

Political.

LETTER

From Mr. Monroe to the Secretary of State, dated Richmond, Feb. 28th, 1808.

Accompanying the message of the President of the United States, received, the 22d March, 1808.

(Continued.)

The 3d order of the 25th January 1798, directed the cruisers to bring in all vessels laden with cargoes, the produce of France, Spain or Holland, and coming directly from any port of the said islands or settlements to any port in Europe, not being a port of Great Britain, nor of the country to which such ships being neutral belonged. The sole effect of this order was to extend to the neutral powers of Europe, the accommodation which had been yielded to the United States by that of 8th January, 1794. The next order bears date on the 24th June, 1803. It directs the cruisers not to seize any vessel which shall be carrying on trade directly between the colonies of enemies and the neutral country to which the vessel belongs, and laden with the property of inhabitants of such neutral country; provided that such vessel shall not be supplying nor have supplied the enemy on the outward voyage with any articles of contraband of war, &c. The sole object of this order appears to have been to introduce a new rule relative to contraband, by subjecting a vessel to seizure on that account, on her return voyage, after depositing her cargo at her place of destination. It prohibits the seizure of neutral vessels, European as well as American, engaged in a trade between enemy colonies and the neutral countries, by positive inhibition. The right to carry on the trade from the neutral country to other countries, was left on the ground on which it stood before. That this order was not intended to affect that trade, and did not affect it, is made sufficiently evident by many decisions of the courts of admiralty, which have been given since the order was issued. In proof of this I refer to all the cases that were decided by the British courts of admiralty, touching the trade of neutrals with enemy colonies in the years 1804 and 5, and more especially to that of the William Trefry, it being the last one and containing a summary of the whole doctrine.

If we recur to the decisions of the courts themselves we shall find a full confirmation of what is here advanced. We shall find that in conforming their decisions to the spirit of the orders of the government, they inhibit the direct trade only between the colony and the parent country, or some other country of Europe: they do not call in question the trade between neutral powers in the productions of enemy colonies, after those productions were allowed to have been incorporated into the stock of the country: that they gave recent and high offence only by the new doctrines advanced, on this latter point, which, by assuming to investigate the motives of the parties engaged in the trade, and to reject acts which were before deemed satisfactory by decisions the most solemn, and to impose new conditions the most onerous and oppressive, laid that commerce very completely at the mercy of the British tribunal. The most material cases are those of the Impagnuel, which involved the question of a trade between Bourdeaux and St. Domingo, that is, the direct trade between the parent country and its colony, in which the goods were condemned on that account. Robin, Rep. 2d vol. page 186. And of the Polly, Lasky, in which the vessel was taken on a voyage from Marblehead to Spain, charged with the productions of the Havannah, brought to Marblehead by the same vessel.

In this case the question of continuity of voyage was involved, and the court decided in favor of the American claim, on ground that gave no offence. It was admitted in explicit terms by the judge, that an American had a right to import the produce of the Spanish colonies into his own country, and to carry them on thence to the general commerce of Europe; and that the landing of the cargo and payment of the duties would be sufficient criteria of a bona fide importation. 2d Rob. Rep. page 461. The next cases were those of the Essex, Orne, of the Rowhena, and some others of the same kind in 1805, which turned on the point of continuity of voyage, in which the court, pushing its doctrine to the unjust and pernicious extent complained of, produced the controversy which took place between the two countries.

The communication between Mr. King and lord Hawkesbury is of the same character. The advocate general admits in his report, which was adopted by lord Hawkesbury, and communicated by him to Mr. King, that by the relaxation of the general principle respecting the trade with enemy colonies, it was distinctly understood, and had been repeatedly so decided by the court of appeal, that the produce of enemy colonies might be imported into the neutral country, and re-exported thence to the mother country of such colony, and in like manner that the produce and manufactures of the mother country might be carried to its colonies. He states that a direct trade between the mother country and its colonies had not been recognized as legal: that what amounted to an intermediate importation into the neutral country, might sometimes be a question of difficulty; that the mere touching in the neutral country to take fresh clearances, might perhaps be deemed evasive, and in effect the direct trade; but that the high court of admiralty had expressly decided (and he saw no more reason to expect that the court of appeal would vary the rules) that landing the goods and paying the duties in the neutral country would break the continuity of the voyage, and was such an importation as would legalize the trade although the goods were re-shipped in the same vessels, on account of the same proprietors, and were forwarded for sale to the mother country of the colony.

This communication corresponds in every the minutest circumstance with the spirit of the orders and decisions of the courts as above explained. It insists, and in terms that are far from being positive, that the direct trade, only between the mother country and the colony, was inhibited. It admits that the trade through the neutral country to the mother country of the colony was lawful, and fixes, with great precision, the acts to be performed

in the neutral country, which would be sufficient to incorporate the goods into the stock of the country, and break the continuity of the voyage. In the latter part of the report alluded to, the advocate general seems to make a kind of reservation of the right of the court of appeal, to revise the decisions of the high court of admiralty, which he represents to have settled the doctrine. But he makes that reservation, if indeed it was intended as one, in such terms as to preclude the idea, that it would ever be taken advantage of, especially when it is considered, that the report was accepted by the government, and communicated officially by the secretary of state, to a foreign minister. It is certain, however, that through the court of appeal, the new encroachment on the rights of the U. States was made, which produced the controversy which ensued immediately afterwards.

The discussion which took place between lord Mulgrave and myself in 1805, on the subject of the seizure, then made, treated the encroachment in that line as the special cause of complaint on the part of the United States. Although the British pretension to inhibit even the direct trade had not been countenanced by the government, yet the commerce of the U. States had been made in a certain degree to accommodate with it by the merchants. They were content to decline the direct trade, and to prosecute their enterprises through the United States equally with the mother country and its colonies. It was natural in the course of a controversy which involved such important interests, that the rights of the parties should be taken up on principle, and carried to the greatest extent. To the light thrown on the subject by a very able essay, which I received from you, I was much indebted, and I acknowledge in this communication, the aid which it afforded me, with peculiar satisfaction. A vindication, however, of the case on principle, how ever extensive the range might be, could not effect the origin of the controversy, nor give to the article entered into for its judgment, a construction different from that which, by well established rules, is fairly applicable to it.

From this view of the several orders of the British government, and from the exposition given of them by the courts, and by the government itself, it appears that the sole object of those that were issued after that of the 6th November 1793, were to inhibit the direct trade of the United States between the enemy colonies and Europe; that they did not touch, and were not intended to interfere with the trade between the United States and Europe, even the parent country, and a fortiori between the United States and Asia and Africa. It was, indeed, the object of the order of Nov. 6th, 1793, to suppress the commerce of neutral powers with enemy colonies altogether; but that being abandoned, the next idea which occurred was to embarrass that trade by forcing it through neutral countries. Here, then, arose a new question, which turned entirely on another principle. That a neutral power had a right to carry on trade from its own ports, in any articles, though of foreign produce, which had been incorporated into the stock of the country not contraband of war, and to air countries; was not controverted. That point, otherwise clear and indisputable in itself, had been long settled in the highest tribunals, and by the most eminent jurists in England. The circum- stances which constituted such an incorporation of foreign articles into the stock of the country, had also been settled by the same authorities. Still the question which now arose turned on this latter point. In forcing this commerce through neutral ports with a view to embarrass it, it became necessary to give the greatest effect to that expedient; to increase the difficulties in those ports, which was done in the manner already stated.

If the instructions of the British government did not inhibit the trade in question, the adjustment contained in the article under consideration, could not affect it. That article supposes a difference between the parties relative to a trade with enemy colonies, and the instructions which interfere with it. The article could not operate in any trade to which the instructions did not extend, and concerning which there was no controversy. In the present case the conclusion is the more credible, because there did not exist even a possibility of controversy in regard to that trade.

But it is objected, that because it is stipulated, that the produce of enemy colonies may be carried to Europe from the United States, that the ports of Asia and Africa are shut on them, and because it is stipulated that the manufactures of Europe from the United States to the West Indies, that those of Asia and Africa, are prohibited from being carried there. This objection has been already obviated. Had the instructions of the British government inhibited that trade, and a controversy between the governments arisen from the inhibition, as the article does not extend to the case, the most that could have been inferred would have been that it was unprovided for, and that the rights of the parties would remain in the same state respecting it, as if the article had not been entered into. It is easy to explain the cause why the term "Europe" was introduced into the article, in reference to the ports, to which colony produce might be carried, and in "European" reference to the manufactures which might be carried to enemy colonies, and to show they were adopted with a view to open on the widest scale the ports which had been at any time shut on them by the British orders. Although the policy of these orders, as well as of the principle on which they are founded, is more particularly applicable to the direct trade between the enemy colonies and their mother country, yet as the term "Europe" had been adopted, and the modifications that were made in them, first at the instance of the United States, and afterwards at that of the neutral European powers, as the widest scale within which the inhibition operated, it was thought best to use that term to prevent the possibility of mistake, as to the extent of the adjustment. Had terms of more extensive import been adopted, they could not have been more effectual to the object, while they might have tended to enlarge the sphere of British pretension, by extending it to cases to which it would be highly improper to give a sanction.

[I enclose Mr. Monroe's Letter at this point as the remainder of it is occupied in examining par-

ticular provisions of the treaty; and as the general policy of carrying the agreement of the treaty it was under consideration, must already sufficiently appear. It would greatly us to compare the republication of this interesting document, did not its great length, and the press of highly important matter from other sources, preclude the possibility of crowding it into our columns.]

State of North Carolina.

IREDELL COUNTY.

August Session, 1811.

James Irwin, vs. Robt Bryson. Original Attachment.

It appearing that the defendant in this case is not within the limits of this state, it is ordered that publication be made three months in the Minerva, that an attachment has issued against him, and that unless he appear at next court and plead or reply, judgment will be taken against him. 5 3m JOHN NISBET, clk.

State of North Carolina.

IREDELL COUNTY.

August Session, 1811.

Robert Simonon, vs. Robert Bryson. Original Attachment.

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State of North Carolina.

IREDELL COUNTY.

August Session, 1811.

James Fleming, vs. Robert Bryson. Original Attachment.

It appearing that the defendant in this case is not within the limits of this state, it is ordered that publication be made three months in the Minerva, that an attachment has issued against him, and that unless he appear at next court and plead or reply, judgment will be taken against him. 5 3m JOHN NISBET, clk.

State of North Carolina.

IREDELL COUNTY.

August Session, 1811.

William Watts, vs. Robert Bryson. Original Attachment.

It appearing that the defendant in this case is not within the limits of this state, it is ordered that publication be made three months in the Minerva, that an attachment has issued against him, and that unless he appear at next court and plead or reply, judgment will be taken against him. 5 3m JOHN NISBET, clk.

State of North Carolina.

IREDELL COUNTY.

August Session, 1811.

Andrew Watts, vs. Robert Bryson. Original Attachment.

It appearing that the defendant in this case is not within the limits of this state, it is ordered that publication be made three months in the Minerva, that an attachment has issued against him, and that unless he appear at next court and plead or reply, judgment will be taken against him. 5 3m JOHN NISBET, clk.

State of North Carolina.

IREDELL COUNTY.

August Session, 1811.

John Stevenson, vs. Robert Bryson. Original Attachment.

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Printing

Executed at the Minerva Office, with neatness and dispatch.

State Bank of North Carolina.

AGREED BY the Board of Directors of the State Bank of North Carolina, at a meeting held at the City of Raleigh, on the 10th day of December, 1811.

The Board of Directors of the State Bank of North Carolina, do hereby certify that the following is a true and correct copy of the Constitution of the said Bank, as established by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, on the 10th day of December, 1811.

The Constitution of the State Bank of North Carolina, as established by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, on the 10th day of December, 1811.

WM H HAYWARD, Clerk.

By Thomas Dabon, of the Law Office, No. 1, North Street, Raleigh, N. C.

THE ECLECTIC REPERTORY.

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