, every one supposed she must fall, when apparently, as by a miracle, she rallied, the invaders were repulsed, and ultimately defeated and destroyed. The French, too, suddenly patched up a peace with her, and discontinued their blockade, which had lasted nearly three years.

It is important to remark here that the British Government did not interfere at all in behalf of Buenos Ayres while she was in these straits, but left her altogether to her own resources.

The hostility of the Monte Videans against Buenos Ayres was not at all mitigated by the loss of their French allies. On the contrary, after a formal declaration of war, they again invaded the Argentine territory, where they were finally defeated in December, 1842.

On this occasion the Buenos Ayrean forces were commanded by the Ex-president Oribe. On his ejection from Monte Video for his refusal to take part against Buenos Ayres, General Rosas had in return promised to aid him, at the first fitting opportunity, to regain his position at Monte Video. In the mean time he had been employing himself in the service of Buenos Ayres.

After this victory, he in his turn marched into the territory of the Monte Videan state, the whole of which, in the course of time, submitted to his authority, excepting only the city of Monte Video.

Not having the means of taking it by storm, he invested it closely by land, and proposed to do the same by sea, by the aid of the Buenos Ayres squadron, which was placed at his disposal. But the English and French agents, though never going so far as openly to deny the legality of the blockade, prevented under various pretexts its ever being put in force.

This was the state of things in June last—Oribe posted close outside the city of Monte Video—the Buenos Ayres squadron in front, waiting permission from the English and French agents to invest it on the sea-side,—the inside party already thinking of making terms—when England and France interposed in favour of Monte Video, and commenced a series of measures which threaten a fresh war.

It will be seen from the above that the intervention of the two powers does not appear to be based upon any principle of justice. This is in favour rather of Oribe and Buenos Ayres, because the former is only seeking to regain his lost presidency, and the latter merely repaying the friendship of Oribe, and endeavouring to guard against a recurrence of the attacks of Monte Video.

Nor can we account for the intervention by any advantages it may be expected to bring to this country, for the only tie hitherto between us and the River Plate has been that of commerce, the ruin of which will be the infallible result of the intervention if persisted in.

Still, as Government, it may be supposed, would not have acted without good reasons, we propose to show, that, (though no doubt with the best intentions,) they have acted wrong from incorrect information.

One of the main inducements for their interference seems to have been an idea that Buenos Ayres is desirous of destroying the existence of Monte Video as an independent state. Now, the only colour for this apprehension is the circumstance of Oribe employing Buenos Ayrean troops in his service. But if certain Buenos Ayreans helped to turn him out, why should not others of the same nation help to reinstate him? That Buenos Ayres should wish to have a friendly neighbour in Monte Video instead of an unfriendly one is quite natural. The same feeling induced us to assist in ejecting Napoleon from the throne of France, and placing the Bourbons in his stead, only we had none of the French on our side, whereas Oribe has more of his countrymen for him than against him. Yet no one would say that the independence of France has been destroyed by our interference on that occasion. Moreover, both Buenos Ayres and Oribe have constantly denied any such intention, and he is a native of the Uruguay State, and for three years filled the office of President of it without any imputation upon his patriotism; indeed his jealousy of the independence of his country, which made him refuse to become a tool in the hands of the