

LONDON, AUGUST 19.

A letter from one of the English prisoners in France, gives a most distressing account of the cruel treatment of those confined in the Castle of Bitché. This is not the only particular in which the tyrant of France has disregarded the more civilized usages of modern warfare, and reverted to the practices of barbarous times. The writer of the letter in question states, that the inhumanity of the Governor can hardly be known to the French Government, and as the foundation of his opinion remarks, that the French Government could not but be aware that these men might take vengeance on the ocean for the injuries sustained by them in prison. But Bonaparte has already abundantly proved, that he is not so much alive to the sufferings of his own subjects, and his hatred of the English would perhaps lead him to encourage than to check the cruelty of his Officer.

Some of the recent accounts from Gibraltar state, that the late brave defender of Gerona, who after the capitulation of that place was taken prisoner by Figueras, had, since his imprisonment, been inhumanly put to death by means of slow poison. This horrid deed is attributed to the Frenchman who had him in keeping, and the preparing of his victims.

The losses throughout the French army have been so great since Bonaparte's imperial accession, that by a late account, accurately taken, of the present population in France, it appears that the females now exceed the males in number, by more than five millions!

The Island of Anholt, in the Baltic, which has been for some time in our possession, is to be strengthened by every possible means, so as to be capable of repelling any attack that may be made on it by the Danes. Capt. Maurice, of the Navy, who distinguished himself in the defence of the Diamond Rock in the West-Indies, is appointed to the command of this post, which is likely to become one of great importance.

In case of a battle on the frontiers of Portugal, if it should turn out favourable to the allies, and the French army should be broken it is said a plan has been laid for the people to rise in arms, to assist the armies in an earnest effort at once to annihilate the enemy, without allowing him time to recover.

The Emperors of Austria and Russia have concluded a treaty for the restoration of deserters on each side.

King Joseph, according to Gibraltar letters of the 26th ult, was in the neighbourhood of Valencia, with an army of 30,000 men, with which he intended to form the siege of Tarragona.

#### PRISONERS OF WAR.

The following account of the sufferings to which a certain class of the British prisoners in France are exposed, is extracted from an Evening Paper:—

"The Castle of Bitché, a strong and ancient fortress, built upon a rock, in the centre of a sterile country, is intended for the receptacle of such as have attempted to desert, who are suspicious in the eye of Government, or who have incurred the displeasure of the superior officer of the depot to which they belong.

"On a prisoner's arrival at Bitché, he is plunged eighteen hours out of the twenty-four, into subterraneous vaults, twenty-five feet beneath the surface of the earth, where the sun never shines, and where the light penetrates but feebly through the excavations hewn out of the rock. The extreme humidity of the *souterrains* is the first evil he has to combat with, and though to the narrow allowance of the sailor was added whatever the officer could spare (for two or three hundred of either description were confounded promiscuously together,) it was not before numbers were carried off by putrid and inflammatory fevers, or had totally lost the use of their limbs or eye-sight, that, by continued fires and repeatedly plasters and white-washing the pores of the rock, through which the saltpetre oozed in every direction, that these extensive cavities at length were but indifferently aired."

[The writer of the account then proceeds to a warm encomium on the humanity of Lieut. Col. Clement, the first Commandant of Bitché, who did every thing in his power to alleviate the horrors of this dreadful prison. Unfortunately for those who were confined in it, he was sent to Spain, and has been succeeded by a monster, whose cruelty can only be exceeded by his avarice and extortion.]

The narrative goes on:—

"Perhaps the English prisoner of war does not sustain a severer hardship, a more cruel humiliation than that of being conducted, immediately after his apprehension, oftentimes a distance of two or three hundred leagues, to the depot he is destined for; unacquainted with the language and customs of the country, he is led along, chained and hand-cuffed, under a strong escort of the Horse Gen d'Armerie, frequently bound to the young conscripts (deserters,) with whom France swarms, and at other times with desperate malefactors.

"Lieutenant Cockburn, after the loss of his cutter, was chained body to body with an assassin under sentence of death, from Toulon to Lyons, a distance of one hundred leagues; and though Captain Lévison Gower and his officers were not ironed, they were alike thrown into prisons and dungeons every night. If such be the treatment of officers of his consideration, without any imputed offence, what must not the sufferings be of those who are taken, *flagrante delicto*; in the very act of desertion. I shall not attempt to describe them, but as my object is to state facts, I cannot help concisely noticing the severities exercised towards eleven merchantmen, Captains, who, driven to despair by the horrors of a seven years' detention, and the prospect of indefinite captivity, had fled from Verdun, to rejoin their families and native land, and to devote themselves to the career of honourable industry, stripped of all their money, plunged into every *cachot* on the road, exposed to the worst of usage, from the most ferocious of men, on their arrival at Metz, near thirty leagues from Bitché, thumb-screwed and hand-cuffed; they were each bound with an additional chain of uncommon weight and thickness, strongly riveted round their necks: thus, for several nights and days were unable to move, but together; nor could they

perform any of the necessary functions of life, without the most galling and shameful inconvenience. They were conveyed through the different villages and towns, sometimes the objects of mockery, but oftener of pity, to a sympathizing populace. On their arrival at Bitché, the blacksmith not without difficulty, filed their chains asunder, which weighed not less than four hundred and fifty pounds."

The writer concludes with exculpating the French Government in the following words, from being in any way privy, to these shocking and unnecessary severities:—

"Should any one suppose the French Government would not countenance these atrocities he would suppose the truth, but how communicate to the Minister what it is so much the interest of the Commandant to suppress? for every scrap of paper, every letter is examined, as the post office submits every thing to his inspection."

\* The names of the individuals in question are—Thomas Baker, Bristol; Morland, Dublin; Paterfon, Scarborough; Dougal Cawen, Greenock; Duncan Dougal, Dublin; Joseph Silcock, Bristol; Starkey, Ireland; Adam Renton, Hull; MacLaurin, Greenock; Hodgeman, Ramsgate; Robert Gregfon, Sunderland.

From the Liverpool Courier of August 22.

FRANCE.—We have inserted in another place, the new commercial decree of Bonaparte, by which colonial and other produce, heretofore prohibited, are, under certain restrictions, permitted to be imported into France.

On the construction, intent, and motives of this decree, we perceive our contemporaries to be much at variance; some consider it as a tacit abandonment of the restrictive system of Bonaparte, others as leaving that system in full force, and as amounting to just nothing. We have given the subject some consideration, but we cannot fully acquiesce in either of these opinions. That it will go to relieve our intercourse with the continent can be but partially admitted after the scale of duties has been minutely examined. The wants of the continent, say some, will create a demand, and the tariff is rated so high, to supply the demand of the French treasury. That the wants of the continent are pressing enough we doubt not; but it is also to be remembered, that the continent is sunk in poverty, that industry cannot have been so long impeded, the sources of national wealth so seriously impaired, but that the power of obtaining luxuries must be lessened in proportion, and that when the produce of the land is rotting in the hands of the holders, and when consequently the value of land and the price of labor has rapidly diminished, there is no such superfluity of means as to enable the people very extensively to purchase the articles specified in the decree.

Nor yet is this decree to be considered as amounting to nothing. This is not the character of French proceedings. They are never neutral, they produce either much good or much mischief; they either aim directly at some great object, or insidiously adapt themselves to effect some great latent intention. Of the latter character we conceive this new decree will be found, and connected as it is with the letter to Gen. Armstrong, bearing date on the very same day, it is surprising that the whole has not been discovered to be a trick to draw the bonds between America and France closer, and to induce the former to declare against England.

Let us for a moment look at the contents of this letter. The embargo is praised, and the non-intercourse is condemned. It was offensive to France because it interdicted French vessels from entering the harbours of the United States, and his sequestration of American property is justified as a measure of reprisal—a matter of right. Well, but this Act is revoked, and the ports of America are open to French commerce, and therefore, "in this new state of things," says the French Minister, "I am authorised to declare to you, Sir, that the decrees of Berlin and Milan are revoked, and that from the first of November they will cease to be in force, it being understood that in consequence of this declaration the English shall revoke their Orders in Council, and renounce their new principles of blockade, or that the United States, conformably to the act you have just communicated, shall cause their rights to be respected by the English." Then follows a fulsome declaration how much the Emperor "loves the Americans, and that their prosperity and their commerce enter into views of his policy."

A style so different from that he usually assumes, so opposite to true dignity, that it betrays the true object of the letter which is to spirit up the French party in America. This is the true intent of his sawing professions. He confesses his inability to effect the ruin of England, even with the aid of the whole continent, and now in fact supplicates the assistance of America, and changes the growl of the Tiger into the obsequious grinning of the ape.

Let us now connect this letter with the decree. Suppose the Berlin and Milan decrees dead, and the British Government, out of fear lest the American non-intercourse acts should be revived against this country, rescind their Orders in Council, France gains this advantage, that she enjoys the commerce of America. The American staples are brought into France, and a part at least of the produce and industry of France go to America. Thus France will partially relieve herself from her present pressures, and we accordingly find that the American staples are almost entirely left out of the list of imports, and no doubt designedly. They will not be saddled with those exorbitant duties. The articles specified are the produce chiefly of the British colonies or her allies.

By this scheme, too, the ground of the quarrel between this country and America will be changed and become more complex. France will evade the charge of violating the rights of neutrals, by effecting her purpose by a municipal regulation. The British Orders in Council will lose their justification as being measures of necessity founded upon the unjust decrees of France. America will tell us that we have nothing to do with the municipal acts of France, and thus it is attempted, perhaps by a concert between both these powers, to reduce us to this dilemma, either to maintain our Orders in Council when the show of justice is taken away from them, or to suffer the commerce of the enemy to be relieved, and to give up the power of retaliating on him the evils of war. The artifice is deep but it may be met and turned,

Nothing is said in this decree or letter respecting the release of American ships and cargoes under sequestration.—Perhaps the sequestration is held over the heads of the Americans in *terrorem*. We are curious to learn how the French party in America will manage that masterly piece of logic in the letter to Gen. Armstrong, where it is argued that because America, by her non-intercourse act, forbade the entry of French vessels into her harbors, the confiscation of all American vessels already in the harbors of France or her allies was a just reprisal—"a matter of right."

SWEDEN.

GOTTENBURG, AUG. 13, 1810.  
KING MAKING.

Though the Diet has not yet agreed on a Crown Prince, no doubts exist of the success of the Duke of Augustenburg [a Member of the Royal House of Denmark.] FREDERICK VIth of Denmark is nearly unanimously opposed. Marshal BERNADOTTE has been started as a candidate, but he is opposed by the Clergy on account of his religion, and by the Commons (or peasantry) because he is a Frenchman.—Neither Gustavus Adolphus, nor the Duke of Oldenburg are candidates.

ENGLAND.

LONDON, AUG. 24, 1810.

The report that BONAPARTE on his birth-day, the 15th signed a cartel for a General Exchange of prisoners, is not yet confirmed. Our government has done every thing in its power to bring about an event so auspicious to humanity.

#### BELLIGERENT COMMERCE.

The terms of the Licenced Trade between England and France have not yet been settled. We insist, that the return cargoes shall consist of Wheat, Meal, Bar-Stones, and one-third Wine. BONAPARTE says we shall take one third Brandy. As this will injure our West-India colonies, Ministers will not consent to it.—Our exports are to be India piece-goods, English manufactures, Coffee and Sugar. BONAPARTE, it is said, will suspend the operation of his Licences until the 2d November, to know our determination respecting the Orders of Council. This need excite no other anxiety. Our Orders of Council will cease on the 1st November, if the French Decrees do. But no other right guaranteed by the *Laws and Usages of Nations* will be abandoned. BONAPARTE knows this; and knows that we shall blockade his ports whenever we think our safety or interest requires it.

A desultory firing was heard on the 22d, on the French coast near Calais, Dunkirk. We can only conjecture its cause—BONAPARTE may be taking those places in his tour to Holland.—Our cruisers may be exchanging shots with the French batteries; and it may be for news of a victory in Portugal, though it did not seem regular enough for a rejoicing. We have later accounts from Portugal, and know that the firing could not have been for any event in that kingdom.

The Emperor NAPOLEON, as he cannot drive things to cajole the Americans into a War with us. We think he will again be disappointed. For what can the United States gain by War? They cannot annoy us. They indeed may put an end to all intercourse with us.—This they have already tried, and what did it produce? Nothing but injury to themselves. Our West-Indies were not starved, as they so confidently predicted; and all our Colonies would rejoice in the event of that suspension of commerce.

#### AFFAIRS OF PORTUGAL.

AUGUST 25.—The French under MASSENA have given indications of falling back. The great want of provisions, their situation on a ten-mile-long plain in the heat of summer, and the great scarcity of water, has filled their hospitals with sick, and occasioned their retrogradation.—The dysentery prevails to a great extent. The British army being in the high lands, with plenty of good water and provisions, enjoy a fine air, and remarkable health. MASSENA has essayed all his arts to induce Lord WELLINGTON to descend to the plains.—But in vain.—The longer his Lordship delays fighting, the better. The French are circumvallating Almeida.

Three American vessels from Salem, New-York and Baltimore, with mixed cargoes, for the Baltic, have been sent into port for examination.

The harvest turns out to be a good one; but the demand for the armies abroad, keep up the price of grain.

Holland is in a wretched state.—The Conscription is executed with relentless severity; and 30,000 French bayonets are kept sharpened to punish the refractory Dutchmen. *Vive la Liberty!*

The debts proved of Brickwood & Co. amount to Twelve Hundred Thousand Pounds.

Alkinson, the Clerk, who has absconded, sailed for America in the Charles, only two hours before the arrival of the officer sent to Liverpool to arrest him.

Ten Millions of Crown Dollars are now stamping; together with new half-crowns, shillings and sixpences.

NEW-YORK, SEPTEMBER 26.

Extract of a letter from a Captain of a New-York vessel, to a friend in this City, dated Copenhagen, August 3.

"I was captured on the 18th May, under the guns of Elsinore Castle. I have been detained ever since till yesterday, when my ship was given up. Three weeks the supercargo and I were kept close prisoners on board, without being allowed to speak to a boat that came alongside; we were after that kept 12 days prisoners on shore, that the privateersmen might have sufficient time to tamper with the men, some of whom they offered to bribe as high as 5000 dollars, if they would swear the ship came from England; they however proved all honest.

"All that was alleged against the ship was, there was one name more on the roll than was on board, and that I did not heave too for them till after several shots were fired. I have been obliged to pay the villains 600 dollars and court charges, amounting to about 1000 more.

"The ship Swift, of New-York, has been condemned here, because the privateersmen swore they saw papers lying on the bottom in twenty feet water, and some floating,