

THE RALEIGH MINERVA.

[THREE DOLLARS PER YEAR.]

RALEIGH, N. C.—PUBLISHED (WEEKLY) BY LUCAS AND A. H. BOYLAN.

[FOR \$2.50 CENTS IN ADVANCE.]

VOL. 15.

THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 1811.

No. 780.

FOREIGN RELATIONS.

The following notice of the President's Proclamation, is from the *London Courier*, which is the administration paper. We do not before remember to have seen this article, although the paper from which it is extracted is as far back as the 12th December.—*Norfolk Ledger*. It has been inferred by some that the Proclamation of President Madison, issued in consequence of Bonaparte's pretended revocation of the Berlin and Milan Decrees, is a proof of a hostile disposition towards this country. That, the President may have such a disposition, we are not disposed to deny; but it is argued that the Proclamation cannot be received as a proof of it, for he had no other choice left.—The Act of the first of May last, relative to the commercial intercourse between the United States and Great Britain and France, provides—that in case either Great Britain or France shall before the 3d of March next, so revoke or modify her edicts as that they shall cease to violate the neutral commerce of the United States which fact the President of the United States shall declare by Proclamation, and if the other nation shall not within three months thereafter so revoke or modify her edicts in like manner, then the 3d, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th sections of the act entitled "An act to interdict the commercial intercourse between the United States and Great Britain and France and their dependencies, and for other purposes," shall from and after the expiration of three months from the date of the proclamation aforesaid, be revived and have full force and effect, so far as relates to the nation thus refusing or neglecting to revoke or modify her edicts in the manner aforesaid."

The French Government having notified to General Armstrong that the Berlin and Milan Decrees were to be revoked from the first of November, the President, it is contended, had no other alternative than that of issuing the proclamation which he has issued. Be it so.—We have no disposition to quarrel with America for renewing her intercourse with France. If she choose to trust to Bonaparte's word, and on the faith of his declaration, at his Berlin and Milan decrees are revoked, send her ships with American produce into his ports, we can have no right to complain. It is for her to decide whether she will place confidence in a man who never yet kept his word with her or any one else.—It is for her to decide, whether by the mere revocation of these decrees he ceases to violate the neutral commerce of the United States, and whether there are not other edicts unrevoked, by which the commerce of the United States, is and will continue to be as much violated as it was by these decrees. America may also, if she pleases, interdict all commercial intercourse with us; she may refuse to herself the benefits of carrying on trade with us, and we shall have no right to consider that as a ground of war. As to our Orders in Council they are revoked, of course, whenever the repeal of the French Decrees shall have actually taken place. If America, in consequence of the President's Proclamation, trade with France, and find that that repeal has actually taken place, then we can have no objection to declare to the American Government, that the Orders which we were compelled by those Decrees to adopt, cease to be in force. It is probable, though we speak without any official information, that even now they may be so modified as that vessels recently captured, as violating the Orders of Council, may not be condemned. This opinion we are induced to entertain by a circumstance that is said to have occurred yesterday. A case arising out of one of these captures was yesterday brought on for adjudication in the High Court of Admiralty, where, upon Sir W. Scott stayed proceedings, with the knowledge probably of some modification or repeal of the Orders being in the contemplation of our Government.

Thus, then, we have given it as our opinion, that we have no right to quarrel with America, because she has renewed her intercourse with France, or because she may not choose to have a party with France to enforce certain principles, which France is desirous of enforcing against us. In Champagny's letter to general Armstrong, dated the 6th of August, announcing the intended revocation of the Berlin and Milan decrees, he adds, "it being understood, that in consequence of this declaration, the English shall revoke their orders in council, and renounce the new principles of blockade which they have attempted to establish; or that the United States conformably to the act (May 1810) which you have just communicated, shall cause their rights to be respected by the English."

These new principles, as they are called by the French minister, America, we trust, does not consider herself bound to attempt to make us renounce.—Undoubtedly in Mr. Pinkney's letter of the 25th Aug. to Marquis Wellesley, nothing is said of these new principles; he merely informs his lordship that the French decrees are to be revoked, and "takes it for granted that the revocation of the British orders in council of January and November 1807, and April 1809, or of all other orders dependent upon analogous, or in execution of them, will follow of course."

But we remark in the American papers great stress laid upon our restoring full liberty to trade with the American official paper, the *National Intelligencer*, we find the following article:—

appeared in the English prints, it is probable that questions may hereafter arise, between the American and British governments on the subject of blockades. On recurring to the documents communicated to congress on the 23d December, 1808, we find the following letter from Mr. Merry to Mr. Madison, explanatory of the British doctrine on that topic. It embraces, we believe, the principles cordially admitted by the United States, beyond which they have never advanced any pretensions, and contrary to which, it is hoped Great Britain will set up no new rule."

Mr. Merry's letter is dated on the 4th April 1801. It relates to some complaints on the part of America relative to the blockade of Martinique, and Guadeloupe, and encloses a letter from Mr. Napoleon to Mr. Hammond, the under secretary of state, informing him, that the lords of the admiralty "had sent orders to commodore Hood, not to consider any blockade of those islands as existing, unless in respect to particular ports which may be actually invested, and then not to capture vessels bound to such ports, unless they shall previously have been warned not to enter them."

This, then, is the principle of blockade from which we infer from the American official paper America means to contend.—What those circumstances were which induced the government in 1804 to limit and narrow for a time the principle of blockade, we know not. But America must not take it for granted that because we do not in particular cases choose to go the whole length of a principle and a right, that therefore we abandon the principle and the right. To a principle so narrow and limited as that to which we have alluded, the British government never will consent. The doctrine which England has maintained and acted upon has never exceeded the limitations prescribed by all writers upon international law. France, on the other hand, has essentially deviated from these limitations in her practice, whilst she has greatly narrowed them in her official communications. Thus, in the *Berlin decree*, Napoleon declares all England in a state of blockade, when not a French ship of war floated upon the ocean; and yet in a communication of the Duke of Cadore to Gen. Armstrong, it is seriously affirmed, that a place to be strictly blockaded must be invested both by "land and sea." Amidst these contradictory doctrines, Great Britain will never allow, on the one hand, that she has exceeded in practice the admitted definition of blockade by celebrated civilians, or, on the other, the French interpretation of rigorous investment; much less will she admit France to have been justified in the pretended charges and consequent conduct against her, for violating principles which only under the French construction could be admitted to be genuine or sound.

FROM THE PHILADELPHIA GAZETTE.

We will not term the following letter merely interesting, because we deem it highly important; and we may be permitted to add, as evidence of its importance, that it is written, not by an habitual opposer of the present administration, but by a gentleman, who on more than one occasion has voted with the ministry.—The circumstances it unfolds, though lamentable, we apprehend are too true.

Washington, Feb. 17th, 1811.

The senate have been occupied during the whole of the past week on the bill to renew the charter of the Bank of the United States. No question has yet been taken on it, nor will there be a decision for a day or two to come, as there are several members yet to speak against it, and perhaps some in favour of it. It is believed that the votes in Senate will be exactly equal, so that the casting vote of the Vice President must decide it and he is believed to entertain constitutional scruples, which will induce him to vote against it. Thus you see the chances are against the bank even in the Senate. If it should pass that body and come again before us, I scarcely think it can be got through our House though many differ with me in opinion and think there is a considerable change in favour of the bank. I believe there are several who repent their votes, and regret that they have committed themselves upon the subject; but they are so completely entrained by party and influenced by pride of opinion, that I very much doubt whether they can assume magnanimity enough to acknowledge their error and change their votes. Party prejudice, violence, and jolly have marked their victim; and the sacrifice must be made, whatever it may cost the country. Whilst such is our gloomy prospect within, our exterior relations assume a fearful aspect. That Napoleon has us in his toils is beyond a doubt.—It remains to be seen, and a few days must determine whether we yet possess a sufficient degree of spirit and independence to destroy the shackles; or, having lost the generous spirit of freemen, have become base enough to act as the servile tools of the fell destroyer of the liberties of mankind. The course we have been and are still pursuing evinces a want of wisdom, a short sightedness, or a want of public virtue, which is truly astonishing and painful to behold. What man, viewing the course which Bonaparte has pursued, can for a moment doubt that his object is universal conquest? But Britain is in the way, and presents the only obstacle. To humble her and effect her overthrow, every means must be made use of, every power must be exerted, every other consideration must give way. To this object the great continental system lends all its powers. For this end the commerce of the continent is annihilated, British merchandise is burned—the peace, comfort, happi-

ness, and prosperity of millions of his own subjects and others destroyed. With these facts, so palpable and so plain, staring us in the face, we have the consummate folly to believe or the wickedness to affect to believe, that it is in our power to soothe this ferocious monster—to stop the force of this overwhelming torrent, which threatens to sweep away the liberties of the world, by a non-intercourse and restrictive measures against Britain. Nay, so infatuated are we, that not only are our eyes so hoodwinked that we cannot see, but our senses appear to be so benumbed that we cannot feel. Not content with burning our ships and merchandise upon the ocean—with executing his Berlin and Milan decrees (which outraged every principle acknowledged as public law by civilized nations,) with almost rigour—with telling us that we are without honour or energy, and worse than the colonists of Jamaica, to cap the climax of robbery, perfidy and insult, the Rambouillet decree was issued and more than twenty millions of property belonging to our silly and unsuspecting citizens, who had violated no law, and who conceived the laws of hospitality & the principles of justice and good faith were a sufficient security for them;—this property was seized and confiscated without a pretext. Thus robbed, insulted, and abused, we passed the act of the first of May last, telling the author of these wrongs that if he would cease to plunder us and repeal his Berlin and Milan decrees, we would have no intercourse with Britain.

He saw at once that we were ready to entangle ourselves in the meshes of his wily policy, and spread his net accordingly. All at once we were told, that "his majesty loves the Americans," and that "the promotion of their prosperity enters into his views," that "the decrees of Berlin and Milan were revoked, and should cease to operate on the first of November." This declaration soothed the pride and gratified the feelings of our administration. They were so simple as to believe his professions, and to flatter themselves that they had hit upon the true course of policy at last, and in order to shew our full confidence in his promise, the president, without waiting for official and unequivocal information that the decrees were revoked and had ceased to violate our neutrality, as the law under which he acted required, stepped beyond the line of his duty, and declared that the decrees were so revoked as to violate our neutral commerce. This act of the President lulled the unsuspecting merchants into a slumber, and induced many to trust their property safe more within the grasp of the universal plunderer.—Least the sensibility of Congress should be excited, and their tempers ruffled by the Rambouillet robbery, the president touched the subject very gently, gravely telling us that the procedure arose "from a misconception of our laws, and a misapplication of the law of reprisals," implying thereby, that upon suitable application the property would be restored.

Thus were we gliding gently on, preparing to go beyond our promise in the act of the first of May, by enacting additional and severe restrictions in aid of the non-intercourse act, when our course was arrested by the communication from Mr. Russell, our Charge des affaires, informing us that the decrees were continued in force after the first of November, thus giving the lie to Napoleon's assurance, and to the Proclamation of the President consequent upon it. The administration and their friends were astounded. They found themselves caught in the trap which had been bared for them, and knew not how to get out. The dreadful idea of acknowledging an error and of a retrograde movement, appalled them. After taking some time to collect their scattered and bewildered senses it was recollected that the proclamation had not reached Paris when Mr. Russell's departure came away. This great discovery tended much to allay their panic. It was conceived that this verification of the pledge of the first of May—this spontaneous proof of confidence in the promise of the Great Emperor, would so soon as made known to him, inspire him with equal confidence in us, and induce an immediate suspension of the decrees and a delivery of our property to its rightful owners. But not so! The Hawk does not release his prey when once enclosed within his talons. His majesty understood his business better. Determined to keep the plunder, and yet make it subservient to his further views upon us, he tells the council of prizes to suspend further proceedings upon all seizures under the decrees, dating from the first of Nov. and directs the property to be held only in a state of sequestration until February, when the Americans having fulfilled their pledge of resisting the British orders and blockades, the property is not to be condemned but given up to its rightful owners. Thus, the law of the first of May and the President's proclamation, are mere pledges of something further, and though my decrees are not revoked yet I will hold you to your promise of resistance against England and keep the property as a pledge for its performance.—This to be sure looks very suspicious and our administration and friends their are again in check.

Whilst brooding over the awkwardness of their situation, and seeking for some means of extricating themselves from their dilemma, news is brought that a new French minister has arrived at Norfolk, and is on his way to this city. A sign of joy was at once visible upon the countenances, so lately overspread with gloom. A ray of hope once more beams upon the benighted imaginations of the Corsican's dupes. They flatter themselves he comes empowered to heal the wounds and cement the friendship of the two countries. And

doubtless he does. He will sear the wounds with a hot iron, and cement our friendship by placing us under the fostering care of his royal master, only requiring of us, in return, to surrender our independence, and become one of his liege dependencies. Nothing short of this can or will satisfy him. What is the pledge for the performance of which he now holds our property in security? A simple non-intercourse with England! It would be the extreme of folly to suppose it. No he will, doubtless, insist upon an armed resistance against her, and when that is complied with, and we have engaged in war with England, then shall we be directed to burn all British merchandise as the only effectual way of attacking her, and of co-operating with other powers in the great continental system. When all this is done, and we humbly sue for the restoration of our property, we shall be told that it has been applied to the great service in which we are all engaged, and that as the cause is common, it is immaterial by whom the means is applied; and instead of a refund, we shall no doubt be called upon to furnish further contributions.

You will hardly believe that there are men who are for proceeding in our restrictive system against England in the present situation of affairs, under the pretext that we have given a pledge to France which we are bound in honour to fulfil. Yet, such is the fact. The brother-in-law of the President has within two days declared, in my presence, that we were bound to go on and fulfil our part of the contract; adding, that Bonaparte was only holding our property until we saw that we did do it, and would then give it up. You can better conceive than I can describe my feelings on the occasion. If I did not reply with as much asperity as the disgraceful observations merited, it was not out of any respect for the author of them, but owing to the particular place in which they were uttered. When such sentiments come from such a source, what have we to expect?

The French minister, Serrurier, arrived here on Thursday last.—On Friday he had an interview with the Secretary of State, and yesterday with the President. Nothing has yet transpired with respect to his mission. A report, I know not upon what authority, has been circulated that he is instructed to demand, that we shall extend our non-intercourse to Cadiz and Lisbon. This is highly probable. It is expected that as soon as our administration have ascertained his master's wishes his friends will begin to act, and we shall then know what we have to expect. Whilst my fears are strong that we are doomed to travel in the disgraceful road of subservency to France, I entertain a faint hope, which I am willing to cherish, that there is still a portion of American feeling and patriotism unextinguished in the breasts of the majority, which may induce them to halt in the downward path in which they have been travelling, and by a manly exertion, regain the American ground from which they have been artfully led. I have some times feared that as the President has committed himself by issuing his proclamation, and knows not how to get clear of the difficulty without acknowledging his error, that probably they would take no step, but adjourn, leaving things as they are. However if the majority do not stir in the business in the course of two or three days, an attempt will be made by the minority to sweep away the last vestige of our foolish and disgraceful non-intercourse. Whether it shall succeed or not, it will place the responsibility where it ought to be, and justify the minority to their much abused country.

Some authentic particulars respecting the early life of BONAPARTE.

Bonaparte at a very early period of life, had run a career of fame and splendor, which few attain though living to a very advanced age, and while yet green in years he is hoary in renown.

The general, and not unnatural eagerness of mankind to become acquainted with every particular which has contributed to the forming the character of one who has sustained, and still sustains such a conspicuous part on the grand theatre of the world has according to the usual course of human events, led to publications without number.

In their endeavors to depreciate the character of him, the people of this country have not been sparing of their reflections, as they conceive them, upon the lowness of his origin; some even asserting that his father was a butcher; his mother a washerwoman, and that he himself commenced his military career as a common soldier in the ranks. Some of these narrators go still further, & even assert the French emperor to have been so totally without education, that to this moment he cannot write half a dozen lines, without, at least, as many faults in grammar and orthography.

On the paternal side he is descended from one of the most ancient and illustrious families in Florence, while it was a republic; the civil dissensions which prevailed in the city during this period, occasioned many of the noble families, or, at least, branches of them, to emigrate from time to time, among whom was the Bonaparte family from which the emperor Napoleon is descended. When the Island of Corsica became subject to France, the inhabitants were classed like the French, in three orders; the Nobles and Clergy, and the Commonalty; and every third year a deputy, chosen from each order was to repair to Paris, and pay homage in the name of all his countrymen to their new monarch. On one of these occasions, Carolo Bonaparte, the father of Napoleon, whose profession was the law, was cho-