

# THE RALEIGH MINERVA.

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From the Spirit of '76.

## GENERAL ARMSTRONG'S CORRESPONDENCE.

Editor of the court gazette in his paper of the 15th inst. in laying before his readers the late extracts from general Armstrong's remarks, every American of independent mind must be able to see at a glance the firm and lofty tone in which general Armstrong vindicates his government against the unfounded insinuations uttered against it in relation to the conduct generally of general Armstrong at the court of Paris, it is impossible for us to say, from the imperfect view of the present and late executive have furnished public both of the instructions given him, his communications with them, whether they are characterized by a firm and lofty tone or the acts under the immediate injunctions of the executive, and of course his communications with the French government can only be seen in a relative light to his instructions. If general Armstrong's instructions left him at liberty to repel with just sensibility and manly indignation the 'injury and insult' lawlessness and insolence inflicted upon us by the French government, as also such 'unfounded insinuations' as are uttered by that power against this nation, we should not hesitate in saying that there is no more so extraordinary in the firmness or consistency of his tone, at which every American of independent mind ought to feel a pride. If, on the contrary, general Armstrong was so managed by his instructions and compelled to be so guarded in his communications through fear of offence to that government by a 'firm and lofty' exposition of its atrocious conduct to America, as to avoid at all hazards, even the most obsequiousness, inducing it to conform with the British policy, then it may be that he has acted correctly. His language to us however to be full mild for the occasion, under almost any circumstances, but not more so than his instructions warranted. In the editor of the court gazette upon this ground, that general Armstrong has vindicated his government in a firm and lofty tone, the 'unfounded insinuations,' (alluding to the Duc de Cadore's letter) uttered against it, and that every American of independent mind must feel a pride at the circumstance, what task must or ought every American of independent mind to feel towards the editor of the gazette, who could pass over in perfect silence for near two months this very letter which contains those 'unfounded insinuations'? Why should his firm and lofty tone was so perfectly suited to witnessing those base insinuations, degrading epithets of the French minister? He is fearful of spreading through the national press the insolence and villainy of France, and descending to notice those 'unfounded insinuations'? What then suppressed his ire, which would now feign have us believe he feels? If his firm and lofty tone is justly a subject of commendation now, it was equally so then? Duane, however, has fully possessed the public with the idea of accounting for much of the conduct of ministerial editor. He has already told the public that 'it would not comport with the substance of the National Intelligencer' to act with independence. 'Its existence' he tells us 'depends upon its obedience to the temporising and evasive schemes of the influential members of Congress.' His conduct on this occasion, therefore, is by no means unaccountable or to be wondered at. 'It is a true specimen of his candor, forbearance and dignified moderation.'!! Let us view this subject in another light and for a moment the correctness of the press of our court gazette, that the firm and lofty tone of general Armstrong's letter to the Duc de Cadore, sheds lustre on the proudest days of Roman virtue, what must every American of independent mind think of the 'firm and lofty' tone of that part of the president's message, at the opening of the second session of the eleventh Congress, which relates to the conduct of France, which he barely notices her 'trespasses,' and 'unfriendly arrangement' with the British government, and to fix upon it the odium of the disapproval, merely informing congress that France the posture of our relations does not correspond with the measures taken on the part of the United States to effect a favorable change! Nothing at that time transpired with that respect which deserved to be noticed and commended to the national legislature in a more forcible and impressive manner than we find it was, particularly when the 'principal belligerent' who was also a 'trespasser' had received so great a share of his attention? In the pertinent language of general Armstrong, was the capture and condemnation of a ship driven on the shores of France, by distress of weather and the perils of the sea—nothing? Was the seizure and sequestration of many cargoes brought to France in ships violating no law and admitted to regular entry at the imperial custom houses—nothing? Was the violation of our maritime rights, consecrated as they have been by the solemn forms of a public treaty—nothing? In a word, was it nothing that our ships were burnt on the high seas, without other offence than that of belonging to the United States; or, that an apology than was to be found in the enhanced safety of the perpetrator! Yet all this and more was known to the president at the time his message was delivered to congress; at a

time that he knew he was bound by the constitution of the land 'to give to congress information of the state of the union.' General Armstrong's letter which Mr. Editor Smith tells us "sheds lustre on the proudest days of Roman virtue" applies with peculiar force to the flagitious conduct of France in the cases just recited, all which the executive was apprised of at the commencement of the last congress, and if general Armstrong deserves commendation for the 'firm and lofty tone' which he has assumed in vindicating his government, it is clear as day that the president merits public censure and condemnation for the beggarly notice which he, in his message to congress, has taken of the unprincipled conduct of France, of what general Armstrong justly terms the 'injury, insult and lawlessness' of that power towards America.

From Mr. Madison we never calculated upon any thing either very bold or dignified. We never conceived him qualified for the chief magistracy of the United States, however he might be for a secretary of state, a legislator or for some inferior station to that of the president of the union, and we are firmly convinced that the nation will consult its best interests by dispensing as speedily as practicable with his administration. He is a timid, temporising politician, as devoid of decision as of nerve. He is illy calculated to preside over a nation of freemen. His administration so far has been productive of little else than embarrassment to the nation at large, and there now appears a positive certainty of its being involved in still greater difficulties with a power that ministerialists have heretofore attempted to persuade us to believe was acting upon the principle of "retaliation" and solely in defence of the "freedom of the seas." From England too there is but little expectation that his administration will never obtain just and ample reparation for her 'trespasses.' So it seems that we are going on from bad to worse, and how it is all to end, it is not more difficult to conjecture than awful to contemplate.—With respect to General Armstrong's letter of the 10th of March, which has been a subject of such general commendation, we are not prepared to give it our unqualified approbation, because it contains some sentiments in the highest degree derogatory to the independence of the minister of freemen. However politic it may have been deemed to temporise with the French government before its letter of the 14th of February, there certainly should no longer have remained any doubt or hesitation with our minister as to the part he was to act after its receipt. The measure of our wrongs was filled to the brim. We had already submitted to greater indignities than ought to have been borne with. It had become high time that our minister should "vindicate his government in a firm and lofty tone." His task was a simple one. The atrocities of France were notorious. It was not a difficult matter heretofore for him to enumerate her most prominent acts of flagrant aggression.—This he has done in some instances in a forcible and striking manner, but not more so than the occasion called for. Yet his letter is defective in other parts. He has no where protested against illicit incarceration of Americans. He barely notices the "unfounded insinuation" that the people of the United States were destitute of policy, of honor and of energy, and passes over in silence other passages in that letter, perhaps not less objectionable. Nor does he vouchsafe to call the French minister's attention to the very exceptional circumstance of his having first published in the face of all Europe this insolent communication, before he condescended to furnish him with a copy. He could not well have acted towards our minister, or government, in a manner more truly contemptuous. Yet Gen. Armstrong deems this a matter of no moment, or carefully avoids treating it as such. Again, what are we to think of a minister who in one breath justly excepts to "a measure of reprisal, equally sudden and silent in its enactment and application, founded on no previous wrong, productive of no previous complaint, and operating beyond the limits of his majesty's territories and within those of sovereigns who had even invited the commerce of the United States to their ports," and in the next speaks of "the confidence he feels in the open and loyal policy of His Majesty," who has authorized those measures of reprisal equally sudden and silent! What is the plain import of those words, "open and loyal policy", but fairness of conduct and devotion to the principles of justice? If this be the plain and natural interpretation of their meaning, does it not argue a degree of extreme inconsistency, if not base hypocrisy in our minister to signify his confidence in the open and loyal policy of a tyrant who sanctioned those "measures of reprisal equally sudden and silent in their enactment and application, founded on no previous wrong, productive of no previous complaint, and operating beyond the limits of his majesty's territories and within those of sovereigns who had even invited the commerce of the United States to their ports?" It might also be asked with great propriety whether this "open and loyal policy" in which General Armstrong places such implicit confidence consisted in "the capture and condemnation of a ship driven on the shores of France by distress of weather and the perils of the sea—the seizure and sequestration of many cargoes brought to France in ships violating no law and admitted to regular entry at the imperial custom houses—the violating of our maritime rights, consecrated as they have been by the solemn forms of a public treaty.—In a word, whether it consisted in burning our ships on the high

seas, without other offence than that of belonging to the United States; or other apology, than was to be found in the enhanced safety of the perpetrator?" Yet all these acts of perfidiousness were of long standing, are truly characteristic of "his majesty," and had but just been recapitulated by General Armstrong at the moment he is avowing the perfect confidence in the open and loyal policy of this insatiable tyrant! Under such circumstances we cannot join in echoing his praise, in applauding indiscriminately the conduct of a minister who should so far forget the dignity due to his station, as to express his entire confidence in the open and loyal policy of a wretch whose deeds have long been marked with the utmost flagitiousness and perfidy towards his government, and from whom it is now suffering the most cruel injuries, the greatest indignities!

From the N. Y. Evening Post.

Mr. Doolittle's Narrative.—Having given Mr. Doolittle's narrative to the public, in his own words; we now proceed to make some remarks and observations on the subject.

The first thing which presents itself to our view in examining this narrative is the submission of our minister at Paris to the unjust decrees of the tyrant of France Bonaparte had decreed that every neutral vessel which should visit a British port, or that should be visited by a British cruiser should be denationalized. That is, that the vessel should lose its neutral character and the crews should become Englishmen, and be treated accordingly. The ship in which Mr. Doolittle sailed had visited a British port, the crew therefore, agreeably to the decrees of Bonaparte, were Englishmen, they were taken as Englishmen, and confined as English prisoners of war. Mr. Doolittle applied to Gen. Armstrong, and requested him to demand these men as Americans. No law of nations that ever existed could denationalize them, unless they had committed some crime. It was what every neutral had a right to do. And had they submitted to Bonaparte's decrees they would at once have lost their neutral character, they would have become his slaves. But what does Gen. Armstrong say in this business?—He acknowledged the decree of Bonaparte to be just. The emperor has decreed that there shall be no neutrals—you have attempted to maintain the neutral character, your punishment therefore is just. This is the sum and substance of Gen. Armstrong's doctrine. And on this principle he could not demand these poor devils as Americans. They were Englishmen—they had violated the decrees of his imperial majesty,—every man who does that is an Englishman of course—and if the Emperor thought fit to punish him as an Englishman he ought not to complain. The Emperor, though he was actually making open war on the United States, did not think it policy at that time to declare it. He knew if he called these unfortunate men American "prisoners of war," the eyes of the people of America would be open; and that it would be out of the power of his minions in this country to stifle the spirit of indignation which would be raised against him. Though our government and their ministers were with him, yet he knew that the great mass of the people were against him. It was therefore, necessary for him to disguise his real views; and in this deception General Armstrong has done every thing to assist him. Had the General demanded these men as Americans—had he written directly to the minister of state, instead of applying in a cringing tone to the minister of war, he would have settled the business at once. The men would have been released, or an open declaration of war would have ensued. Bonaparte must have given up the men, or declared his intention of treating us as enemies. In either case the honor of the nation would have been saved, and if Bonaparte had declared war against us, as in all probability he would have done, millions of property would also have been saved. But, to the shame of Americans be it spoken, we have submitted to every indignity which foreign nations have seen proper to heap upon us; and this is not all—our ministers, instead of being the defenders of our rights and protectors of Americans, have condescended to become spies and informers to the police of foreign countries. They have not only submitted to the laws of tyrants, made to control and destroy the rights of neutral nations, but they have actually assisted in putting these unjust edicts into execution.

Another thing exhibits the meanness of Gen. Armstrong or some of his satellites. Mr. Doolittle sent letters through Gen. Armstrong, and by his permission, to his parents in America. These letters instead of being forwarded directly to Mr. Doolittle's father, were sent to Duane 'to be used, and then forwarded.' What shall we think of such a minister—a minister—a representative of a great nation, to descend to such meanness! What will he not descend to? Is it then come to this, that a private correspondence is to be kept up between our minister and a lying printer in this country, believed to be in the pay of France; and is every communication which comes from France, to go through the hands of this vile vagabond? It is well known that no letter can come from France without being opened by the police of that country, unless it comes under Gen. Armstrong's cover; and it appears that the letters forwarded by the general are to go through the hands of Duane. An honorable situation of affairs this! Gen. Armstrong's last letter to the French minister was in the style of a man and an American,—and we are happy to give him credit for the stand he has taken.—We sincerely hope he

has seen the evil of submitting to Bonaparte's decrees, and that in future he will maintain the character of a true American. But as long as he holds a private correspondence with such men as Duane, and exposes to them secrets which our administration think too sacred for the public eye, we shall look upon him with suspicion. No man can be a true American who holds familiar converse with Duane.

In making our observations on our affairs with France, and the situation of the unfortunate Americans in that country, we have been under the necessity of censuring General Armstrong, and laying the blame on his shoulders, as he was the representative of the American nation in that country; and through him every communication from Americans to the French government ought to have been made. But we are far enough from thinking that general Armstrong did all that he has done of his own mere motion. We have a higher opinion of his spirit than to think he could so stoop, and feel no degradation. He had his instructions from our temporizing great ones at Washington. He was undoubtedly forbid to interfere for the poor Americans, lest the "paragon of human nature," the "super-eminent" emperor, should take offence, and declare open war against us. Submission to Bonaparte's decrees was the policy of Jefferson, and is the policy of our present administration. Napoleon had decreed the destruction of commerce, and his friends in this country obeyed! They manned our fleet and armed the militia against navigation at home, and instructed our ministers to destroy it abroad. Mr. Armstrong may have, therefore, done his duty as a minister, but as a man and a friend to his country, he has certainly failed.

From the Federal Republican.

MESSRS. EDITORS,

I have long thought and frequently indulged the remark, that the different ministers of England were not less ignorant of the state of parties in this country, their character and views, than they were mistaken in the policy pursued in their negotiations.—Until the appointment of Mr. Jackson, for many years they have not had a minister in the United States, who was qualified properly to represent his government, or capable of attending to its interest. I have never been able to account for this oversight or neglect, unless it be that she does not think us of sufficient consequence in the scale of universal politics to be regarded with a more jealous and watchful attention. However it cannot be denied that after the seduction and ruin of Erskine, she thought fit to put her best foot foremost, and to compliment us by sending out the ablest negotiator in her whole diplomatic corps—that is to say, after the steed was stolen she shut the stable door. The arduous & almost infeasible task of undoing what Erskine did without authority, was assigned to Mr. Jackson, and although much of the evil was remedied, the affair has terminated in a complete suspension of diplomatic intercourse.

Now, before Erskine's arrangement was made, it is a matter of history, that the diplomatic action was almost under water, without having a straw to catch at. The ignorance, weakness, or treachery of this boyish minister, induced him to stretch forth his hand to save them from drowning. By a coup de main, they were not only saved, but actually enabled to place their preserver in their own situation, who might appeal to their magnanimity and humanity, in vain, to extend to him a like assistance. Whose fault is it then that the avowed and bitter enemies of England, still hold the reins of government in this country? It is England's fault—in this way. They permitted a man to reside here as minister, who was not qualified even to be a sub-consul! who if not open to corruption, was at least so torpid as to be the dupe of the petty tricks and cunning of a common petty-fogging attorney. I hope she will profit by the lesson, and whenever diplomatic intercourse is renewed, she will avoid these rocks and quicksands. Unless she has an eye to the character and conduct of her ministers in this country, the American people will be perpetually humbugged by the gross and clumsy deception of their own cabinet.

But I begin now to flatter myself that the Madison's, Giles's and Smith's are perfectly understood in England, and will be dealt with in a manner becoming the occasion, all the palaverings of our philosophical senatorial doctor Logan to the contrary notwithstanding. By the way, Messrs. Editors, you have let off this absurd personage much too easy. He is going about the world like an itinerant mad Doctor, thinking that by his emollients, his potions and his salves, he can reduce all mankind to his own precise level of stupidity. He is one of those fellows whom the imitable poetry of the Anti-Jacobin describes as thinking,

"That black's not so black,  
Nor white so very white."

It was really an odd manoeuvre to send this political quack in a sort of demi-official capacity to England, to jabber his nonsense in ministerial circles, and to circulate the impression that as it were, or by chance would fall out, the American cabinet was not in earnest in mistreating Mr. Jackson. As a kind of passport, you remember, he carried with him a poor description, I would add I wouldn't letter, from Mr. Madison, which he used no doubt to bother and puzzle your oppositionists and *Burdetties*, who would seize hold of the slightest pretext to force the ministry into the adoption of further conciliatory measures. The mad Doctor will come home with his finger in his