

BOSTON, JANUARY 9.

DOCUMENTS,

Laid before the House of Representatives, Dec. 31.  
To the House of Representatives of the United States.  
I lay before the House a Report from the Secretary of State complying with their resolution of the 21st inst. December 28th, 1810. JAMES MADISON.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

December 28, 1810.

SIR.—In pursuance of the resolution of the House of Representatives of the 21st of this month, I have the honor of laying before you,

1st. A copy (marked A) of a Decree of the Emperor of France transmitted to this Department by General Armstrong;

2d. A copy (marked B) of correspondence with General Turreau;

3d. A copy (marked C) of a communication just received, from General Armstrong in relation to the duties lately imposed by the Emperor of France.

With the highest respect and consideration, I have the honor to remain, Sir, your most obedient servant,  
R. SMITH.

The President of the United States.

(A)

Translation of a Decree of 15 (9) July, 1810.

Thirty or forty American vessels may import into France (under licence) cotton, fish, oil, dye-wood, salt fish, cod fish, hides and peltry. They may export wine, brandy, silks, linens, cloths, jewelry, household furniture and other manufactured articles. They can only depart from Charleston and New-York, under the obligation of bringing with them a Gazette of the Day of their departure, (American Gazette) moreover a certificate of the origin of the merchandize, given by the French Consul, containing a sentence in Cypher: the French merchants who shall cause these vessels to come must prove that they are concerned in the fabrics of Paris, Rouen and other towns.

(B)

GENERAL TURREAU TO MR. SMITH.

Washington, 27th November, 1810.

(TRANSLATION.)

SIR.—Since our last conversation relative to the certificates of origin given by the Consuls of His Majesty in the United States, I have collected and read over the different orders of my Court on that subject, and asked of the Consul General of France those which he might have received directly on this part of the service, so essential for the security of your exportations.

It results from the instructions which I have received directly, and from those that have been sent to the Consul General, that the Consuls of His Majesty in the United States do not deliver nor must not hereafter deliver, under any pretext, any certificate of origin to American vessels destined for any port other than those of France: that they deliver them and will deliver them hereafter to all American vessels destined for the ports of France, loaded only with the produce of the United States: that all the certificates anterior to the last instructions attributed to the Consuls of His Majesty and which it is pretended were given for colonial produce, that evidently came from England, have been challenged as false (argues de faux) in as much as the English publicly fabricate papers of this sort at London.

This, Sir, is all that is possible for me to say to you at present respecting certificates of origin.

I cannot doubt but that the government of the United States will see in these regulations of my court an intention, distinctly pronounced, of favoring the commercial relations between France and the United States in all the objects of traffic which shall evidently proceed from their agriculture or manufactures.

You will readily perceive, Sir, that in giving this latitude to the mutually advantageous relations of the two friendly people, the Emperor cannot depart from the system of exclusion against English commerce without losing the advantages which His Majesty and the allied powers must necessarily expect from it.

I have the honor to be, with high consideration, &c.  
(Signed) TURREAU.  
Hon. Robert Smith, Secretary of State.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO GENERAL TURREAU.

Department of State, November 28th, 1810.

SIR.—I have had the honor of receiving your letter of yesterday, stating that the French Consuls in the United States are at this time authorized to deliver certificates of origin only to such American vessels as are bound to some port of France, and as are laden with the produce of the United States.

It will afford satisfaction to our merchants to know, and, therefore, I have to request you to inform me, whether, in American vessels, having such certificates of origin, they can export to France every kind of produce of the United States, and, especially, cotton and tobacco.

In addition to the intelligence, communicated in your letter in relation to the certificates of origin, I have the honor of asking from you information upon the following questions.

1st. Have not the French Consuls been in the practice, under the authority of the French government, of delivering in the ports of the United States, certificates of origin for American vessels bound to the ports of France, and of her allies, and laden with either colonial produce or the produce of the United States.

2d. Have the French Consuls in the United States lately received from the French government instructions not to deliver such certificates of origin for American vessels; and at what time did they receive such instructions?

3d. At what time did the French Consuls cease to issue certificates of origin to American vessels, in pursuance of instructions from their government, in cases of destination to ports of the allies of France?

These facts being connected with questions, interesting to our merchants in foreign tribunals, your goodness will pardon the resort to your aid in ascertaining them.—I have the honor to be, &c.  
(Signed) R. SMITH.

(TRANSLATION.)

GENERAL TURREAU TO MR. SMITH.

Washington, December 12th, 1810.

SIR.—If I have not replied sooner to the letter which you did me the honor to write to me on the 28th of last month, it is because I have sought information from the Consul-General of His Majesty, whether he had not received directly instructions more recent than those which I had transmitted to him, and also to enable me to give a positive answer to the questions contained in the letter referred to above.

I reply, Sir, to the first of your questions, that M. M. the Consuls of His Majesty to the United States have always delivered certificates of origin to American vessels for the port of France: they did it in execution of a decree of His Majesty of the first of Messidor, of the year eleven.

M. M. the French Consuls have also delivered them to vessels destined for neutral or allied ports, whenever they have been required of them. This measure was sanctioned and authorized by a circular despatch of his Excellency the Minister of foreign relations, under date of the 20th April, 1808. This despatch prescribes the formalities to be gone through for the certificates delivered in such cases.

I proceed now, Sir, to reply to the second of your questions.

By a despatch of his Excellency the Duke of Cadore, of the 30th of August last, received by the "Hornet," the 13th of last month, and of which information was given the same day to the Consuls and Vice-Consuls of His Majesty, they are expressly prohibited from delivering certificates of origin for merchandize of any kind, or under any pretext whatever, if the vessels are not destined for France.

This reply to your second question, Sir, furnishes you with a solution of the third. The Consuls and Vice-Consuls of His Majesty will have ceased to deliver certificates of origin to vessels for any other place than France, immediately on the receipt of this circular, which will reach them a few days sooner or later, according to the greater or less distance of the places of their residence.

Concerning cotton and tobacco: their importation into France is at this moment specially prohibited; but I have reason to believe, (and I pray you, meanwhile, to observe, Sir, that they do not rest upon any facts) that some modifications will be given to this absolute exclusion. These modifications will not depend upon the chance of events; but will be the result of other measures, firm and pursued with perseverance, which the two governments will continue to adopt, to withdraw from the monopoly and from the vexations of the common enemy a commerce, loyal (loyal) and necessary to France as well as to the United States.

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurance of my high consideration.

(Signed)

TURREAU.

AMERICAN SEAMEN.

The late appropriation, by Congress, of 100,000 dollars, to defray expenses incurred in relieving American Seamen, was made necessary by the following expenditures:

Extraordinary cases of disbursements made by Consuls of the United States for the relief of Seamen, for which an appropriation is necessary, viz.

William Lee, Consul at Bordeaux, and John Barney, of Baltimore, for the passage to the United States, including provisions, of 164 captains, mates, and ordinary seamen, from St. Jean de Luz, in France, dls. 13,500

NOTE.—Mr. Lee collected those men at St. Jean de Luz, from the Ports of Bayonne, Socou, St. Sebastians, and Passage, for the purpose of transporting them to the United States, they having been discharged, in a destitute situation, from American vessels which had been seized and sequestered at those ports. In pursuance of this purpose, he chartered the ship Ann, owned by Mr. Barney, for the above sum, and advanced thereof, 8000 dollars, leaving a balance due him of 5500 dollars. The particular vessels and captains, from which they were discharged, cannot now be ascertained, nor the branch of trade in which they were engaged.

John M. Forbes, Consul at Hamburgh, for the subsistence afforded destitute seamen within his consulate, between the 1st September, 1809, and 12th July, 1810, dls. 7535 35

NOTE.—Mr. Forbes writes, under date of the 12th July last, that "I had to maintain not only the crews of several ships wrecked on this coast, but those of two vessels, seized in the river Jade, found their way to me. During all last winter, I had nearly 100 seamen naked and destitute to provide for and support. These circumstances will, I presume, satisfactorily account for the great amount of my present disbursements."

Stephen Cathalan, Consul at Marseilles, for subsistence afforded, in like manner, to destitute seamen within his Consulate, during the years 1806, 1807, 1808, 1809, and part of the year 1810, dls. 4024 54

NOTE.—The greater part of this account has been admitted and paid by Gen. Armstrong out of the foreign intercourse fund, but as the account has not yet been adjusted at the treasury, and the fund for seamen

is now exhausted, an appropriation is necessary to restore the sum drawn from the foreign intercourse fund. Peter Isaacson, Consul at Christiansand, in Norway, for subsistence on shore and provisions for the voyage home for 181 seamen, dls. 5070

For the passage to the United States of the same number of men stipulated by him with the owners of the ship America, and now due them, dls. 5430

NOTE.—These men had become a charge to the public, like those in France, from the seizure and condemnation or sequestration of the vessels to which they belonged. After supporting them for some months in the ports of Norway, the Consul seeing no prospect of a speedy restoration of their respective vessels, to prevent their entering into Danish or other foreign service, took the resolution of sending them home, for which purpose he chartered the above-mentioned ship and collected the men at Christiansand, whence they embarked for the United States. In what particular branch of trade the vessels thus seized, were engaged, is unknown to this department.

Alexander Hammett, Consul at Naples, for the subsistence on shore, and provisions for the voyage home for the crews of twenty-eight American vessels which had been seized and sequestered at Naples, dls. 15,000

NOTE.—The vessel in which these men embarked was the Fanny, but it does not appear that any thing was paid for their passage. The above sum of 15,000 dollars was drawn for, by permission of our minister at Paris, on the bankers at Amsterdam, and is therefore due to them.

They have besides, it is believed, advanced from time to time on General Armstrong's drafts, in favor of different Consuls for the relief of Seamen, of which particular accounts have not been received, the sum of dls. 25,000

Total dls. 75,555 89

UNITED STATES CONGRESS.  
IN SENATE, Monday, December 31.  
WEST FLORIDA.

The Senate resumed the consideration of the bill extending the laws now in force in Orleans Territory to the Perdido, &c.

Mr. Pickering commenced a speech in which he proceeded about an hour; when he read as an evidence in support of his argument against the title of the United States to Louisiana or Florida between the Mississippi and Perdido, a letter from Charles Maurice Talleyrand, the French minister for foreign affairs, dated 21st December, 1804, to General Armstrong, our minister at Paris, on the subject of certain overtures which had been made by our ministers in Spain for the aid of France in procuring a cession to the United States of one or both Floridas. The purport of Talleyrand's letter appeared to be a denial that the United States had acquired, by the treaty of 1803, any title to Louisiana east of the Mississippi, or some statement to that effect.

When Mr. Pickering had concluded the reading of this letter—

Mr. Smith (Md.) said he wished to enquire whether the paper, which the gentleman had just read, had ever been publicly communicated to the Senate?

Mr. Pickering said it had been communicated not indeed as a public paper—but for what reason had it been communicated confidentially? Because, by a publication of it at the time, injury might have been done to our ministers or our affairs abroad. There was however, now no reason why the whole truth should not be known. They were about taking a step which was one of peace or war, and it was important that every thing in relation to the subject should be disclosed.

Mr. Smith (M) said, that whenever papers were communicated to the Senate confidentially, before they could be read publicly in this body or any other, it was necessary that the permission of the Senate should be obtained; which no doubt if asked, in this case, would have been granted. But if this proceeding were permitted to pass unnoticed, any individual might have the power to do the greatest injury to the nation, as his humor might move him. He apprehended the proceeding was wrong; but gentlemen older in the Senate than he was, could perhaps better decide.

On the suggestion of a member, the galleries were cleared. The Senate sat with closed doors for an hour. When we were again admitted.

Mr. Clay submitted the following resolution,  
Resolved, That the public perusal in the Senate of certain papers with open galleries by the gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. Pickering) in his seat without a special order of the Senate removing the injunction of secrecy, which papers had been confidentially communicated to the Senate by the President of the United States, was a palpable violation of the rules of this body.

This resolution passed the Senate, Yeas 21, Nays 7.

ALEXANDRIA, DECEMBER 28.

There is a letter in this city from a gentleman of information and candor, now in England, which states positively, "That the Emperor Napoleon when determined to repudiate his wife Josephine did send a letter to King George of England, with an overture to marry one of the English Princesses,—to make Peace; and to furnish his Majesty with troops sufficient to conquer the United States for one of the English Princes; that Spain and Portugal should be guaranteed to France; that Ferdinand 7th should be established in his South-American dominions;—and that Malta, Sardinia, Sicily, &c. should be the subject of a future discussion." It is also intimated that Mr. Pickney has acquainted our government of a proposition of this nature being made.—If this be true, why is the information withheld from the American People? Are they unfit to be trusted with such secrets?