

BOSTON, December 25.
TELEGRAPH.

We understand that a Mr. Grout has obtained a patent for the exclusive erection of Telegraphs in this country: that he is now in town, and proposes to make a few experiments, to demonstrate the goodness of his system, by signa flags, &c. to be raised on Fort Independence and Fort Hill, and that he has further in view the erection of a telegraphic line of communication between Bolton and Martha's Vine-yard, if there are no insurmountable natural impediments; and at least, so far in that direction as will greatly facilitate the receipt of news from hence.

December 26.
NAVAL AFFAIRS.

Orders, we learn, have been issued from the Navy-Office to suspend the equipment of our national ships for the present.

From the GAZETTE of the UNITED STATES.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 19.

Mr. WAYNE,
SIR,

That the public mind may not be misled by the different statements which have been published respecting the capture of Curacao, I request you to insert, in your paper, the copy of a detail, which I transmitted to the Secretary of the Navy, on my arrival at this place.

I have since received letters from Curacao, which enable me to state, that the specie which was detained by Captain Watkins, has been restored to the American Consul, by order of Lord H. Seymour.

All American vessels that were in the harbour of Curacao previous to the capitulation, have been compelled to pay a salvage to the British.

I am Sir,

Your obedient servant,
W. D. ROBINSON.

[C O P Y.]

On the 5th September the French force at Curacao commenced offensive acts against the Dutch, and particularly intimidated their designs (by a manifesto) against American persons and property. On the 6th, the American Consul requested me to go to St. Kitts, with a view to procure some assistance from the United States on that station. On the 14th I arrived at St. Kitts, and found there the frigates John Adams, and sloop of war Merrimack and Patapco. To Capt. Croft of the John Adams I presented my papers, and explained the nature of my errand, urging him immediately to go down to Curacao; he joined me in opinion, as to the necessity and singularity of the case, but expressed a delicacy at leaving his station at that time; however, he cheerfully gave his consent for the immediate departure of the two aforementioned sloop of war. Accordingly Captains Brown and Geddes, (with promptitude that evinced their zeal for the service) prepared for sea, and sailed the ensuing day. On the 22d instant we appeared off the harbour of Curacao, where we discovered a British frigate lying to windward of the port; the sent her board on board the Merrimack, by which we learnt, that the island had capitulated to the lieutenant, to Frederick Watkins, Esq. commander of the frigate Nereid, and that the American Consul, with his family, was in said frigate. I immediately went on board the Nereid and had some conversation with the commander and our Consul relating to the capitulation, &c. After which I went on shore, waited on the governor, and other officers, and stated the arrival of the two sloop of war, whose object was to protect the American persons and property. The governor replied, that no effective relief could be afforded unless one of the sloop of war came into the harbour. All the officers both civil and military having declared that the salvation of the island depended on the American ships acting offensively. I gave it as my opinion, that the American commanders were not authorized by their instructions to attack the French in the position they then held. The governor and others said, that unless something decisive was done the inhabitants in the garrison, as well as the Americans, would all be sacrificed. That night I laid on shore with a view to ascertain the actual situation of things, and I observed that a considerable number of American citizens had volunteered their services in the forts, and were placed at the principal batteries, from whence they could not retreat (of course) would have been seriously situated, had the French taken the place by storm. Under these considerations I advised Mr. Phillips to recommend one of the ships to be sent into the harbour; he coincided in my opinion, and I went on board the Merrimack, Captain Brown, and after stating the urgency and peculiarity of the circumstances, he

resolved to lend 20 marines from his own ship, and to dispatch the Patapco on the undertaking. On the 23th inst. the Patapco entered the harbour amidst a very heavy fire from the French batteries, which consisted of 5 or 6 24 pounders. After she had entered the harbour the musketry from the French (who were sheltered behind the walls, and in the houses on shore) became very warm and incessant; but by the spirit with which the Patapco kept up the fire for about two hours, completely silenced the enemy. As I was a passenger on board, and had an opportunity of observing the conduct of the officers, and crew of the Patapco, it affords me peculiar pleasure to state their enthusiasm and good conduct on this occasion—and when it is considered that for near three hours we were within half gun shot of the enemy; who kept up a continual discharge of musketry, it is as singular as fortunate, that only two persons were wounded. On the 24th instant, Captain Geddes sent 50 men on shore, which together with 20 from the Merrimack, were under the command of the lieutenant of marines from the Patapco; they were stationed at a post on one wing of the batteries, which, in case of an attack on the town, would have been the first object of assault. It was confidently reported and believed, that the French intended to make an assault that night, but while this event was expected, the French camp was evacuated, and taking advantage of the darkness of the night, they precipitately embarked between 8 and 11 o'clock, cut their cables and made away. On the morning of the 25th the Merrimack stood close in with the land, and had the mortification to find the place and which the French vessels occupied the day preceding entirely evacuated; the British frigate—discovering this to be the case, immediately made preparations for entering the harbor, and accordingly at about 11 o'clock the 25th inst. came into the port, and took possession of the place in the name of His Britannic Majesty.

From this representation it is obvious, that the British frigate Nereid rendered no effective assistance to the inhabitants of Curacao, as the commander of her did not think proper to venture the ship through the fire of the French batteries, in entering the harbor, nor did he deem it prudent to attack the French privateers, though they lay in such a position as rendered the enterprise practicable and easy;—but it is presumed he did not wish to run any risk until he received a reinforcement from Jamaica, and merely kept cruising off the port in view of the French camp and vessels. The frigate had only landed six or seven men and was holding only communication with the Dutch governor, which the French from their situation observed, consequently lost no time in preparing for the assault of the town, which they continued bombarding until the American sloop of war appeared off the harbour, and on that morning had actually advanced with a principal part of their force within a few hundred yards of the main fortification, with an intention to take it by assault, but seeing the two sloop of war, they were disconcerted and retreated to their camp. What followed until their evacuation has been previously stated.—It therefore appears, that had not the American ships arrived at Curacao on the 22d inst. the island would to a certainty have been taken by the French, and of course the capitulation would have been a nullity. The Patapco and Merrimack have therefore rescued the island from a serious dilemma, as I have no doubt but a principal part of the inhabitants, together with all the Americans, would have been sacrificed had the French succeeded. That the said ships have put Capt. Watkins in peaceable possession of the island, does not therefore admit of any dispute, as the reinforcement from Jamaica had never made its appearance—in what manner the American citizens have been treated for his essential service, will best appear by the following detail.

In the afternoon of the 25th inst. Captains Brown and Geddes waited on Capt. Watkins, and informed him, that as their object of Curacao was the protection of American citizens and property, they were desirous that all the American vessels in port should prepare for departure under their convoy.—He replied, most certainly, and that he had not the smallest wish to throw the least obstacle in their way, but that they might sell, load, and depart, as hereofore. The American captains were then assembled, and informed that the Merrimack and Patapco would give them convoy thro' the Mona passage in ten days. This being concluded, the said Watkins stated to Captains Brown and Geddes, that he received positive information of another expedition having failed from Guadaloupe for Curacao, and requested them to go and cruise off the island while the American vessels were getting ready for sea; accordingly the two ships went out, and after cruising ten days, returned to Curacao; but to the surprise and mortification of the American commanders, they learnt that an embargo was laid on all Ameri-

can vessels, & that none of them were permitted to load with any produce. On an explanation being demanded of Watkins, he said, that he found it necessary to detain the vessels until the reinforcement arrived from Jamaica, & until a proper court of admiralty was established at Curacao, but after their business was investigated, they should be suffered to depart, and in future allowed the same indulgencies, as with other of his Britannic Majesty's islands in the West-Indies. Thus were the American sloop of war obliged to return to St. Kitts, without knowing the issue Captain Watkins has granted commission to 5 or 6 small vessels to cruise in the vicinage of Curacao, and capture all American vessels no matter where bound, or of what their cargoes consist, and the Merrimack and Patapco had the mortification to see two or three vessels captured & sent in, without having it in their power consistent with their present instructions, to interfere.

The capture of the scho. George, owned by Mr. William Paterston of Baltimore, is attended with such extraordinary circumstances as I presume, will merit serious attention.—She sailed from Baltimore, cleared out and destined for Curacao, arrived there safe, but falling a little to the leeward of the harbor anchored in one of the bays: Captain Watkins hearing that she was at anchor, sent down an officer and some men, took possession of her and brought her into port—the day ensuing an English ensign and pendant was hoisted on board of her—the supercargo and captain of said schooner waited on said Watkins and demanded his reasons for hoisting English colours on board the George. He replied with a great deal of hauteur, that he had good reasons for so doing, but he did not wish to be bothered by them, and if they had any thing to do or say, on the subject it must be done through their Consul; accordingly Mr. Phillips, accompanied by Captains Brown & Geddes, waited on him, & asked his reasons for taking possession of the George, without any investigation or trial whatever—he replied, she was a "damned fine schooner," and he must have her to send some dispatches to England—as to the cargo, he would "send it to Jamaica for trial, where he did not doubt it would be condemned, as he had found contraband, articles on board?" he was requested to name the articles he called contraband, and he produced three bales, marked W. P. No. 52, 60, and 62, two of which were actually an inferior species of snaburbs and the other tickleburgs.—Mr. Phillips expressed his surprise at the articles being deemed contraband, and remonstrated with Captain Watkins, but to no effect; the only satisfaction that could be got was, that he would do as he pleased, and if he did wrong he must be answerable for it, but that the service required the sending of the schooner with dispatches to England.—Captain Geddes and Mr. Phillips took samples of the articles in question, which I have brought with me. Other vessels have been recently sent in, whose fate is uncertain; every bale of goods is torn open and ransacked, and should there unfortunately be any German lincens on board whose texture is sufficiently strong to make boat sails, the vessel and cargo will be condemned.—It is a well known fact, that the vessels trading to the West-Indies, carry more or less of German lincens, but according to Captain Watkins's construction, all these articles are contraband. The following breach of honor will illustrate in a very strong point of view the character of the said Watkins.

During the period the capitulation was negotiating, things were so alarming a state on shore as to induce Mr. Phillips to seek an asylum for himself and his family on board the "frigate"; Captain Watkins very politely tendered his cabin and gave every apparent evidence of respect to Mr. Phillips as American Consul—among the effects Mr. Phillips carried on board the frigate, was a large amount of specie, which he placed in the charge of said Watkins—a few days after this, Mr. Phillips had occasion to write a note on some business to Mr. Corfer, his partner; said note was trusted to the charge of one of the officers of the frigate, who broke it open and delivered it to Captain Watkins, the said Watkins then informed Mr. Phillips that he regretted he was under the necessity of retaining the specie he had committed to his charge, as he had discovered that he was concerned in business which was not justifiable in an American Consul.

Mr. P. assured him that by the laws of his country he was entitled to prosecute commerce, and stated his surprise at the violation of confidence he had reposed in him. This however would not avail; the money was still retained when I left Curacao. Among the individuals whose feelings had led them to use some harsh expressions on the conduct of said Watkins, was a Captain Lambert, of Salem, whose observations partook of more freedom than corresponded with the said Watkins's ideas of propriety; he therefore sent for and interrogated him in the most arrogant manner.—Captain Lambert made such replies as Watkins conceived indecorous; he was ordered to leave the island directly, and if he uttered a single insolent expression he would have him to the gang-way and flogged.—Capt. Lambert was of course under the necessity of departing from Curacao.

I forbear to make any comments on this detail, but presume the Executive of the United States will take the necessary measures to secure to the American flag the respect it merits.

I am Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM D. ROBINSON.

B. Stoddart, Esq. Secretary of the Navy of the United States.

LEGISLATURE OF VIRGINIA.

The following Resolution passed the house of Delegates on the 22d instant.

Whereas the General Assembly of this Commonwealth at their session, which commenced in December in the year 1798, passed sundry resolutions, in one of which they solemnly protest against the act of Congress, commonly called the sedition law as a palpable and alarming infraction of the Constitution of the United States.

And whereas the General Assembly of this Commonwealth, at their session, which commenced in December in the year 1799, repeated this solemn protestation against the said act of Congress, and moreover, directed the publication of the report of a select committee, copaining a fair and candid representation of the reasons on which that measure was founded; a report of which the members composing this present General Assembly take pleasure in expressing their decided approbation, not only because of the perspicuity and irreprehensible force of the arguments which it contains, but because a disposition to promote "mutual respect confidence and affection among the members of the union," is uniformly preserved.

And whereas recent occurrences have taken place in several parts of the United States and particularly in this Commonwealth, which justify the apprehensions expressed by the said General Assembly, and which prove that the said act is as oppressive and dangerous in practice as it is erroneous in principle.

And whereas the said last mentioned General Assembly by their resolution passed on the 17th day of January last, instructed the Senators from this State in the Congress of the United States, to oppose the passing of any law founded on or recognizing the doctrine lately advanced that the common law of England is in force under the government of the United States, a doctrine which they truly declare to be novel in its principles and tremendous in its consequences; and the members of the present General Assembly, after the most mature deliberation are of opinion that the said doctrine tends directly to the subversion of a fundamental article in the constitution, namely, that the general government possesses no powers but those which are expressly granted:—

Resolved, That the Senators from this State in the Congress of the U. S. be, and are, instructed, and that the representatives be requested, to avail themselves of every opportunity to obtain a repeal of the said act of Congress, and to oppose any law or resolution containing a recognition of the said doctrine.

NOTICE.

THE subscriber intending to leave this State in the Spring, and to be absent during the Summer months, earnestly requests those who are indebted to him or to the late concern of Langdon and Giles, to make payment on or before the first day of April next; a strict compliance with which, will enable him to discharge the just claims of his and their creditors.

He offers for sale,

The building newly erected on Toomer's Wharf. The Still House Lot and Wharf with the Improvements thereon; together with a moiety of the Saw-Pits, adjoining the aforesaid Lot, with the Saws and other Implements completely fixed for carrying on the business of sawing timber, and a quantity of timber on hand.

The Lot No. 21, being a Water Lot on the Hill, a little below the aforesaid Still-house lot.

R. LANGDON.

January 8

FOR SALE,

A good saddle or chair Horse, and a New Riding Chair and Harness. Apply to the Printer.

EPHRAIM PABODIE,

BOOT and SHOE-MAKER,

RESPECTFULLY informs his old customers, and the public in general, that he has just arrived from New-England, with a complete assortment of LEATHER and BOOT LEGS, and has recommenced his business of Boot and Shoe Making in Wilmington, North of the Court-House, and next door south of Mr. A. T. Browne's, where he will be happy to wait on all those who please to employ him, and the smallest favours will be gratefully acknowledged.

N. B. He has just opened for sale a large assortment of NEGRO SHOES, a few white LAMB SKINS, suitable for Free-Masons' aprons, and a few kegs of MANNING'S TOBACCO, by the kegg or smaller quantity.

Nov. 20.—208—17.