

points at the same time; of Oporto, and the other, second column immediately on passing the heights east of the city; and march of Santa Anna, to proceed to Loreto; this plan was to be executed only in case the enemy should be met with at the gates.

At a small distance from the Kilns on the road of Mialhada, I met a detachment of the enemy to the left of this city, and commencing a fire, I extended the Cavalry to the Kilns, and fortunately cut off all communication with Coimbra. The enemy's detachment surrendered, after having lost some men; and not meeting with any other of the enemy's troops, I ordered the cavalry to proceed on a gallop by the principal roads, and after crossing the bridge of Mondego to follow the Lisbon road, in order to intercept all communication with the army, which was performed with the greatest spirit and gallantry by Lieutenant Dantel, with the loss of only one dragoon, who was killed.

I ordered the divisions of Infantry to march to the principal places in the city, where we were resisted about an hour, in which time we had only 2 men killed and 25 wounded, among whom is Colonel Serpa, of the regiment of Penafiel: this Colonel commanded the first brigade, the conduct of which is worthy of your Excellency's approbation. The principal force of the enemy, which was stationed in Santa Clara, on the side of the Mondego, maintained for some time an irregular fire upon our cavalry when it passed the bridge; but the French officer who commanded there, as soon as he observed that Lieutenant Dantel had crossed the bridge, proposed a capitulation; I had then advanced as far as the Convent, and would admit of no other proposition than that of surrendering at discretion, promising them, however, my protection from the insults of the peasants. The troops laid down their arms, and retired.

I have reason to believe that the number of the prisoners exceeds 5000, of which 4000 are on their march to Oporto, including an entire company of the marine guards of the Emperor. 3500 muskets were taken, and almost all of them were loaded, by which a judgment may be formed of the number of soldiers who were in a condition for defensive service.

I have caused these arms to be distributed among the country militia. We found no artillery, but we seized a quantity of oxen and sheep, which the enemy had collected for the subsistence of their troops, and which is a great acquisition to ours. It is supposed that there are 80 officers among the prisoners. The Chief Commissary, Mr. Flandin, who acted as Governor, will remain at Coimbra, being sick. From the nature of the attack your Excellency will easily conceive how difficult it was to oblige the soldiers, and armed peasantry, not to plunder the prisoners; and I am sorry to say that the peasants committed some acts of violence; but I judge that from 600 to 800 Frenchmen only were victims to their resentment. I must observe that nothing can exceed the state of misery in which I found this city. The enemy, not content with having sacked it throughout, and plundering it of every valuable that could be found, had set fire to some houses, and piled up in the streets, in the greatest disorder, all the provisions which their army could not take with it; for which reason it could not be expected that near 800 soldiers, natives of this city and its neighborhood, accompanied by their miserable relatives and acquaintances, could be patient witnesses of a scene of devastation, in which their property had been destroyed in a manner so unjust and scandalous; notwithstanding, I beg your Excellency to be persuaded that every possible effort was used to protect the French who fell into our power, and after the first movements I succeeded in rescuing them from insult.

As the corps of Brigadier-General Miller, and of Col. Wilson arrived here in the morning, I propose to leave one of my brigades, and march with the rest of my division, as an escort to Oporto; for to such a degree has the animosity of the country people been excited by the last passage of the French army, that I consider my presence absolute necessary, and particularly in the districts between the Mondego and the Vouga.

I shall close this account by assuring your Excellency, that the bravery of the Troops on this occasion deserves the highest credit; it being impossible for me to eulogise individuals when all highly distinguished themselves.—I have the honor to be, &c.

NICHOLAS TRANT.

His Excellency Marshal Beresford.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

WASHINGTON CITY, DECEMBER 5.

The President of the United States this day communicated by Mr. COLES, his Private Secretary, to both Houses of Congress, the following

MESSAGE:

Fellow-Citizens of the Senate,
and of the House of Representatives,

THE embarrassments which have prevailed in our foreign relations, and so much employed the deliberations of Congress, make it a primary duty, in meeting you, to communicate whatever may have occurred in that branch of our national affairs.

The act of the last Session of Congress, "concerning the commercial intercourse between the United States and Great-Britain and France and their dependencies," having invited, in a new form, a termination of their edicts against our neutral commerce, copies of the acts were immediately forwarded to our Ministers at London and Paris, with a view that its object might be within the early attention of the French and British governments.

By the communication received through our minister at Paris, it appeared that a knowledge of the act by the French government, was followed by a declaration that the Berlin and Milan decrees were revoked, and

would cease to have effect on the first day of November ensuing. These being the only known edicts of France, within the description of the act, and the revocation of them being such that they ceased, on that date, to violate our neutral commerce; the fact, as prescribed by law, was announced by a Proclamation, bearing date the 2d day of November.

It would have well accorded with the conciliatory views, indicated by this proceeding on the part of France, to have extended them to all the grounds of just complaint, which now remain unadjusted with the United States. It was particularly anticipated that, as further evidence of just dispositions towards them, restoration would have been immediately made of the property of our citizens seized under a misapplication of the principle of reprisals, combined with a misconstruction of a law of the United States. This expectation has not been fulfilled.

From the British government no communication on the subject of the act has been received. To a communication from our minister at London of the revocation by the French government, of its Berlin and Milan decrees, it was answered that the British system would be relinquished as soon as the repeal of the French decrees should have actually taken effect, and the commerce of neutral nations have been restored to the condition in which it stood, previously to the promulgation of those decrees. This pledge, although it does not necessarily import, does not exclude the intention of relinquishing, along with the Orders in Council, the practice of those novel blockades which have a like effect of interrupting our neutral commerce. And this further justice to the United States is the rather to be looked for, inasmuch as the blockades in question, being not more contrary to the established law of nations, than inconsistent with the rules of blockade formerly recognized by Great-Britain herself, could have no alleged basis other than the plea of retaliation, alleged as the basis of the Orders of Council. Under the modification of the original orders of November, 1807, into the orders of April, 1809, there is indeed scarcely a nominal distinction between the orders and blockades. One of those illegitimate blockades, bearing date in May, 1806, having been expressly avowed to be still unrescinded, and to be in effect, comprehended in the Orders of Council, was too distinctly brought within the purview of the act of Congress, not to be comprehended in the explanation of the requisites to a compliance with it. The British government was accordingly apprised by our minister near it, that such was the light in which the subject was to be regarded.

On the other important subjects depending between the United States and that government, no progress has been made, from which an early and satisfactory result can be relied on.

In this new posture of our relations with those powers, the consideration of Congress will be properly turned to a removal of doubts which may occur in the exposition, and of difficulties, in the execution of the act above cited.

The commerce of the United States with the North of Europe, heretofore much vexed by licentious cruisers, particularly under the Danish flag, has latterly been visited with fresh and extensive depredations.—The measures pursued in behalf of our injured citizens not having obtained justice for them, a further and more formal interposition with the Danish government is contemplated. The principles which have been maintained by that government in relation to neutral commerce, and the friendly professions of His Danish Majesty towards the United States, are valuable pledges, favour of a successful issue.

Among the events growing out of the state of the Spanish Monarchy, our attention was imperiously attracted to the change, developing itself in that portion of West-Florida; which, though of right appertaining to the United States, had remained in the possession of Spain; awaiting the result of negotiations for its actual delivery of them. The Spanish authority was subverted; and a situation produced, exposing the country to ulterior events which essentially affect the rights and welfare of the union. In such a conjuncture, I did not delay the interposition required for the occupancy of the territory west of the river Perdido; to which the title of the United States extends, and to which the laws, provided for the territory of Orleans, are applicable. With this view, the Proclamation, of which a copy is laid before you, was confided to the Governor of that territory, to be carried into effect. The legality and necessity of the course pursued, assure me of the favorable light in which it will present itself to the Legislature; and of the promptitude, in which they will supply whatever provisions may be due to the essential rights and equitable interests of the people thus brought into the bosom of the American family.

Our amity with the Powers of Barbary, with the exception of a recent occurrence at Tunis, of which an explanation is just received, appears to have been uninterrupted, and to have become more firmly established.

With the Indian tribes, also, the peace and friendship of the United States are found to be so eligible, that the general disposition to preserve both continues to gain strength.

I feel particular satisfaction in remarking that an interior view of our country presents us with grateful proofs of its substantial and increasing prosperity. To a thriving agriculture, and the improvements related to it, is added a highly interesting extension of useful manufactures; the combined product of professional occupations, and of household industry. Such, indeed, is the experience of economy, as well as of policy, in these substitutes for supplies heretofore obtained by foreign commerce, that, in a national view, the change is justly regarded as of itself more than a recompense for those privations and losses resulting from foreign injustice, which furnished the general impulse required for

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r Tagus commanded by
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le, and in this respect their
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the satisfaction to acquaint
y, that the information which I trans-
u in my former despatch of the 13th inst.
the march of the detachments of the troops
d by Gen. Bacellar, has been since confirmed.
r Trant arrived near Coimbra on the 7th inst. and
ately attacked the advanced posts, which the
y had without the place, and which he cut off and
nted from entering the city, to which he marched
he utmost rapidity, and took possession of it.—
resistance made by the enemy was not of long du-
on. He took prisoners 80 officers and 5000 men,
e greatest part sick and wounded. I have the honor
o enclose to your Excellency, a copy of the despatch,
hich Col. Trant sent to Marshal Beresford, and also
a copy of the letter which the Marshal, in consequence
of that affair, transmitted to me.

On the following day Brigadier-Gen. Miller, and
Colonel Wilson arrived at Coimbra with the detach-
ments under their command. They afterwards made
prisoners of nearly 350 soldiers, who had separated
themselves from their regiments on their march, for the
purpose, as they say, of procuring food.

Col. Wilson has since advanced with a guard of in-
fantry and cavalry to Condeixan, while Brigadier-Gen.
Miller is in Coimbra.

I enclose to your Excellency a copy of a letter from
Marshal Beresford, relative to those events.

A detachment of the garrison of Peniche sent out by
Brigadier-Gen. Blunt, has also been successful, having
made 48 prisoners from the rear of the enemy's army,
and killed nine. Lieut. Col. Waters, whom I employ-
ed with small detachments of infantry and cavalry, like-
wise took a considerable number of prisoners from the
enemy's rear.

The difficulties which the enemy experience in pro-
curing subsistence, and which they have incurred by
invading this country without having provided maga-
zines, and without having adopted measures to secure
their rear or their communications with Spain, has plac-
ed them under the necessity of sending out soldiers to
procure supplies, and owing to this circumstance not a
day passes without deserters or prisoners coming in.

Every thing remains tranquil in the north of Portu-
gal, according to the last despatches that I have received.
My last intelligence from Cadiz is to the 4th instant.

I have the honor to be, &c.

WELLINGTON.

Head Quarters at Peronegro, 20th October, 1810.

His Excellency Don Miguel Pereira Forjaz.

Copy of a letter from Colonel Trant to His Excellency
the Marshal Commander in Chief.

COIMBRA, OCTOBER 7.

SIR.—I have great pleasure in informing your Ex-
cellency that I have this day happily entered Coimbra,
with the loss of a few men only killed and wounded.

In my letter of the 6th inst. I had the honor to in-
form you, that I intended to proceed to Mialhada in
the course of that day, for the purpose of forming a
junction with the corps, which were under the com-
mand of Brigadier-Gen. Miller, and of Col. Wilson,
and making an attack upon this City; but when I ar-
rived there I was informed that the said corps were de-
layed by the want of supplies, in the districts near
Bussaco, which were completely exhausted, and the
Cavalry not being able to advance with rapidity on ac-
count of the fatigues which they had experienced, in
their former marches.

The only alternative which remained, in order to
prevent any defensive measure from being taken in
Coimbra, as I was within three leagues of the city, was
to march thither with my own division only, it being
probable that the enemy was as yet ignorant of my ar-
rival at Mialhada.

For this reason I began my march at mid-day pre-
ceded by a squadron of cavalry, commanded by that
brave officer, Lieutenant Dantel, whose name on ano-
ther occasion I mentioned to your Excellency.—The
Regiment of Coimbra had the post of honor in front of
the column of Infantry. My plan of attack was to