

schooner to the United States: the terms on which she was first offered, and the conditions on which I would accept of the command.

On the 5th had a conference with him, when to my great surprise, he told me he meant to give me up the authority I had received to command the schooner from my government, which was the President's instructions and your letter.

By so doing, he delivers me a command to seize all French vessels—as an officer being bound to follow orders, I must have gone again a cruising; on the other side, considering myself a prisoner. (although he did not acknowledge me as such) how can I draw the sword until I am exchanged? Finding myself in this delicate situation, I conceived myself bound by honor to state my objections to Mr. Desfourneaux for refusing the command of the Retaliation, which I did by letter, a copy of which is here inclosed; after the delivery of it, I had an interview with him; he treated me very cavalierly—conceived I had no right to make those objections, and threatened imprisonment for my non-compliance: I told him he had me in his power, and could treat me as he pleased, but no fears of punishment would make me act contrary to the character of an officer.

I found he was determined to return her, told him I was sorry he compelled me to leave his port with these orders; that I should certainly obey them, and take all his vessels I could.

His answer was, if I did he would put every American to the sword;—finally he told me, as he was master here, he would compel me by force to leave this place as commander of that vessel. To superior power I am obliged to yield; considering myself a prisoner, I shall haste to my country to get an exchange, when I shall be ready for a second cruise, which I hope will prove more fortunate than my first. He sends two vessels with me as cartels with the American citizens, who have met with very hard prisoner fare in this island.—My government no doubt can see into his intentions for returning the schooner. It is with them alone to receive her. Driven by force, I shall make a speedy return to my country, and trust that the government will conceive the regard and respect I bear my country was the sole motive for my present conduct.

Wm. BAINBRIDGE.

BENJAMIN STODDERT, Esq.
Secretary of the Navy.

Cape May, February 10th, 1799.

SIR,

Inclosed, you will receive duplicates of letters wrote you from Guadaloupe which will explain you the return of the Retaliation, the manner of my conduct whilst in Guadaloupe relative to my taking the command of her.

I sailed from Guadaloupe on the 18th, put in the island of St. Thomas the 21st, left there the 23d, in company with the brigs Romain and James, cartels, with American citizens on board, that were made prisoners in Guadaloupe.

In the Retaliation came thirty-seven of her crew, officers included, the remainder was put on board the cartels; also came one American master and two supercargoes, who were prisoners there.

Mr. Regis Leblanc, the bearer of the letter from Mr. Desfourneaux to our President, came in the schooner.

The manner in which Mr. Desfourneaux writes and his treatment towards the American citizens, were very different. Notwithstanding, after the departure of Victor Hugues, he treated myself and officers with civility.

He writes he sends home the citizens that were made prisoners previous to his arrival; at the same time considered them so himself. If we are to judge by his conduct, he detained them in prison to the last moments they remained in the island, then marched them down and embarked them under a guard, and entered every persons name down on the roll of exchange. True he liberated masters of vessels on the 7th January, which saved him provisions he much stands in need of, as there is a great scarcity in the island. As friendly as he writes, the Insurgente frigate, which came with him from France, by his orders went out a cruising, took an American from Bedford, bound to Surinam. He says she shall not be condemned, although her roll of equipage is not in form; but will oblige her to sell her cargo. Mr. Leblanc, the bearer of the letter to the President, has brought a great number of these letters printed in French and English to be distributed amongst the citizens; he leaves them on board the schooner, and he says he will not distribute them until he obtains permission. You will observe by the duplicates of my letters how different the treatment to the Retaliation was, to what he writes to our President; instead of ordering her to follow the division, made us strike our colours, ordered myself and officers out of her, took possession of her in the regular form of making prizes, reversed the American flag, union down.

After giving you every information, which I conceive my duty as an officer of the United States, permit me to conclude with assuring you and my government, that Mr. Regis Leblanc, was of essential service to the present liberation of the Americans in Guadaloupe, and rendered them every service in his power, as much so, as if he had been an American himself.

The schooner was very much plundered whilst in the hands of the captors.

With all due respect, Your obedient servant,
Wm. BAINBRIDGE.

Benjamin Stoddert, Esquire,
Secretary of the Navy.

P. S. I have just this moment anchored off this Cape; shall come to town as soon as possible.

From the Gazette of the United States.

The following memorandum politely handed me by Capt. Bainbridge, of the Retaliation, will shew the degree of credit which ought to be attached to the letter of Desfourneaux.

“On the 5th of January, I waited on Gen. Desfourneaux: during the conversation I then had with him, he informed me that affairs had been amicably settled between America and France. On enquiring on the grounds of this information, he said Dr. Logan had arrived in America, and had terminated the dispute between the two countries. I observed to Desfourneaux that I did not believe Dr. Logan was authorized by our government to act in any official capacity in France. He said no, he was not from the government, but was a deputy from the people—A sufficient evidence of his belief that our government and people are divided.

“He mentions in his letter to the President, that he has sent home the Americans made prisoners previous to his arrival. I declare that great numbers of them continued to be made prisoners after his arrival, and that every vessel that was brought into the island of Guadaloupe previous to my departure on the 18th of January, was condemned, vessel and cargo, except one from New Bedford, bound to Surinam, the trial of which was not decided,
“WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE”
Philadelphia, Feb. 18, 1799.

NEW-YORK, Feb. 20.

It is supposed that upwards of 300 merchant vessels belonging to different ports in the United States, now traverse the ocean, carrying from 10 to 20 guns, and manned accordingly. Aims are found to be the only role d'equipage that can protect our commerce from the voracious fangs of French pirates. This insures to them general safety; and the merchant who has committed his property to the mercy of the waves in pursuit of a lawful traffic, finds some consolation in the reflection that his vessel is prepared to repel injuries from more merciless pirates. The very appearance of a ship well provided with weapons of defence, has in numerous instances preserved her not only against robbery, but has even forced respect upon those abandoned ruffians whose only pursuit is to seize upon the earnings of honest men. Where the means of resistance are seen, those infamous pests are very cautious of attack; for it must be observed that people of this profession do not engage in it for the sake of fighting, but for the sake of robbing where no fighting is necessary.

Every man is now thoroughly convinced of the propriety of permitting our vessels to arm in their own defence. Of the utility of this measure there cannot be a greater proof than the reduction in the premium of insurance; the immense shipments that are daily made from almost every port in the country; the increased price for many of our staple commodities, and the unusual demand for good ships. The happy consequences of this extension of trade, we trust will be felt through every grade of society; but to none will the benefit be greater than to the honest and industrious husbandman. The government, too, will come in for a very pretty item.—Under such flattering auspices, which honest men must see and confess, we think it highly probable that Virginia and Kentucky will be sadly disappointed in their infernal plan of exciting insurrections and tumult.

MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATURE.

February 9.

Yesterday, in the Hon. Senate, the Committee to whom was referred the report of the joint Committee, in answer to the — famous resolutions of Virginia and Kentucky, made their report, which contained additional reasons in support of the opinion of the Legislature of Massachusetts, as to the constitutionality of the Alien and Sedition Laws of the United States. These reasons were adopted by way of amendment to the original report, and upon the question, shall the original report pass as now amended, the yeas and nays were as follow:—Yeas 27, Nays 2.

VIRGINIA RESOLUTIONS.

“If the Legislature of Virginia, by their threat to arm the militia of that state, intend to intimidate the Federal States into an acquiescence in their opposition to the government of the Union, they should remember, that an allusion to force in discussing questions of government, is an improper precedent, that if the idea is indulged, her sister States will be found as able in the field as in the cabinet, and that a dissolution of the Union, would bring no blessings to Virginia.
[Spectator.]

February 26.

By the Trio, from Liverpool, we have our regular files of London papers up to the 18th December, besides a file of Scotch papers to the 15th, with which we were obligingly favored. These papers will enable

us to lay before our readers, a connected chain of European intelligence.—In the preceding columns of this day's paper, will be found several articles of considerable importance. With respect to the destruction of Buonaparte and his troops, little can be said. The account, however, comes through a channel which we think gives it some claim to authenticity. It appears likewise that his troops were much dissatisfied, and that a mutinous spirit had discovered itself, owing chiefly to scanty supplies of provisions and water.—Upon the whole, appearances are much against the army of the East; and considering the difficulties they had to encounter, it is perhaps no ways probable that their undertaking will terminate very honorably to themselves.

We find but little said on the score of a continental peace. The following articles from a Paris Journal of Dec. 4, are the most explicit on this subject.

“Letters from Strasburgh state, that the hopes of an approaching continental Peace, and a thorough reconciliation between our republic and Austria, increase daily. Prussia, we are assured, plays the part of Mediator. Citizen Sieyes at Berlin, it is said, is empowered to negotiate a general Peace, and even to enter into negotiations with England. Time will shew whether the latter part of this intelligence be true.”

“The Archduke Charles returned the 25th Brumaire, from Friedberg to Munich. It is said, that some expressions which have escaped him give hopes of peace. It is also said that since his arrival, the movements of the Austrian army have been entirely suspended.” [Spectator.]

NORFOLK, February 26.

It is truly distressing to be obliged to relate the dreadful Conflagration which took place in this Borough on Sunday morning last. It broke out, as we are told, in the house of Mr. Abbot, shoemaker, Woodside's lane, from the roof of which, flames were discovered to issue between the hours of one and two o'clock, and in so violent a manner as to threaten immediate destruction to the adjoining buildings, which was effectually realized in a short time, as there was not a house left standing before seven o'clock from Burke's wharf to the Main Street, including all those to Commerce Street, amounting, as well as we can learn, to about 62 dwelling houses.

We cannot help ascribing the safety of the remaining part of the town to Providence, as the morning was perfectly serene until the flames were effectually got under; immediately after, a stiff breeze sprung up from the westward, which, from its direction, must have baffled the exertions of the inhabitants and many others, until the whole of the town would have been laid in ashes.

It would be the height of ingratitude to omit noticing the timely and active exertions of many of the inhabitants of the town of Portsmouth; also, the captains and crews of the shipping in the river, who, on this awful occasion, shewed unprecedented activity and vigilance. Among the latter we could descry Captains Silver, Godshell, Israel, Needham, Scammon, Belfor, Edwards, Thomas, Young and Corran and his mate; also, captain Carmack, of the marines. A Danish sailor, who exerted himself on this melancholy occasion, was killed—and the skeleton of a woman was found among the ruins—We fear many other lives were lost.

Last night we were again alarmed by the cry of Fire!—it was in the chimney of a house in Church street, and was fortunately extinguished without much trouble.

FAYETTEVILLE;

SATURDAY MORNING, MARCH 16, '99.

We understand (says the Petersburg paper) that the House of Representatives of the United States adjourned the 4th instant.

COMMUNICATION.

Beware of Counterfeits!

A number of Notes, are in circulation throughout this state, in imitation of the Bank Notes issued by the United States Bank, from their office of Discount and Deposit at Charleston, South Carolina; which are forged and counterfeit:—Twenty-three have been detected in this town, supposed to be brought into this state from Georgia or South Carolina—they are easily distinguished from good ones by any person accustomed to them, as well as by the difference of the paper, it being thicker and of a brown dingy hue; the copper-plate impression on the face is much coarser and darker; also those which have appeared are made payable to Daniel DeSauffure, and apparently by him endorsed; the counterfeiters have not attended very nicely to the small marks which are noticeable in the original signature of D. DeSauffure on the back of the genuine notes endorsed by him and duly issued from that office.

It is hoped that this notice will have a tendency to put the public on their guard against them, and effectually prevent the nefarious villain, who have attempted to circulate these false notes, from such impositions in future, and be a means of bringing all of them to justice.