

General Miscellany.

Extraordinary Documents.

[Of the genuineness of the following documents, each reader will form his own opinion. For ourselves, we incline to believe them a fresh instance of those forgeries, which of late have so frequently disgraced every nation. One thing, however, is inexplicable, except upon the supposition that the fraud was committed in America, and that these pretended documents were never printed in a London paper, viz. the suggestion of Mr. Gallatin's appointment to pretend to negotiate a peace under the mediation of Russia. If it shall appear that these papers ever were published in England, we shall be constrained to suppose them genuine. We hope that the editors of the New-York Commercial Advertiser, from which paper they are copied, will give us further information on the subject.—ED. MESS.]

FROM A LATE LONDON PAPER.

Our readers will recollect, that Mr. Barlow, the American ambassador to France, set out some time ago, to congratulate Bonaparte at Moscow, on the conquest of Russia. We expressed at the time our surprise, that a nation on friendly terms with Alexander, and which had a minister at Petersburg, should allow its public agent to transgress so much against that decorum which ought to subsist between neutral nations—but the following extraordinary letters will teach us not to calculate upon the proceedings of the United States, by ordinary rules. We leave every one at present to make his own comments, and content ourselves with mentioning how they came into our hands. It seems one of Mr. Barlow's attendants was not so fond of the journey as his master, and therefore made his escape to Heligoland, where he was seized as a spy. A port folio was found in his possession, containing all the secrets of Mr. Barlow's mission. It has been forwarded to his majesty's ministers, but as it was not till after several papers had been examined, that the officer was aware of their importance, a friend contributed to procure copies of the following letters.

MR. BARLOW TO MR. MADISON.

Paris, Dec. 15, 1811.

SIR—The Duc de Cadore took me into his closet last evening, after his dinner party had retired, and informed, that he had wished for some time for a private conversation on subjects distinct from what might be supposed strictly official. It is astonishing, continues he, that after so long a trial of the inefficiency of your general government, no attempts have been made to give it strength and energy. Affecting surprise at this extraordinary address, I replied, that the general government would be found equal to any crisis. He shrugged up his shoulders, and said, come, Mr. Barlow, you have been too much in the world, and are too well acquainted with mankind, to be seriously of that opinion. How frequently has your general government been obliged to relinquish the most favorite measures, because it was unable to carry them into execution. It is absurd to expect that the government of the United States can act with vigor, while it is clogged with the state administrators. There will be a continual jarring between them. Their views and interests are often very different—hence inconsistent counsels, a mob, a chaos, on which we can never calculate with any degree of verity. These evils were foreseen by your more enlightened statesmen; and by men with greater clearness than your president, Mr. Madison. Convinced that every sensible person wished for a remedy, it was proposed to Mr. Jefferson to adopt such measures as would gradually undermine, and at length destroy the state governments; but there was too much timidity in his character to enter upon so bold an enterprise. He was convinced of its propriety, but having promised to his friends to remain president only eight years, a period then nearly finished, he was unwilling to commence a system of measures pregnant with danger, and which he could not hope to complete.

It was to no purpose, that he was informed, that even to begin would be doing the greatest possible service to the friend who succeeded him—his fears predominated. What was the more surprising, he entered afterwards with the greatest cordiality into his majesty the emperor's continental system, tho' surely more hazardous, and perservered in much longer than could have been anticipated. The non-importation, non-intercourse, and embargo laws, were received by his majesty the emperor as so many proofs of friendship, although aware of their inefficacy, and convinced that they were more pernicious to America than war itself. Am I to consider this conversation official? He smiled. We must be more candid, Mr. Barlow, when we meet again. Your appointment took place at the request of the emperor, and we know that you are entirely in the confidence of Mr. Madison. I thought it prudent to be very guarded during this interview, but the same reserve will not be necessary in our next.

Yours,
JOEL BARLOW.

Paris, Dec. 23, 1811.

SIR—The Duc de Cadore this morning entered again on the subject of my confidential letter of the 15th. I was surprised

at his accurate knowledge of all the facts relating to the transactions between America and France since our independence, and especially the part which you and Mr. Jefferson, with other influential men still living, have acted in them.—Mr. Madison, said he, has always been friendly to France, and with reason. Our intercourse with your country has been of advantage to leading characters; but to the point. Some years ago, the following propositions were submitted to Mr. Jefferson, and although not rejected, they were never, from his want of energy, cordially adopted.

1. That on condition of his declaring war against England, the presidency should be guaranteed to him by his majesty the emperor for life.

2. That one million of francs, and even more if found necessary, should be annually placed at his disposal during the war, to be repaid after it was ended, or as soon as the intended alterations in the form of government were effected.

3. That three thousand French officers, instructed to obey the president implicitly, should be sent out to serve in the army of the U. States.

4. That ten ships of the line, with their proportion of frigates, should be despatched to the U. States, to be named and officered exclusively by American seamen.

These liberal offers were not acceded to by Mr. Jefferson, less from want of inclination than irresolution, and because he had entered into engagements with his party to retain the presidency eight years only. I now offer the same terms in the name of his majesty the emperor, to Mr. Madison, and he may depend upon any further assistance that may be deemed necessary. His decision must be made immediately. The emperor goes in the spring to conquer Russia, an amusement of a few months. He will then be absolute master of the whole continent of Europe, and England must perish. But she is still powerful, and without your aid, she may continue the contest for several years longer. I am indeed anxious for Mr. Madison's determination, for should his majesty return from the north, and find nothing done, he will never trust you more, and perhaps, in his rage, publish the names of all those who have benefited by French liberality.—The Duc had proceeded thus far, without wishing or waiting for a reply. I told him, that though possessing your confidence, I could give no answer to propositions so extraordinary, but that they should instantly be transmitted for your consideration. At the same time I remarked, the outrages committed by the French on our commerce, had prevented their friends from pursuing any measures which tended to introduce a closer connexion between the two nations. It is very difficult to manage Americans; their discernment is so keen, that they cannot be deceived, and their love of liberty so great that they will not suffer the smallest restraint.—Why Mr. Barlow, you either are, or affect to be, extremely ignorant of the secret views of the leading men of your party. We have captured and condemned your vessels at their desire, to provoke a similar conduct on the part of G. Britain, and to drive your people gradually from the ocean. The whole blame has been thrown on the British, under the pretence of making a distinction between general decrees and municipal regulations. But to say that your countrymen will not bear restraints after submitting to an 18 months embargo, is rather jocular.

I requested an interview next morning to discuss the propositions, that I might be able to anticipate any objections, and add necessary explanations to my despatches to you.

Paris, Dec. 24.

SIR—I told the minister that the first proposition must, for various reasons, be difficult of performance. What, a man with a million of francs at his disposal, find difficulty in carrying any question, or in securing his election? Impossible. He will then have time to model the government to his pleasure. But Mr. Madison may have come under engagements to retire. Such promises are conditional, and he has the means of compensating those who may conceive themselves injured. To the second proposition I had no objection. On the third I remarked, that it was impossible to introduce three thousand French officers into the service without creating a suspicion that would ruin our whole plan. You are not to suppose that this number is to be sent in a body. Some will come in disguise, some to one seaport, and some to another, &c. Their names and places of residence will be sent weekly to the ambassador. Of these men it will be easy to place from two to five in each regiment as officers. The president must procure a law, giving him the sole nomination of all the officers; or if this be too much, of all except the field officers. He then may appoint some of these experienced Frenchmen in each regiment, and after serving as captains for some time, he may pass a law establishing promotion by seniority. It will be easy to dispose of field officers, by giving them civil appointments, or removing them in various ways, and thus by the regular operation of the law of the land, a Frenchman may soon get to the command of a regiment.—But the young men sent out will enlist also as

privates, should it be deemed impudent to employ many at first as officers, and then may be gradually promoted to be non-commissioned officers, in which capacity they can be of singular advantage. Indeed, with a little management, three thousand men, and more, might be employed, and the people know nothing about the matter; and if suspicion should arise, the fourth proposition affords a speedy answer; for how could America fear a handful of French in her armies, when she held by our liberality a formidable fleet.

I expressed a wish that he would authorize me, in my public despatch, to mention it as the intention of the French government to restore some part of the property which had been so unjustly seized. You may promise what you please, but we have gained more friends in America by these acts of violence, as you call them, than by our liberality. All who have lost property, retain hopes of recovering it, and are therefore reluctant to break with France. Our policy is to keep such matters in doubt. In England every capture is soon decided one way or another by the admiralty court, and whatever the judgment be, it is sure to produce enemies. If the ship be a prize, the decision is said to be unjust—if cleared, there is so much delay and damage that hatred follows.

Yours, &c.
JOEL BARLOW.

Paris, Dec. 26, 1811.

SIR—The Duc de Cadore called on me this morning with a manner manifestly wishing to effect some object more than he seemed willing at first, to avow, and after much desultory conversation he asked me my opinion of the policy the Court of Russia would probably pursue in the event of a war between the United States and G. Britain. I replied, that as it was the immediate interest of Russia, to be at peace with the U. S. and also her policy that England her present ally should not be embarrassed by a diversion of her resources and military and naval forces in carrying on a war with us, it was hardly to be doubted but that she would use her endeavors to bring about a peace between us and England. This he acknowledged was his impression, and added, that should the atrocious aggressions of Great Britain finally produce a war, the political influence of Russia would be expected to restore a reconciliation—in that case, he further added, that there was only one man in the U. S. who ought to be trusted with such a negotiation at the Russian Court, and named Mr. Gallatin; to appoint him as the negotiator for Peace, would be good policy. Mr. Gallatin, as now Secretary of the Treasury, would soon be made unpopular by the measures he must recommend to furnish the necessary means to carry on the war, and the popular clamour would be in some measure silenced by removing him from the Treasury. Besides these considerations, Mr. Gallatin is not only more qualified to be sent to an intriguing Court, but it would be particularly grateful to his Imperial Majesty as corresponding with his views. Mr. Gallatin although not so openly an advocate for the Continental system as some others, yet his Majesty likes him not the less as a powerful supporter—and his presence at the Russian Court might be of essential service to his Majesty. I told him I would communicate his observations to my government.

Yours, &c.
J. BARLOW.

Extract of a letter from an English gentleman at Petersburg, dated Dec. 7.

"The campaign has been carried on with unexampled resolution by the Russians, which, together with the resolution that always marks the path of a retreating army, has given the war features of unusual ferocity. As an instance I need only relate what Gen. Winzingerode declares. 'From Moscow to Smolensk I travelled a prisoner, and I firmly believe, that not less than sixty thousand dead bodies are lying on the road.'

"A fund is established under the patronage of the emperor for the relief of the sufferers by the war, especially for the late poor inhabitants of Moscow, whom the destruction of that city has beggared. The Emperor has given 50,000 and the Empress 25,000 roubles. The poor peasants themselves manifest their sympathy towards the sufferers by their small donations; many of them amount to no more than five coppers (about three farthings); but as their good patroness says, 'this is more to them than thousands to us.' She is universally and most enthusiastically beloved. The common people call her 'our good and beautiful empress,' and both these epithets most justly belong to her."

LONDON, FEB. 1.—Count Walmoden, coming from the service of Austria, and Gen. Goiezer, from the service of Prussia, are to be employed in our army with the rank of Generals.

The widow of Sir Wm. Hamilton, formerly Minister at the Court of Naples, and the particular friend of Admiral Nelson, has published that she is in reduced circumstances, states certain losses she has sustained, and asks for recompense.

Evidence and Documents on the subject of Impressments.

[We have already published the Report of the Committee of our State Legislature on the subject of Impressments. We now give a list of the Documents on which that Report was founded, and some part of the Evidence itself. As this is now the sole ground of the war, it cannot be too well understood.]

EVIDENCE,

Before the Committee on Impressments.

THE DEPOSITIONS OF

- 1 Capt. Isaac Clark, Brewster,
- 2 Capt. John Fildridge, Yarmouth,
- 3 Eben Parsons, Esq. Boston, Merchant,
- 4 Wm. Parsons, Esq. do. do.
- 5 Caleb Loring, Esq. do. do.
- 6 Capt. John Holland, do. do.
- 7 Moses Townsend, Esq. Salem, Merchant,
- 8 Mr. Wm. W. Oliver, Esq. Collector, Salem,
- 9 Joseph Peabody, Esq. Salem, Merchant,
- 10 Nathan Felton, Esq. Danvers,
- 11 Samuel Page, Esq. Danvers,
- 12 Capt. Joseph Mudge, Lynn,
- 13 Capt. Zachariah Atwell, Lynn,
- 14 Capt. Andrew Harraden, Salem,
- 15 Capt. Josiah Ome, do.
- 16 Mr. Nath'l Hooper, Marblehead, Merch't,
- 17 Mr. Benj. T. Reed, do. do.
- 18 Hon. Wm. Gray, Esq. Boston, Merchant,
- 19 Capt. Ozias Goodwin, do. do.
- 20 Theodore Lyman, Esq. do. do.
- 21 James Perkins, Esq. do. do.
- 22 Thos. H. Perkins, Esq. do. do.
- 23 Aaron Breed, Esq. Lynn, [one of the Com-
mittee.]

- 24 Hon. Nathan Mitchell, Esq. Bridgewater,
- 25 Col. John Thomas, Kingston,
- 26 Wm. Ome, Esq. Salem, Merchant,
- 27 Capt. John Tucker, Gloucester,
- 28 Joseph Moody, Esq. Kennebunk, Merch't,
- 29 Hon. Wm. Davis, Esq. Plymouth,
- 30 Hon. Israel Thordike, Boston, Merchant,
- 31 Josiah Waters, Esq. Boston,
- 32 Mr. Edward Lander, Salem, Merchant,
- 33 Capt. Wm. Story, Marblehead,
- 34 Capt. Wm. Crabree, Portland,
- 35 Ois Little, Esq. Casine, Merchant,
- 36 Mr. Wm. Parker, Boston, Mariner,
- 37 Commodore Bainbridge,
- 38 Asa T. Newhall, Esq. Lynn,
- 39 Thomas H. Tobey, Esq. Sandwich,
- 40 Mr. Charles Durant, Roxbury,
- 41 Capt. Wm. Sturgis, Boston,
- 42 Isaac Hull, Esq. of the Navy,
- 43 Certificate from the Hon. John Davis, Esq. District Judge,
- 44 Mr. Lawson Carroll, Boston,
- 45 Mr. C. W. Williams, Wells,
- 46 Capt. Lemuel Walker, Litchfield,
- 47 Enoch Preble, Esq. Portland, Merchant,
- 48 Hon. Matthew Bridge, Esq. Charlestown, Merchant,
- 49 John Hewes, Mariner,
- 50 Letter from Commodore Bainbridge,
- 51 Barnabus Hedge, Jr. Esq. Plymouth, Merchant.

The following Witnesses were also summoned, but

- did not testify:—
William Raymond Lee, Esq. Collector of Salem, absent by indisposition.
Joseph Wilson, Esq. Collector of Marblehead, did not attend.
Henry A. S. Dearborn, Esq. Collector of Boston, absent at Albany.
Hon. Wm. Bartlett, Esq. Newburyport, did not attend.
Moses Brown, Esq. do. absent by indisposition.
Hon. Benj. W. Crowninshield, Esq. Salem, appeared before the Committee, but declined testifying.

Commodore Rodgers appeared, and informed the Committee that he would make a communication to them in writing, which they have not yet received. Feb. 25, 1813

Sworn to before
ALEX. TOWNSEND, J. Peace.

Documents referred to in the Report.

[No. III.]

The Deposition of EBEN PARSONS.

I reside in Boston, and have been engaged in commerce and navigation for about 45 years. I have employed upon an average, annually, from the year 1793, about one hundred and fifty seamen in my vessels, engaged in foreign trade, up to the year 1803; and from the year 1803, to the time of the embargo, I have employed about one hundred seamen, annually, upon an average. No seamen have been impressed from any of my vessels, but the Byfield and Financier (which are related in the deposition of Capt. Isaac Clark) except the following, viz.—One of my vessels (the Financier above-mentioned) commanded by Capt. Sargeant, about the year 1805 or 1806, being on her return from the East Indies, put into St. Helena, and while there, two of the crew were impressed from the ship; they were foreigners, and had no protections. On another voyage of the same ship, to the Baltic, a young man by the name of Thacher, of Yarmouth, was taken out by a British ship; the young man had taken out a protection when he was quite a boy, and had grown up at the time when he was taken, and the description in his protection did not agree with his person; this was the reason assigned at the time for taking him. On the return of the ship, I forwarded a protection to Mr. Williams, of London, and Thacher was immediately discharged. This protection was certified by the selectmen and town clerk of Yarmouth.

The number of men employed on an average, including large and small vessels, in foreign trade, is about six for every hundred tons of shipping.

I do not know of any Americans impressed, from any vessel belonging to the town where I reside, other than those above-mentioned and referred to.

I have not had any men taken from my vessels by the French, except when my vessels were taken by them.

EBEN PARSONS.

Sworn to before
ALEX. TOWNSEND, J. Peace.

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[No. IV.]

The Deposition of WM PARSONS.

I reside in Boston, and have been engaged in commerce and navigation about thirty years. I have employed in my vessels, annually, upon an average, about fifty seamen, until the time of the embargo. I have no recollection of any of my seamen being impressed for the last twenty years, except in one instance. In the year 1806, a seaman was taken from the ship Meridian, capt Lord, in coming out of Rotterdam, by a British sloop of war; I do not recollect the man's name; he and all the rest of the crew were shipped at Norfolk, in Virginia, and there was only one American among them; the man taken, as above, was an Irishman. When I paid off the crew they informed me that they had bought their protections at Norfolk, for 2 dls. a piece. Capt. Lord applied to the commander of the sloop of war, who said he would deliver up the man, if the man himself would give his word that he was an American, which he would not do; but said he had a wife in America.

I do not know of any American seamen being impressed from any vessel belonging to the town where I reside, other than the vessels above mentioned belonging to me.

The number of men employed on an average, including large and small vessels, in foreign trade, is about six for every hundred tons of shipping.

Upon enquiring of all the crew of the Meridian that were paid off as above-mentioned, I found that there was but one instance where the true names of the men agreed with the names mentioned in their protections; that was a Connecticut man. When I speak of their true names, I mean the names they gave me when I paid them off, and by which they received to me for their wages; many of them had forgotten the names they went by in their protections. When they were shipped at Norfolk, their protections were picked out, as capt. Lord informed me, from a large number of protections which were kept at the boarding-house; and such protections were chosen as agreed with the persons of the seamen.

Of all the crews of my vessels that have been shipped at Boston, I do not recollect any instance where a man has been impressed. The Norfolk crew above-mentioned was the only instance where a crew of mine had been shipped in any other port than Boston.

WILLIAM PARSONS.

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