

Remarks

On the Despatch of Mr. Jackson.

FROM THE NEWSPAPERS.

his article, published in our last, although it does not come to us as official, we regard as especially true, and so regarding it, we shall not suppress our impressions it has made upon our mind. It is stated at two circumstances which this article discloses—first that the arrangement made by Mr. Erskine, was unauthorized by his government, and secondly that his powers or instructions were previously communicated to our government. The two governments therefore having agreed upon this point to spread each with a veil the conduct of the agent of the British government is liable to such censure, judging of the subject as it is before the people. Erskine in making an arrangement for which he was not authorized, has committed an act for which no excuse can be made, and from which it is impossible now to excuse all the mischief which will result. The conduct of Mr. Jackson, our government with equal dignity and prudence regarded as appropriate conduct of an individual, and the conduct of our government can not ought to be excused. It is possible, and probable that Mr. Jackson may have received information, that if the minister indeed him to think that the despatch was in conformity of the nature and extent of Mr. Erskine's instructions, but that he was directed by our government, a violation of the rules of diplomacy, and except in the instance of a revolutionary diplomacy, without examination was impossible that the government of the United States could submit to have its veracity questioned upon such a delicate and important subject, which the feelings and interests of this nation seem to be strongly excited, and deeply concerned. There appeared no other course but to which has been pursued by Mr. Madison in the case of Cray, furnished a precedent of violation.—Whenever may be our general opinion of the administration, we hope that will not be the results of foreign governments agents, with promptness and firmness to see how the poor enslaved governments of Europe are humiliated and insulted the ministers of Napoleon and wish to see that of that sort in our country, and here we consider of the insulting notes of Europe and the United States, and the notes of Europe to Mr. Armstrong, telling him that our nation ought to be at war. We repeat under the firmest belief, that the administration was not apprized of the nature and extent of Mr. Erskine's instructions, we think that Mr. Erskine touched the personal feelings of the ministers of the administration, & the character & glory of the nation generally, by insisting upon a communication of information which had been so long denied. The remarks which we have submitted, are intended upon a supposition that the circumstances stated are correctly stated, that nothing has been exaggerated or omitted in malice. It does not appear liberal to censure a person in a moment, but from a variety of circumstances we are persuaded that Mr. Erskine has been disgraced, and the means of the present rupture as he was of the original misunderstanding, and some strong reasons to believe that he has been so disgraced that he did communicate his instructions to our government, and we suppose it to have so informed Mr. Jackson. If Mr. Erskine has made such a communication to Mr. Jackson, the latter will not be justified in asserting it was omitted by our government. Mr. Erskine of all men on earth, is most interested, being it believed, that the government of the United States did know his instructions. In no other way can he excuse himself to his government for the violation of his instructions, for it was now agreed, that the dispatch of Mr. Jackson to Mr. Erskine of the 23d of January, was the only dispatch by which the conditions were prescribed to Mr. Erskine for the conduct of an arrangement, on the matter to which it related. The readers will do well to notice the latter part of the remarks which we have quoted, it clears up one point which was involved in much obscurity. It was always considered as extraordinary, that Mr. Erskine's dispatch of the 23d of January, took no notice of the affair of the Chesapeake, although the adjustment of that affair formed a prominent feature in the arrangement made with Mr. Erskine. We now perceive that with respect to the affair of the Chesapeake, Mr. Erskine was not authorized, and that the despatch of the 23d of January was the only one on the matter which was related, that is to the modification of the commercial restrictions imposed by this country, and the revocation of the British orders in consequence from these reflections, we are naturally led to a consideration of what effect this circumstance will have upon the political and commercial relations of the two countries. We are distinctly informed that Mr. Smith has been to Mr. Jackson, that no further communications would be received from him, and that the necessity of this determination, would with respect to Mr. Erskine, be made known to his government, and an assurance to it, at the same time, that a

ready attention would be given to any communication affecting the interests of the two nations through any other functionary that may be substituted. This is very clear and intelligible language, & shews that the government of this country, consider the affair as personal with Mr. Jackson, and not general with his government. If therefore the political relations of the two nations are to suffer any interruption, the first step must be taken on the part of the British government. We cannot tell from the article referred to, at what time the correspondence took place, whether before or after the sailing of the Africaner, nor can we understand, whether our government has already communicated the circumstance to the British government, or intend to do so. We incline to think that this correspondence took place before the Africaner sailed, and was communicated by Mr. Jackson to his government, and in this opinion we are confirmed, as Mr. Jackson was understood left Washington immediately after his despatches for the Africaner were sent down to this place, and of course was not engaged in any diplomatic correspondence. This fact is not important in itself, except we are naturally led to inquire if this circumstance occurred a month past why no notice should be taken of it, until now, and why at this particular juncture?

It is possible, but we doubt it, that the despatches for the American minister in London, went also by the Africaner; they may have gone by the packet. It would be desirable that the British government should be apprized of the determination of our government, as early as possible, and as soon as the former was apprized through Mr. Jackson. We do not apprehend any serious difficulty will arise out of this circumstance, which the recent changes of the British cabinet will contribute to avert. It is not to be presumed that a new administration will commence its career by a rupture with the United States, to sustain a minister in pretensions, wholly inadmissible.

The commercial restrictions which are imposed at present, it is probable will remain some time longer; they may be augmented, and will certainly be more inconvenient, by reason of the uncertainty which attends the relations of the two nations from this unexpected event.

The commercial interests of this country for the last two years, have been in a most deplorable situation. Closely connected with political relations, they are subject to those sudden and violent fluctuations which political events produce. At no period of our former unexampled prosperity were larger fortunes more rapidly accumulated, than at the present time, and to those who were best informed of the operations of the government.

The Subject continued.

The rupture between our cabinet and the British minister, is a circumstance which must give serious concern to every one who has the interest and happiness of this nation at heart. The French party rejoice, and now look for the consummation of all their hopes, the reward of all their long devotion to France, either under her revolutionary government, or her Corsican master. It requires some patience to listen to some who are now assuming all the patriotism of the nation, when they see who have taken the trouble to examine their conduct can produce incontestible evidence of a devotion to a foreign government, and an open and profligate opposition to their own. It will become such men, to assume in the present crisis, airs of patriotism, and to ascribe to others a want of attachment to their government.

We feel a confidence, that the people of this nation, will rally round their government, and resent with firmness any attempt on the part of a foreign government or its agents, to insult the nation, or to interfere with its concerns. But when we see that already attempts are making to cause suspicion to be attached to the Federalists, we are not inclined to be silent, the more then we recollect and know the foul source from whence these suspicions proceed.

We have no other authority for the truth of what is said to have been the conduct of Mr. Jackson, than what appears in the National Intelligencer, but believing it to be true, we have expressed our opinions, and to which we have nothing to add.

This is not the first instance in which the government has been insulted by a foreign minister, but we both hope and believe that it will not furnish another instance of condescendance to a foreign agent, in contempt of all decency, and regard to the American character.

Those who are now assuming such extraordinary airs of virtue, will moderate a little in their high tone, when they find that their conduct is not forgotten, upon more occasions than one.—Most part, if not nearly all of our readers, know the conduct of Genet, he insulted this government by language, which is too indecent to be here repeated, he assumed the right of carrying on naval and military enterprises from our country, by commissioning and arming our citizens against nations, with whom we were at peace. He had the audacity to say that the President ought to have convened Congress upon his arrival, making himself the judge of the duties of the President; when checked in this insolent career, he threatened to appeal, and actually did appeal to the people. He was supported by a party notwithstanding, and upon a memorable occasion the follow-

ing toast was given:—"The persecuted citizen Genet, may the shafts of calumny aimed at him, recoil on their archers." This was after his recital, which was at the instance of the President.—Faucher pursued the same insolent conduct, and had the insolence when speaking of the President's Proclamation of neutrality, to call it "insidious." Adet was not behind his predecessors, and closed his mission by an appeal to the people, for the express purpose of influencing an approaching election. Under all these disgraceful circumstances, these ministers, found a party and papers, who openly sustained them in their indecent and dangerous proceedings.

Even after the unjust conduct of the French government had proceeded to such lengths, that the nation was driven to arms, the party still supported their pretensions. And of the evidence of the intrigues of the French government with the citizens of this country, one instance among many, will be sufficient to notice. The answer of the French minister of foreign relations to our ministers in the year 1798, was in the possession of a printer in this country, before it reached the American government. With all these, and many more proofs of a similar nature, which could be produced, shall such men lay exclusive claim to the confidence of the nation? Will the people bestow their confidence on those, who have enlisted themselves under the banners of a foreign power? In bringing these circumstances into notice at this juncture, we have no other object, than to guard our fellow citizens against those, whose motives by reference to the facts which we have stated cannot be doubted.

Reflections

ON THE STATE OF EUROPE.

Under this head, the Connecticut Courant has lately published a series of numbers. The writer concludes the whole with the following pertinent and impressive remarks:

"In the stupendous drama of Europe, which begun with the French Revolution, almost every succeeding act has produced surprise by its novelty, and has abounded with incidents as terrible as they were unexpected. Both wisdom and folly have been baffled alike in their conjectures respecting the future. In vain has the learned sage explored the pages of history, ancient and modern, to find some parallel instance that might enable him to conjecture the future from the past. In vain has the shrewd politician, the wily statesman, attempted to lift the veil from futurity, so far as to devery consequences from their causes, nicely weighed in his balance. All, all, have been equally puzzled, equally baffled in their theories, equally out in their guesses: and from first to last, it has happened that what occurs to day affords no means by which to judge of tomorrow."

"We have seen a great and high-spirited nation rise in its might and burst the bands of its government. We have seen this nation of thirty millions of people, not only prostrating and sweeping away all its civil institutions, but also waging open war, as it were, against Heaven. We have seen it, in the uproar of anarchy and atheism, covered with crimes the most horrible, and mangled itself by the murder of tyrants of its citizens. While thus weltering in its own blood, and seemingly in its last agonies, we have seen it spring forward in the paroxysms of rage, bearing down all before it with irresistible might, binding the surrounding nations in fetters, and spreading havoc and ruin far and wide."

"We have seen a young man of no name or family, an adventurer, a foreigner, who had fed upon the bread of public charity—we have seen him step forward, put his bits in the mouth of this furious nation, scourge it with his whip and goad it with his spurs. We have seen thirty millions of peoples who generally, neither feared God nor regarded man; who had spurned all laws divine and human; we have seen them, one and all, bend their necks to the yoke of the usurper.—We have seen them, all as one man, become the tools of his ambition, a mighty engine in his hands that has been wielded by him hither and thither at his pleasure. Like the He Goat in the Prophet Daniel, that "touched not the ground" as he went, we have seen this modern Alexander moving in his career of victory with astonishing rapidity, shaking the pillars of every government within his reach, overturning thrones at a single blow, putting down and setting up kings, and still adding nation after nation to the train of his conquests. We have seen moreover a series of incidents remarkably tending, from first to last, to promote his views.—All this we have seen already; and what will be the next act in the drama, or what its catastrophe, Omniscience alone can foretel."

"The kingdom is the lord's, and He is the Governor among the nations. "He sitteth upon the circuit of the Heavens," and "darkness is under his feet."—Divine Providence rules and overrules the affairs of both nations and individuals; and amidst the convulsions, the confusions, and the changes in Europe, it constantly marches forward with unerring wisdom towards the accomplishment of its final purposes.—Yet, while we acknowledge awe, the dispensations of Divine Providence in staining the pride of human glory and bringing into contempt the honorable of the earth; also while we entertain a firm belief that it will be so ordered by the Dispenser of all events, that good will finally grow out of this state of things—we do, in the mean time, not the less detest the instruments of cruelty that are filling the earth with violence and with blood. They mean not

so, neither do their hearts think so." Their aim is not final good or indeed any good to mankind, but to advance their own ambitious views and to gratify their cruel dispositions. And they are to be resisted, on the same principle that we would resist and destroy a robber, an assassin, who should attempt to plunder us of our property and to murder our wives and children. Napoleon's fall may be as sudden as his elevation; or if for the wise and holy purpose of Divine Providence, his power should be continued and yet farther enlarged, there is still a power above, that has fixed his bounds which he cannot pass; a power that is never wanting, eventually, to those who duly confide in it, and are not wanting to themselves.

"The signs of the times" are truly awful.—The tempest grows louder and yet louder; and in this alarming juncture, it behoves us to bethink ourselves of our own safety. Placed as we are at a great distance from the theatre of general uproar and carnage, and kept, as yet, out of the vortex, we are, in this respect in an enviable situation; a situation which we ought to contemplate not without lively gratitude to the Governor of the Universe, nor without heart-felt compassion for our suffering fellow-beings. Never had a nation more means of happiness, more urgent calls for patriotism, more frequent or more solemn warnings against internal divisions and dissensions; yet we turn a deaf ear.—Instead of uniting like a band of brothers to ward off the blow that threatens us, we are but adding weight to it by violent and acrimonious discord among ourselves. Is this worm at the root, a worm that will never die? Is there no balm that can heal or assuage the wounds which have been made among us by the rancorous spirit of party?—Then, our ruin must be inevitable; for a nation, any more than a house divided against itself cannot stand. A crisis may arrive, and very soon too, that will give opportunity to some daring usurper to fix his foot upon our necks.

"My fellow citizens, of whatever political party we have been or are, let this be henceforward our general motto. For God and our Country.—Let us beware of that moral poison, or of those infidel, atheistical principles and practices, which first opened the gate to the flood of miseries wherewith Europe is overwhelmed.—Let us practice those political, moral, and religious virtues, which exalt a nation. Let us shun the contagion of French influence, and of all foreign influence, with as much vigilance and dread as we should shun the touch of the hand of death. And then, in the name of our God, we might set up our banners, and bid defiance to the arms of flesh, how potent, soever, that should offer to assault us."

Case of Captain Bennet.—The case of this man has not excited the attention it ought.

The following letters exhibit a true statement of facts.

From the Canadian Journal.

ELIZABETHTOWN, (U. C.) May 10, 1809

Mrs. MOWER; A most cruel murder having been perpetrated in this place lately on the body of Isaac D. Underhill, a resident here, I deem it my duty, through the medium of your paper to lay before the public a statement of the affair; and must request you will as early as possible insert the following circumstance and letters.

On the first inst. an American vessel, said to be bound from Ogdensborough, in the state of New York, to Oswego, anchored in a Bay on the British shore of the St. Lawrence. Having on board a captain William P. Bennett of the 6th United States Regiment of infantry, and some of his men. While laying in said Bay, captain Bennett, who had received information of an American deserter being in our settlement teaching school, ordered his Sergeant by the name of John Graves to pursue and take him: the sergeant & two of his men then went on shore, proceeded to the school house, took the said Underhill, tied his hands before him, and drove him some distance through the woods with their guns and bayonets, pricking him continually in a most cruel manner to make him run, till they came to the Kings highway, when the said Underhill, looking towards a Mr. Fulford's house where he boarded, felt a wish to escape to it and run; he had not proceeded more than 4 or 5 rods when he was fired at by the said Sergeant and his men and on a second discharge of a gun he was mortally wounded when the Sergeant and his men ran up to him and were going to blow out his brains, but he begged his life, saying he had received his death wound and wanted a few moments to make his peace with his maker; on which the soldiers left him, ran to the shore, went immediately on board the schr. and from thence with their captain Bennett, fled to the American shore. Underhill with assistance reached Mr. Fulford's house, where he lay in excruciating torture till Tuesday afternoon, when he expired. The coroners inquest sat on the body the next day and brought in a verdict of Wilful Murder, (after hearing the testimony of Francis Davis and Robert Augeron, two seamen belonging to the vessel mentioned in their depositions, also many other strong and convincing testimonies)—The following letter from capt Bennett, with my answer, will further elucidate the latter.

I am your humble servant. HENRY ARNOLD.

(COPY)

At Anchor off Major Ford's, May 3, 1809.

SIR, I have not the honor of an acquaintance with you, nor is it necessary to my purpose, as I am