

is one that can assume the character of neutral. Every man contemplates a speedy return to the accustomed relations in life, at least so far as to enable our farmers to vend their surplus products. If we surrender our right to transport them, who can come here to purchase? England only! In this state of things she would monopolize our products, reduce their amount, and lessen their price—the would naturally acquire that influence on our politics which would not be controuled, and we should become a second Portugal.

I have heard of a real or imaginary system of China, of a civilized nation supposed to inhibit foreign commerce, & of the recommendation of that system, though not by government, of this nation—On this subject I have enquired, and the result has been, that no such system exists. That nation studiously avoids foreign treaties yet for a century and an half she has encouraged foreign commerce, and her own citizens in their own ships actually carry on considerable foreign commerce with Japan, Batavia, and other ports of the East Indies. But what of China, admitting the limits the commerce of her subjects to her own provinces?—Her empire contains a third or a fourth of the whole human race—a greater number of people than Europe and America combined, and near three fourths of the population in Asia. Her provinces produce almost every thing in the known world. Her numbers naturally furnish every order and every occupation in life, and her internal trade must exceed the whole commerce of Europe. Is this nation set before us as an example? Shall a nation whose surplus produce is immense, be assimilated to an overgrown nation whose population on rafts and shallops nearly equals ours, and who scarcely know how to find sustenance? Shall the fancied system of an absolute chief be preferred to the laws of a country preferring the rights and giving scope to the energies of every class in society? Shall that nautical people whose canvass whitens every sea, who lead the old world to new sources of commerce, force the scaly tribe to give sustenance to distant nations and countries, and levy tribute on the monsters of the deep be compared to a people ignorant of astronomy, geometry, and navigation; whose fears force them to keep near light of land, and whose superstition leads them to offer incense in times of difficulty in lieu of those exertions on which human safety depends? Instead of freedom, shall we substitute slavery? Instead of knowledge, shall we prepare the way for ignorance? Bold and intrepid navigators! Your country acknowledges your services, she admires the warmth and tenderness of your friendships, the extent of your liberality, the tear of your sensibility and your firmness and patience in times of suffering.—She will never desert your interests. But when the day is overcast, when the tempest lowers, and the lightnings play, she pauses to decide on the course of the voyage."

Late and important News.

The British ship Matilda, arrived at New York, in 18 days from St. Johns, Antigua, brings London papers to the 19th of December, and Antigua papers to the 24th of January, containing news from Lisbon, to the 10th of December.

It is reported by a passenger in the brig Matilda from Antigua, that on the 26th of January, a dispatch was received from Admiral Cochrane, stating that Sir John Moore, with an army of 30,000 men, had attacked the French army in the environs of Madrid and completely routed them, with great slaughter on both sides. The English lost 4,000 killed.

It is further stated, that a French 50 gun ship with 500 troops and 1,700 barrels of shot was captured after a severe engagement, going into Guadaloupe, by the British frigates *Jasan* and *Cleopatra*.

The London papers have contradictory reports about Buonaparte; one day he is said to be at Paris, and the next at Madrid.

Battlers, St. Christopher, January 17

A few hours previous to this paper's going to press, we were politely favored with the following communication from a gentleman:

"The *Rig Dove* sloop of war, arrived at Barbadoes on the 14th inst from Lisbon, which port she left on the 10th December, brings the melancholy account of

the French army having entered Madrid, early in December, after completely vanquishing the Spanish army under Generals Blake and Palafox, and that Sir John Moore was within a days march with 36,000 British troops.

A French line of battle ships and two frigates, left France on the 28th November, with supplies and troops for Martinique. Sir A. Cochrane, has also positive information of 5 French ships having left France with troops and supplies which the admiral is daily expecting to meet off Martinique.

The Portuguese, with 2,000 men have taken possession of Cavenne.

The troops from Halifax under Sir Geo. Prevost, have received orders to prepare to proceed to Bermuda, where they are to winter, and from thence return to Halifax. And it is said that some of the troops had actually embarked when the last accounts were received from Barbadoes.

London, December 10.

A Sunday paper says, some ministerial changes are spoken of; the Duke of Portland, Mr. Canning and Mulgrave, it is said, are to retire. Lord Chatham, it is added, is to be removed to the Treasury, and Lord Melville has been offered a seat in the Cabinet.

Mr. Shaw, the messenger, left London the 10th of Dec with dispatches for Paris.

Accounts from Sweden were unfavourable since the rupture of the armistice, the Russians pushed forward with such an overwhelming superiority of force, that all the gallant efforts of the Swedes have been fruitless.

Dutch letters received in England state, on the authority of accounts from Paris, that the answer of the British government to the overtures from France and Russia, was very detailed, and very favourable; & that at Paris, it was generally supposed a peace would shortly be concluded. A London paper says "we cannot agree with the Parisian quidnunc, as to the probable result of the negotiation."

Austria still continues her military preparations.

A Russian Ukase, notifies to the merchants of St. Peterburgh, that after the first of January, 1809, no ships shall be suffered to enter or clear, from the Russian ports.

Private letters from Holland state, that Buonaparte has ordered a relaxation to take place in the regulations enjoined by his Milan decree, respecting neutrals. By the decree alluded to, it was ordered that all neutrals which had touched at a British port, or submitted to be searched by a British cruiser should be confiscated on entering a French port, or condemned as legal prizes if captured by a French armed vessel. It is now ordered, that neutrals shall be admitted into French ports, though they have been searched by a British cruiser, provided they have not touched at a British port. Buonaparte by relaxing in the Milan decree probably expects that the American government will be induced to remove its embargo so far at least as regards vessels bound to France.

December 10—Two o'clock.

Intelligence has been received from Spain of even a more disastrous nature than our gloomy forebodings led us with pain to apprehend. The defeat of General Blake, which turns out according to the information we had received, to have been complete appears, according to the intelligence now arrived to have laid open the central body of the Spaniards under Castanos and Palafox to the skilful operations of the enemy; and his army too, if the civil tidings are not unfounded, has been completely defeated, if not destroyed. We stated in a late paper, that the retreat of Blake, by leaving uncovered the left of the Spanish line, would render necessary the retreat of the whole army. We fear this obvious policy has not been pursued, and that Buonaparte has thus been enabled to destroy the whole central division of the Spaniards.

The intelligence, as it has been given to the public, is to the following purport.

"Intelligence has been received from Gen. Baird, dated Astorga the 29th ult. by which it appears that the army under Gen. Castanos had sustained a defeat, the particulars of which have not been received. Gen. Sir J. Moore had directed Sir David Baird to re-embark at Vigo, and proceed immediately to the Tagus, for the

purpose of assembling the British army in force, and enabling it to act in such a manner as circumstances might point out, for the support of the common cause.

It is further stated on private authority, that the transports at Corunna had, on the 3d inst began to take on board the heavy baggage belonging to the British army under the orders of General Baird, and it is asserted that the most ample means have been provided for the secure retreat of the whole of our force. We trust, if the necessity for their embarkation is apparent, that the account of there being sufficient means is correct; for we are told, in two or three other letters, that large divisions of transports had sailed from Corunna.

Previous to this battle, the French had advanced in another direction from Burgos to Lerma, Aranda, and across the Duro, and it appears by the proclamation of the Central Junta, that they had got to the neighbourhood of Somosierra, a small town in the mountains, about forty miles north of Madrid. In this state of affairs the Junta ordered a strong force to occupy the important posts of Guadarama, whither the English who are said to have been at the Licurial on the 21st, (but there probably is some error in the statement) were about to proceed to co-operate with the Spaniards.

It should seem however that the enemy took a different route to the capital, by proceeding in a direction due south from the Duro, by Somosierra, Buitrago and the road that leads from thence to Madrid; and the unexpected defeat of Gen. Castanos having frustrated all the plans that had been formed, a retreat on the part of our army became necessary. If that is effected in good order, it is conjectured that it will concentrate itself upon the frontiers of Portugal; to try the defence of that country against Buonaparte, or to advance against Spain upon a favourable opportunity. But the question whether, without Spain, we could defend Portugal against Buonaparte, appears to have been decided by our government, when it advised the Royal family to emigrate to Brazil!

Such is the distressing complexion of the intelligence received and however incorrect it may turn out to be in its parts, there is no doubt but it may prove in the main to be true. It is in vain now to revert to the complaint of the tardiness in forwarding our troops, who have once more arrived at the scene of action, after the battle has been fought; we long since expressed our fear of committing this usual blunder.

But what is now thought of the issue of the Spanish contest. Those who were so sanguine a short time since are in utter despair, and think the fate of the peninsula forever decided. We hesitate to adopt that opinion. We wish only to be fully assured that the whole Spanish nation is deeply impressed with the determination, so often avowed of continuing the contest as long as practicable. We are persuaded that if the Spaniards really see in their true light the advantages that they must derive from the execution of the noble views before them, they will persevere with renewed ardor. But if they are not convinced that they fight for what is worth every sacrifice, and that death alone is to close the contest, then is Spain now subdued, and the emancipation of Europe hopeless for a time of which no one can pretend to see the end. If however, the Spaniards still fight, they must abandon the plains, and decline fixed battles, they must betake themselves to their mountains, and the defence of their towns; the siege of Saragosa must be an example for every place, & the enemy must be made to buy whatever he possesses. Thus will his troops be melted down, & his resources exhausted. We own, however, that this prospect of hope, to which we so fondly cling, is covered with clouds so thick, that it is scarcely discernable. The suspicions which so closely adhered to us, that a people so long and patiently enslaved, a people so ignorant & uncivilized, would not suddenly be animated with that sublime and unconquerable love of liberty, which the situation of the Spaniards required; and letters from officers of the highest distinction in Sir John Moore's army, but too strongly prove that these suspicions were well founded. They complain that the British army on their march met with nothing but coldness, and jealousy, and that they perceived no such symptoms as they were led to expect of that devotedness in the cause of their country, without which no hopes could be entertained.

A cabinet council met yesterday, about two o'clock, at the Foreign office, and sat until seven in the evening. When it broke up, Mr. Hunter, the messenger, was ordered to proceed with dispatches to Spain.

It is understood that the subject under consideration was the situation of our army in Spain, and it was reported last night, that Mr. Hunter carried out with him the approbation of government to the plan of the retreat suggested by Sir J. Moore, and orders for the whole of the British force to be concentrated in Portugal. Transports have been ordered to Corunna and Vigo, and every arrangement has been made to facilitate this operation.

It is said that the scattered remains of the Spanish army have proceeded towards the Sierra Morona, and that Don Francisco Palafox is collecting them to defend the passes of those mountains; but whether any information has been received on this subject, or whether the statement is founded in conjecture only, we have not been able to ascertain.

The situation of the remains of the army of Galicia is most truly distressing, and calls most loudly for our active exertions in its favor. The Marquis de la Romana and his brave followers, whom he rescued from bondage in Moldavia, are called and would be treated as trophies by the despot if again caught. Lord Paget says, that he found no more than 6,000 men of the army at Galicia assembled together in Leon, though we have been told of 20,000 having united themselves under the patriot standard. Even the last however, is not a number to withstand the host of Buonaparte. They ought therefore if possible, to be saved from his fury.

[While preparing the above for press we received Charleston papers of the 1st inst. from which we extract the following.]

LONDON, DECEMBER 17.

Capitulation of Madrid—Entrance of the French army into that city.

By the flag of truce which returned last evening to Dover, with Mr. Shaw, the messenger, on board, we have received Paris papers to the 15th instant. Their contents are of great importance. The city of Madrid has capitulated, and the French troops entered on the 4th instant, at noon. This intelligence is dated from the French camp at Madrid, and is officially announced in the *Moniteurs* of the 13th and 14th. So far back as Thursday, the 8th instant, we announced the advance of a French corps of 8,000 men to Somosierra, a town about 40 miles north of Madrid.—For this information we had official intelligence. It was announced in a proclamation, addressed by the Supreme Junta to the people of Spain, and particularly those of Madrid, recommending the conduct which they ought to observe under these circumstances. This proclamation was dated from the Royal Palace of Aranjuez, on the 21st ult. and consequently we may presume that the first appearance of the enemy at Somosierra took place about the 18th or 19th. What became of this corps is not mentioned. It was probably pushed rapidly forward, for the purpose of alarming the country, a manoeuvre often practised by the French with success. If such were the case, it probably retreated as rapidly as it had advanced. That a large portion of the enemy had not advanced so far at that date we may presume, as the defeat of the force under Cattan upon the Ebro did not take place until the 23d. The details of the approach of the French to Madrid are contained in the 13th Bulletin, dated St. Martin, the 2d inst. It states that, on the 30th ult. the Duke of Belluno (Marshal Victor) arrived at Somosierra with a corps of 13,000 men, when he found the Spaniards in a strong post, defended by sixteen pieces of cannon. Here, however, as in the battle of Tudela, the French derived great advantage from their cavalry. A charge made by the Polish light horse decided the day, and the Spaniards sustained a total defeat. Buonaparte, on the following day, the 1st December, removed his head quarters to St. Angulime, and on the next to St. Martin, on which day the Duke of Liria, with his cavalry, took possession of the heights which command Madrid, and the infantry were expected to arrive on the 3d. Here the 13th Bulletin ends; but as we have already stated, the *Moniteurs* add, that the town capitulated, and was entered by the French on