

Doc 6 June 1801
1530
more paper added

The Newbern Gazette.

NEWBERN, (NORTH-CAROLINA) PRINTED FOR JOHN C. OSBORN, & Co.

[Vol. 1.]

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 1798.

[NUMB. 21.]

LONDON, MAY 4.

THE following is an authentic account of the brilliant action lately fought by his Majesty's ships *Arrogant* and *Victorious*, with Admiral Serizy's Squadron, on the coast of Sumatra, in the East-Indies:—The two ships fell in with the French Squadron off Achon Head, consisting of *Le Forte*, Admiral Serizy, carrying 52 guns, viz. thirty 24 pounders on her main deck, the rest long French twelves, and heavy cannonades, and manned with 480 picked men; *Le Virtue*, of 40 guns, commanded by Capt. L'Hermit, an officer who had particularly distinguished himself in the North Sea; *Le Regeen*, of 40 guns and *Le Seine*, of 36 guns, all extremely well manned. The wind was light, and continued so at the commencement and during the action. The *Arrogant*, after a few broadsides, separated, and the *Victorious* supported the action alone, against the four, forty five minutes, close on board, in which time, from the tightness of the wind, and the advantage of the frigates had by their sweeps and boats, she received several raking fires, which shattered her stern and quarters a great deal, but not attended with that loss of men as might have been expected. Seeing the little impression they made, the Admiral judged it prudent to sheer off, which they effected by their sweeps, and all the boats of the squadron to wing ahead. They made their attack on the *Victorious* in the most resolute manner; *Le Seine*, though the smallest, determined to board, and rigged her booms out for that purpose, but a well directed broadside from the *Victorious* killed her captain and about 80 of her crew fell, or were wounded with it; and before she could get from under the *Victorious*'s guns, she was hulled upwards of 80 times. Captain Clerke received a very severe wound from his scymitar being torn from his hand by a grape shot; it lacerated his thigh, and caused a great effusion of blood, which obliged him to quit the deck; but he almost immediately returned, which again occasioning a violent hemorrhage, he was forced below, a mortification being apprehended. At the time the action commenced, the *Victorious* was short of her complement near one quarter, her first lieutenant, an experienced officer, and 90 of her men, having been sent from Pul Penag, with a valuable store ship, to join Admiral Rainier at the Mulaccas. Although the very fortunate circumstance of the light wind to the frigates allowed them to get off, yet the consequences of this defeat were at that time of the first importance in India; it forced the French Squadron to Mergui, at the time when both coasts were open to their depredations; and on a report of their condition to Admiral Serizy, from the consequences of this action, he was forced to Batavia, where three of their frigates were obliged to undergo a thorough repair; and it so disappointed the prospects of their cruize, that from Batavia they returned to the islands, and did not again sail from thence till the 18th of August last. Admiral Serizy and his officers, both at Batavia and the islands, made the most honorable mention of the bravery and conduct of Capt. Clerke, and the gallant defence made by the *Victorious*, in such particular circumstances, against such a force.

From Porcupine's Gazette.

FRANCE AND AMERICA.

[The following is an extract of a letter, written, I imagine, by a gentleman in Virginia, to whom the public look up with respect and confidence. It is worthy the attention of every American, and may be relied on as containing undoubted truths.—I take this opportunity of returning my thanks to the gentleman, who made me the communication, by which I look upon my paper and myself as highly honored.]

“My residence in Paris, during the last winter, has enabled me to become ac-

quainted with many facts of a general, as well as particular nature, of which it may perhaps, be difficult to convince the people of this country, but which ought to be generally known.—An unwillingness to volunteer, upon occasions of this kind, has hitherto prevented me from giving them to the public.

It appears to me all essential, that the people of this country should understand the character and conduct of the pretended Americans who reside in France, and who have been principally instrumental in producing and inflicting the injuries against which we rise.—These people (with a few exceptions of honorable and patriotic men) are the fugitives of America, and the dregs and outlaws of Europe. I need not observe that they and their connections here have been the most active despoilers of our commerce—the most inveterate calumniators of our country, and our government; nor that they have continually contradicted and embarrassed all our public missionaries, except Mr. Monroe. During the last winter they have made the most indefatigable efforts to divide our commission-ers; they have every where and incessantly repeated that General Pinckney was a known aristocrat; that General Marshall had been burnt in effigy, for his attachment to the British; and that Mr. Gerry was “the republican,” who had been sent to be overruled by the other two. When at length it was intimated that the Directory demanded a tribute of fifty millions, they instantly advocated the payment of it; and unanimously, that I cannot even make the exception of some characters otherwise estimable and patriotic. They prevailed by persuasion, that the price of peace would be less than the expense of war; and have heard some say, that some of our nation, that if we retained the payment now, we should be brought to it finally!!!

The aspersions of these people have extended not only the government, but to whatever is most respectable among us. The vulgarity as well as virulence of this abuse may be judged of from a speech which I heard our Consul General make use of in company, when speaking of the character of the art of patriots and of men—“General Washington,” said he, is the proudest man I ever saw, except one negro.”!!!

We have other consular characters in France of a similar cast—One of them has remained in office many months since judicial proofs were known of his covering French property by perjury, and false consular certificates—I know not whether it be true, that Mr. Monroe made a report in favour of this man.

The conduct of Thomas Paine deserves particular notice. He lives in the house of a journalist of note, who is usually the first to publish whatever appears hostile to our country. It was in the paper of this journalist that the President's last speech to Congress appeared; but wholly mutilated, and altered in such a manner, by additions and omissions, as to excite the indignation of the French and their government; the journalist complained that he could not insert the entire speech—yet he found room to insert at length, in French and English, a vapid mixture of prose and verse, written by Mr. Edward Church, formerly of Boston, as a satire upon the President of the United States. About 3 days before I left Paris, the same paper (see the *Bien Informe*, of about the 17th or 18th March) contained a paragraph of a letter from this country, beginning with these words—“French party in the United States increases more and more.”

Thus the French people (but the people are nothing in France) are deceived continually. To correct misrepresentation is impossible, since the press is under the absolute controul of the government, and a journal that happens to contain any thing which they think exceptionable, is instantly silenced. One was suppressed for predicting in substance what has since happened to Switzerland!

Were I to pursue the subject of French liberty through all its details, the pursuit would lead me too far. I do not hesitate however, to say, that the government is, both in appearance and effect, wholly military, and probably the most despotic that ever existed. The military are drawn out in force upon the most trifling occasions; and the people are every where accustomed to pass under drawn swords and files of bayonets. The conduct of the elections however will best explain the nature of the liberty there enjoyed.

In the first place the councils have been occupied during the winter past in taking away the right of voting and of citizenship from whole classes of persons to whom those rights are guaranteed by the constitution. The directory have been equally busy in changing the magistrates and civil officers chosen by the people; many communes have been put in a state of siege, and martial law declared; and the proclamations of the directory, ordained to be read in the primary assemblies, dictated to the people the kind of choice they were to make. Having been in several great communes immediately before the primary assemblies, I found that numerous ar-relations had taken place of persons whose influence was feared—I presume this measure was taken throughout the republic. To fill up the measure of abuse, the directory ordered the feast of the sovereignty of the people to be celebrated with unusual pomp, the day before the sovereignty was to be intitled by the mockery of an election. These feasts consist in nothing but military parade, music, and the reading of discourses—and the only object of this, was to assemble the military in the great towns and ensure the election of patriots.

If it be asked, what sentiments the French entertain towards us, I answer that the people in general take no interest in public affairs; and that the government views us with the most profound contempt. When I left France, neither French nor Americans suspected that we dared to resist their pleasure; nor that we should hesitate to obey their will when once firmly pronounced.

Much has been said of the corruption of the French government. This is a subject about which it is difficult to obtain direct proof, and of which I therefore speak with more caution. Certainly persons who compose that government are either the most corrupt or the most injured of men; for never I believe was any government more generally detested. Almost all the people speak of them with contempt and abhorrence, when they have their opportunity of speaking freely. It is universally understood, that the most bare-faced venality is practised at the directory, and among the ministers. Instances of this has come to my knowledge.

To rise from such disgusting details, I consider France as the fairest and best portion of Europe— inexhaustible in national riches—warning with a population, the greater part of which is profoundly ignorant, and implicitly obedient to whoever reigns in Paris. I consider that country as governed by the most despotic executive that ever existed. Harassed by a rapid succession of revolutions, and borne down, under all of them, by the hand of power, the people sigh for nothing but peace and repose, but I repeat it, the people are nothing in France. The government find an interest in keeping up a foreign war; and even if they obtained peace abroad, the country will be agitated by domestic faction for many years to come.”

From the Commercial Advertiser.

We have a long sea coast to defend; but nature has saved the necessity of artificial means of defence, on a great portion of the extent. The coast of North and South Carolina is almost wholly a sand beach, altogether inaccessible by ships; some parts of the Northern shore are of a similar description. The harbours which are safe from large ships are few, and a

small number of heavy ships will defend them.

Besides our distance from Europe renders it immensely difficult to invade our territory. If a fleet should approach our shores and land a body of forces, if we have a few ships of the line stationed in the different harbours of the United States they, by junction or cruising in a detached form, would render it nearly impossible for the enemy to obtain supplies, and defeat their return. It is probable that a fleet of twenty ships of the line, with a due proportion of frigates, would be effectual security against a foreign invasion. We are not in the situation of England, separated from an enemy by a narrow channel, passable in boats, and therefore under the necessity of erecting gunboats and forts along the whole coast. Our enemies, if they ever come, must come in heavy ships and large fleets—they can approach only in a few places—No European government is mad enough to send a handful of troops to America under an idea of conquest. Nothing short of an immense army will make any impression on our country—and such an army will require a number of heavy ships and innumerable transports, which cannot run into every place for landing.

These circumstances render our true policy so very obvious, that a man must be blind to mistake it. It is an idea that I repeat, and urge upon our government, that a small navy will prevent all the enormous expences of large land armies. In our present situation, our militia should be disciplined, and our arsenals filled—we should be prepared to resist an enemy on our shores: but if our government is wise and five years will elapse before we shall have a marine force that will save us the trouble of calling a man to the field.

Nor need our marine be very expensive to us in time of peace—a great number of ships fit for heavy frigates, and even sixty gun ships, would be built under the rules prescribed by government, and under the operation of suitable bounties, to be employed in long voyages in times of peace by merchants, and in time of war to be purchased by government. The growing commerce of our country will render this measure easy and effectual, and it will save a large portion of the expence of a permanent navy.

This measure also will save a large proportion of the expences of navy-yards, which, in the possession of the public, will incur enormous expences. Individuals will build ships much cheaper than government. Let experience be our guide, and teach us wisdom.

PUBLIC AUCTION.

On the first Monday in October next, At WILMINGTON, North-Carolina, WILL commence the Sale of the remaining part of the Cargo of the SHIP BETTY CATH-CART, Prize to the Schooner *Bellona*, a French Privateer,

CONSISTING OF

Two Hundred and Twenty-Nine Hog-heads, Sixty Four Puncheons, Twenty-Three Pipes, and One Hundred and Five Tierces best Jamaica Sugar, and Forty Tierces Coffee.

A L S O,

The ship *Betty Cath-Cart*, burthen about 300 Tons, with her Materials, as she now lies at Langdon's Wharf.

The said ship and Cargo having been abandoned to the United States, and is to fold by order from the Treasury Department.

Terms of Sale to be Cash before Delivery.

G. J. M'REE, Collector.

Wilmington District.

Wilmington, N. C.
August 9, 1798.

CASH

Given for SNAKE-ROOT, at the Printing-Office.