

THE RALEIGH MINERVA.

RALEIGH, N. C.—PUBLISHED (WEEKLY) BY WILLIAM BOYLAN.

[OR \$2 50 CENTS IN ADVANCE.]

VOL. 15.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1810.

No. 758.

The writer of the following letter acted several years as minister resident of the Batavian republic in this country. He is a man of talents, of common erudition, and of a calm and penetrating judgment. Having been for 14 or 15 years a careful observer of the political occurrences of this country, with the assistance of those superior talents, which his station afforded him, he impudently pronounces upon the administration, which has degraded and ruined our country, such a sentence, as will prove an anticipation of the award of posterity. Would to God that it were also acted by the blinded part of our countrymen, before it is too late. Americans have here a mirror presented to them by a stranger of discernment, which they may see the image of their rulers in that hideous form, in which alone, the faithful pencil of truth can portray them.

Mr. Van Polanen is sheltered from the suspicion of any undue motive in speaking as he does, republican by principle as well as profession, and the representative of a revolutionary government once subordinate to France, but now extinguished with so many others of her satellites, he is swayed by every impulse of political affinity or personal connexion, not to defame the government, who, he must have been conscious, did not, among their other crimes, be suspected of a want of cordiality towards the views and signs of France. His repugnance to England is enforced in his conversations, with all the feelings which belong to him, who however erroneously attributed the downfall of his country to her alliance.

In conveying information to an officer of the British government in India of the highest rank, would scarcely think of treating the character of our administration with wanton injustice and contumely. For, what end would it serve? Marshal Daendels is personally unknown to them and they to him: it would not therefore be the gratification of his spleen or that of the writer. Considering, however, that the slender remains of the Dutch commerce in India is carried on exclusively by the intervention of the American flag and American merchants, it was of the importance to him to learn the true state of relations, the probability of engaging in the war or avoiding it, and the means which would conduce to each result. His correspondent had been able to resist the proof of the impotence and selfishness of those upon whom the destinies of this country depend; he could not shut his eyes upon the glaring arts which they put in execution to fortify the tenure of office; he saw how our country sacrificed with unpinching eagerness, in order to direct the popular breeze; he prepared the havoc which they made of its interests with the catastrophe at home, the handy work of demagogues of the same stamp, operating through a similar progress of cowardice, peevishness and private machinations. He therefore turned to his correspondent in effect that nothing honorable was to be expected from a people led so blindly by men whose measures, which they did not centre in themselves, would be described by chance or forced upon them by destiny. These conclusions were drawn without a knowledge of the striking facts, which have since transpired.

At the date of his letter, Mr. Van Polanen could not be apprised, that the refusal to receive the British minister, the dismissal of the British, the submission to Cadore's letter, the Rambouillet decree, and the endless confiscations and impositions, which followed, would be crowded the compass of the ensuing year. This we have seen, though he had not, when he wrote of the national humiliations experienced for many years are nothing, but the main question with government and its supporters is, *how shall we keep our places?*

It would carry us beyond our limits, to descant on every passage, which in this important letter claims attention. We cannot, however, refrain from barely referring to the apt exposure of the policy and measures of the Executive, to surrender the interests of New England and the mercantile part of the union, by abandoning the colonial trade. From this, it seems probable, they were prevented by the premature disclosure of their schemes and the bullying of the minister of France, whose interest was many ways involved in keeping up the claim. The Dutch minister, whose language resembles that of personal privy, expressly imputes the intention to make the surrender, and in behalf of the Dutch colonists, "pledged" that it would be prevented by the circumstances alluded to.

It will be expected that we should explain how the letter fell into our hands. This reasonable curiosity, we are willing to gratify. It was put forward an American vessel bound to Tonningen, which was captured and carried into England; and it was produced upon trial in the court of admiralty. Thence this extract came into our hands, through an American gentleman.—*Federalist*.

Extracted from R. F. Van Polanen, to Marshal Daendels, General of Dutch India, dated New York, August 20th, 1810.

Intelligence was received here on the 21st of a declaration having been made by the Eng-

lish government, that her minister in America, in his negotiation of a provisional engagement, entered into with the American government in the month of April, of the present year, had exceeded his instructions, and that Holland, the island of Walcheren, the sea coast to the south of the

Weser, as well as France, the coast of Italy in the power of the French, the French and Dutch colonies, were again declared in a state of blockade.—Hereupon followed a proclamation of the President of the United States on the 9th inst. renewing the suspension of the American trade to England and her colonies, whereby the disputes between the two governments are not only again revived, but the following amongst other concessions now openly demanded from the United States of America on the part of England, viz.—

The relinquishment of all trade to the colonies of the enemies of England.—With France affairs are on no better footing; all American property continues sequestered in France, American merchants are every where captured and carried into port by French privateers, in Italy and the states of the Church—also American ships and cargoes are laid under sequestration, a measure adopted likewise in Holland, with regard to all colonial produce, which is put under the king's lock, for the purpose of detention till after a general peace.—In Tonningen alone, American ships and cargoes are as yet left free; though the Danes and English have captured American vessels destined for Sweden. The horizon, therefore, cannot be more gloomy for American maritime commerce. Their navigation to South America and certain Spanish and Portuguese ports of Europe, still continues uninterrupted; but the only port left them in the West Indies, is St. Bartholomew's belonging to Sweden.—Negotiations were, it is true, commenced in the beginning of last month, between the American minister at Paris and M. de Hautrieve, but it is regarded as a mere political manoeuvre to embarrass the negotiations with England, and it is expected that on the part of France, in this negotiation there will be again made the former or similar propositions, which have already been deemed inadmissible, as incompatible with strict neutrality.—People begin now to be pretty generally impressed with the belief, that it will be no longer possible for this country to adjust her differences with one of the belligerent powers, without incurring the hostility of the other—that neutral rights cannot be otherwise protected than by force of arms, and that the time they had for preparing themselves for that purpose had been passed in inactivity.—The only mean of extrication from this equally difficult and humiliating situation, would be that of chusing between France and England, but the dissensions existing here will not allow it.

The faction at present in power, is too well convinced, that a war with England, would introduce into government the now proscribed party; and it is to this personal consideration that the honor and interest of the nation are sacrificed.—A war with France would deprive the prevailing faction of many of their adherents, and give rise to connections with England, which in the uncertain issue of war, it is wished to avoid.—National humiliations experienced for so many years are considered as nothing, but the main question with government and its supporters is, *how shall we keep our places?* The opposition against the general embargo, which was beginning to threaten the existence of government, has taught it that the body of the nation will not long submit to losses and sacrifices, and that although parliamentary declaimers may bluster about fighting all the world, and hazarding their lives and fortunes, for the honour and rights of their country; yet if it really come to pass, the disasters of the country would soon be thrown on the governors, and the loss of the present prosperous state, ascribed to their ignorance, bad faith or corruption. Hence the passive conduct of the late president Jefferson, which will doubtless be imitated by the present president as long as possible, though a doubt arises now more forcibly than before, whether it be longer practicable. The merchants have got rid of the major part of their goods and received others in return, and the once overflowing granaries of the country people are now nearly emptied, in consequence of which, the nation will be somewhat more reconciled to the government for a considerable time to come.

I thought it necessary to enter into this concise statement of the political situation of this nation, in order to shew your excellency what hopes may be entertained of the government of the United States being inclined, or indeed ever deemed capable of causing its neutrality to be properly respected. The passive and servile system of government, however dignified by its partisans with the epithets of pacific and just, has too long and pointedly manifested its weakness, to dread any thing else therefrom, than that in a moment of confusion and despair, brought about by foreign and intestine differences, it may, in spite of itself, come to resolutions, which in their consequences, might give rise to an open rupture with France or England. Even should government be able to avoid this, one may easily foresee, from what has already occurred, that notwithstanding all treaties, and the customary protests

and complaints on this side, the American commerce will remain still the sport of one, or both the belligerent powers. It has been laid down by the English ministry on various occasions during the present war, that a neutral nation can enjoy no more commercial rights in time of war, than are permitted her in time of peace; and that therefore trading to the colonies of her enemies which were shut to her in time of peace, does not belong to the neutral rights of America, and was only permitted by England through indulgence; but it was only lately that it was formally insisted upon by the British government, as one of the preliminary conditions to a reconciliation with America, that this trade should be given up by the Americans.

The present president of the United States, and secretaries of state and finances, constituting the majority of the American ministry, have already stated to the English minister in America, that they were prepared on this side to make that sacrifice. The southern and western states would lose nothing by it, and it is there that the principal strength of the prevailing faction exists. The country interest in all the states suffer by it, and the only opposition made to it would be that of the eastern states. I have therefore reason to apprehend that the president of the United States was inclined to yield to the demand of England, though, I at the same time entertain hopes that the reasonable notification herof, and the circumstance under which the same took place, connected with the timely interposition of the French minister in America will effect an alteration in the disposition of the American cabinets.

The French government sacrificing every thing to the great project, of which the principle features are no secret, does not in the least suffer itself to be impeded therein. by the commercial interests of France and her allies. It considers them as a temporary sacrifice, indispensable to the accomplishment of its grand object, the humiliation and weakening of England. There existed, notwithstanding, at the commencement of this war, a motive for preserving peace with America, viz. the interest of the French colonies—but all trans-marine possessions of France are fallen into the hands of the English, except Guadaloupe, Mariegalante and the Isle of France which are under effective blockade. France, so long as the present system with regard to foreign commerce, is persevered in, has no other interest in the preservation of peace with America, than so far as her political interests will not allow of this country's forming a closer connection with England—but she knows how reluctant America would be to proceed to such a connection, and that were she even to resolve on it, and to break with France, the least concession upon her part would again shake such resolution and delay its execution. England, on the other hand, has a real interest, for various reasons, in preserving peace with America; but she calculates upon the defencelessness of this nation and upon civil dissensions, and the weakness of the government which is a consequence thereof,—her present omnipotence at sea makes her look down with contempt upon a nation, whose sea coast and mercantile towns are protected by nothing but incomplete fortifications, and whose navy consists of seven frigates—England knows also by experience, how passively this government bears her ill-treatment, and thinks she has only to take care that she does not too often exceed the measure thereof, and if that happens, to offer negotiations and indemnifications.

There are persons who conceive that the present suspension of commerce with England will be the only means of bringing her to reason, but so long as a neutral port is open, the English will by that channel get American produce and introduce English manufactures into America. America will therefore be obliged to sell her produce cheaper and pay dearer for her supplies. The English navigation would moreover be benefitted by it. It is the avowed opinion of all who have distinguished themselves as statesmen in this country, that America will not be able to adjust her differences with the two principal parties in Europe on permanent grounds; and should it be accomplished with the one, it would involve a state of hostility with the other. Formal declarations of war, are not expected from either party, but (and this is the important point of view I take of political events) the commerce of America will continue to be the object of the violence and rapacity of the one or the other side.—Their extensive commerce will in future be narrowly circumscribed by the prohibitory laws and regulations on the continent of Europe; by the uncertain state of their political relations and the violated authorities of all national engagements; blockades, proclamations and sequestrations, to which the belligerent powers occasionally resort; and by distrust of the good faith of a single nation. The violent hate which increases more and more between the principal parties in this devastating war, gives rise to an infuriate spirit of animosity and revenge, to which both the national interests and every other consideration are sacrificed.

Of all the extraordinary state papers which have proceeded from the French government, since it commenced its revolutionary career, that

from the Minister of Foreign Relations to Mr. Armstrong, which is now published, appears to us the most extraordinary. It would be a waste of time, to examine all the many absurdities which are contained in this paper: they are too obvious to escape the most careless observer. Our Embargo lost the Emperor his Colonies! Ridiculous at this charge is, it is no doubt intended as an offset to our just claims, for the injuries we have sustained from his rapacity and injustice. Equally ridiculous are the complaints against the act of March 1809, as it effected French merchant vessels, when every one knows that they were long before that act passed not only excluded from the United States, but had disappeared from the ocean. Our act serves, however, as an excuse for the sequestration of American property: "reprisal was a matter of right."—This position is taken, and will be maintained, or the Emperor must restore the sequestered property.—By this declaration, thus positively made, we are given to understand that no claim will be admitted; and if any one can discover any thing like a promise to restore, or compensate for the property already sold or sequestered, he must have the facility of extracting consolation, which, tho' pleasing for the moment, will be delusive in the end.

But "at present Congress treads back its steps." No, most puissant Emperor, it is you "that treads back your steps."—You are at length compelled to acknowledge by your own act, that your anti-commercial system, which was adopted without regard to reason, policy or justice, has most completely failed.

It must afford great satisfaction to those who have foreseen, and foretold what would be the result of that system of commercial warfare, which was projected by France, and so foolishly adopted by us.—The advocates for Embargoes and Non-Intercourses, must certainly have some reflections that cannot be very comfortable at this time. But more of this anon. Let us pursue the subject under consideration.

Necessity has produced that which justice or policy could not. To any one, who took the trouble to examine the subject, the consequences were obvious. The system of sequestrations, and plunder could not last long; the expenses of a nation must be defrayed by means more certain—from the industry and enterprize of the people—protected by just laws; on these sources the enemy of Buonaparte relied, compared to which those adopted by him, was to compare time to eternity.

It is too plain that the emperor has found that commerce is necessary to France, as well as England, and however his pride may seek to disguise the fact, his own acts rise in judgment against him.—Our act of congress which passed the first of May, appears to have been unknown in France until the month of August, and its effects are wonderful, if we believe the emperor, for although the Berlin and Milan decrees are not yet repealed, they no doubt will be. In these extraordinary times when all reasonable calculations are baffled by events, we ought not to be surprised that the most unpopular and impotent (according to the opinions of violent democrats) of our acts, has produced such important results, or to speak correctly, furnished the pretext. This poor act, which has been abused with all the terms of reproach, that can be found in the vocabulary of an infuriated democrat, its advocates branded with all the opprobrious epithets which party rancour could suggest, has done what the wonder working embargo, and its appendages of non-importation and non-intercourse could not.

"His Majesty loves the Americans" just about as much as every honest American loves his majesty, and no more, and with submission to his majesty, we hope that he will not take any concern about our independence, prosperity, or liberty, for God forbid they should require his protection.—We should hardly think of electing the wolf for a shepherd. No, all we ask of him, is the observance of common honesty as regards our property.

The British government have fairly overcome the emperor, and by retorting upon him the measure of his own injustice.

As an event that promises advantages to our country, we rejoice in it, but we think our merchants will be wise in restraining their spirit of enterprize.

Norfolk Ledger.

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* This was not a demand of the British government, but a voluntary offer of the American administration through Mr. Erskine. The writer of the letter places the matter in a fair point of view in the sequel. ED. TED. REFUB.