

R U S S I A.
ST. PETERSBURG, APRIL 24.

A circumstantial account of the Conspiracy plotted by Bonaparte, to subject the Russian Government.

The conspiracy hatched up by Bonaparte against the Imperial family, and fortunately discovered through the interposition of Divine Providence, has liberated Russia from the evils which threatened her, and is now the general topick of conversation.

Mr. Speranski, the confidential Imperial Secretary, was raised to that high dignity through the special favour of the Emperor Alexander. Suspicions had been entertained for a long time that Bonaparte maintained spies and agents at this court, who communicated to him the secrets of state; what confirmed these suspicions was the frequency with which, latterly, the couriers were sent from Russia to France, without their coming from France to Russia. Prince Bagration, who commanded an army on the frontiers, formed a resolution to detain a courier, who was going to Paris with despatches for Bonaparte, sealed with the very seal of the Emperor Alexander; he opened them without respecting the imperial seal and found that they contained a description of the plan adopted for the ensuing campaign, and a circumstantial account of the forces of Russia, her military positions, depots, storehouses, and, in a word, the resources, means and dispositions of our government.

Prince Bagration sent a courier immediately to St. Petersburg with those despatches, asking pardon of H. I. M. for his audacity in daring to violate his seal, but in which he was excusable, as was proved from the result.

The courier was desired to place the despatches in the Emperor's own hands—this was attended with considerable difficulty, but finally the Messenger obstinately insisting upon complying strictly with his orders, and it being probable that a second courier would arrive, advising the departure of the first, they were under the necessity of letting him have access to the Emperor, and he delivered accordingly his letters to him three hours after his arrival.

His Imperial Majesty having learned by the contents of these despatches, that Mr. Speranski and his Secretary Magnesy, were the persons who revealed to Bonaparte secrets of such magnitude, he sent for the former, and gave orders to the Prefect of the Police to seize and seal his papers, as likewise those of Mr. Magnesy, and make the latter immediately depart for Siberia.

Whilst they were executing the orders of the Emperor, Mr. Speranski arrived, being totally ignorant of what was going forward at the palace—H. I. Majesty received him in his usual manner, and told him that he was greatly chagrined that he should have been betrayed by a friend, in whom he had reposed the greatest confidence. "How is it credible," answered the Secretary, "that any one could be a traitor to so good and magnanimous a prince as your Majesty?" "Well," replied the Emperor, "You are the friend of whom I speak!"—Mr. Speranski defended himself, saying that it was a calumny of the numerous enemies which his extraordinary elevation had raised him; that H. I. M. never had a Minister who served him with more fidelity and zeal, and to pacify the malice of his rivals, he was disposed to resign.

At this moment H. I. M. was informed that the Secretary of war wished to have an interview with him, the minister let him know that the plan approved by H. I. M. for the ensuing war with France was missing, that it was ascertained that his Aid-de-Camp had delivered it to Mr. Speranski, who had demanded it of him.

Alexander returning to his Cabinet, where Mr. Speranski was, reprimanded him anew, with this fresh proof of his guilt. The Secretary then confessed his crime, and implored the clemency of his Sovereign, who, as a last proof of his goodness and benignity, told him that he might choose either of the two alternatives, that of being tried by the documents and evidence which appeared against his conduct, or be banished to Siberia.

Speranski, as was very natural, preferred the latter, and H. M. ordered him to go home immediately, where he would find, that the necessary dispositions had been taken to that effect.

Notwithstanding that terminating order, Speranski instead of going home, directed his coachman to conduct him to Mr. Magnesy's house, but he had already departed for Siberia. Speranski then repaired to his home, where a coach was ready to conduct him to the same place. He went up to his room, and found that the prefect of the police was waiting for him; he paid him many compliments, apologising for not having been there to receive him. The prefect of the police replied, that that was not the time for compliments, that he could not be ignorant of the motive of his visit and therefore to prepare himself without delay for the journey. He was permitted to take any thing with him but papers.

On examining his papers the affair assumed a new aspect. A most horrid plot and conspiracy was discovered. It appears that their plan was to possess themselves of the Emperor, and of the Grand Duke Constantine; to conduct them in the first place to France, then secure the rest of the Imperial family, the principal personages and persons in office who were not of the French party, disorganize the government, and introduce anarchy and confusion. The conspirators were then to implore the assistance of Bonaparte to restore order, and in this manner to deliver up the Russian Nation into his hands.

In consequence of this discovery, orders were sent to detain Mr. Speranski, and he was conducted to the Citadel at St. Petersburg, to stand trial, to discover his accomplices.

At this time Prince Bagration discovered two spies about his person, who confessed amongst other things

that a courier had just passed with forged passports whose mission was of the utmost importance, and was going to Tangaroff by a circuitous route. The General gave orders to detain him, and he was taken. He is a Pole who speaks the Russian tongue very well, a colonel in the service of France; he had a load of gold Ducats with him; and he was commissioned to bribe to mutiny the Cossacks and Tartar troops in the vicinity of Tobolski, where the insurrection was to commence as soon as the troops took the field, and whilst the Emperor and his Brother were in the army. It appears that Bonaparte had furnished for that and other objects upwards of 50,000 ducats in gold, (two millions and a half of dollars.)

Such is the plan of the revolution which Bonaparte has projected for our country, and is similar to the one he schemed four years ago to get possession of Spain.

A M E R I C A N I N T E L L I G E N C E.
NEW-YORK, OCTOBER 31.

Official account of the battle at Queenstown.

The National Intelligencer, received this morning, contains the following letter from Gen. Van Rensselaer to Gen. Dearborn, detailing the particulars of this disastrous engagement. The General, at the time his letter was writing, was unable to give the number of killed, wounded or prisoners. He represents the conflict as having been severe, and the loss as very considerable on both sides.

From the National Intelligencer of Thursday.

Copy of a letter from Major Gen. Van Rensselaer, of the New-York Militia, to Major Gen. Henry Dearborn, transmitted by the latter to the department of war.

HEAD-QUARTERS, LEWISTON, OCTOBER 14, 1812.

SIR—As the movements of the army under my command, since I had the honor to address you last on the 8th inst. have been of a very important character, producing consequences serious to many individuals; establishing facts actually connected with the interest of the service and the safety of the army; and as I stand prominently responsible for some of these consequences. I beg leave to explain to you, Sir, and through you to my country, the situation and circumstances in which I have had to act, and the reasons and motives which governed me; and if the result is not all that might have been wished, it is such, that when the whole ground shall be viewed, I shall cheerfully submit myself to the judgment of my country.

In my letter of the 8th inst. I apprised you that a crisis in this campaign was rapidly advancing; and that (to repeat the same words) "the blow must be soon struck, or all the toil and expence of the campaign go for nothing; and worse than nothing, for the whole will be tinged with dishonor."

Under such impressions, I had on the 5th inst. written to Brigadier Gen. Smith, of the United States' forces, requesting an interview with him, Major Gen. Hall, and the Commandants of the United States' regiments, for the purpose of conferring upon the subject of future operations. I wrote Major Gen. Hall to the same purport. On the 11th, I had received no answer from Gen. Smith; but in a note to me of the 10th, Gen. Hall mentioned that Gen. Smith had not yet then agreed upon any day for the consultation.

In the mean time, the partial success of Lieut. Elliott, at Black Rock (of which however I have received no official information) began to excite a strong disposition in the troops to act. This was expressed to me through various channels in the shape of an alternative: that they must have orders to act; or, at all hazards, they would go home. I forbear here commenting upon the obvious consequences to me, personally, of longer withholding my orders under such circumstances.

I had a conference with — as to the possibility of getting some person to pass over to Canada and obtain correct information. On the morning of the 4th, he wrote to me that he had procured the man who bore his letter to go over. Instructions were given him; he passed over—obtained such information as warranted an immediate attack. This was confidentially communicated to several of my first officers, and produced great zeal to act; more especially as it might have a controlling effect upon the movements at Detroit, where it was supposed General Brock had gone with all the force he dared spare from the Niagara frontier. The best preparations in my power were, therefore, made to dislodge the enemy from the Heights of Queenstown, and possess ourselves of the village where the troops might be sheltered from the distressing inclemency of the weather.

Lieut. Col. Fenwick's flying artillery, and a detachment of regular troops under his command, were ordered to be up in season from Fort Niagara. Orders were also sent to Gen. Smith to send down from Buffalo, such detachment of his brigade as existing circumstances in that vicinity might warrant. The attack was to have been made at 4 o'clock in the morning of the 11th by crossing over in boats from the Old Ferry opposite the Heights. To avoid any embarrassment in crossing the river (which is here a sheet of violent eddies) experienced boatmen were procured to take the boats from the landing below to the place of embarkation. Lieut. Sim was considered the man of greatest skill for this service. He went ahead, and in the extreme darkness, he passed the intended place far up the river; and there, in a most extraordinary manner, fastened his boat a shore, and abandoned his detachment. In this front boat he had carried nearly every oar which was prepared for all the boats. In this agonizing dilemma, stood officers and men, whose ardor had not been cooled by exposure through the night to one of the most tremendous north-east storms, which continued, unabated, for twenty-eight hours, deluged the whole camp. The approach of day-light extinguished every prospect of success, and the detachment

returned to camp. Col. Van Rensselaer was to have commanded the detachment.

After the result, I had hoped that the patience of the troops would have continued until I could submit the plan suggested in my letter of the 8th, that I might act under and in conformity to the opinion which might be then expressed. But my hope was idle: the previously excited ardor seemed to have gained new heart from the late miscarriage—the brave were mortified to stop short of their object, and the timid thought laurels half won by an attempt.

On the morning of the 12th, such was the pressure upon me from all quarters, that I became satisfied that my refusal to act might involve me in suspicion and the service in disgrace.

Viewing affairs at Buffalo as yet unsettled, I had immediately countermanded the march of Gen. Smith's brigade, upon the failure of the first expedition; but having now determined to attack Queenstown, I sent new orders to Gen. Smith to march; not with the view of his aid in the attack, for I consider the force detached sufficient, but to support the detachment should the contest be obstinate and long continued.

Lieut. Col. Christie, who had just arrived at the Four Mile Creek, had late in the night of the first contemplated attack, gallantly offered me his own and his men's service; but he got my permission too late. He now again came forward; had a conference with Col. Van Rensselaer, and begged that he might have a command in the expedition. The arrangement was made, Col. Van Rensselaer was to command one column of 300 militia; and Lieut. Col. Christie a column of the same number of regular troops.

Every precaution was now adopted as to boats, and the most confidential and experienced men to manage them. At an early hour in the night, Lieut. Colonel Christie marched his detachment, by the rear road, from Niagara, to Camp. At 7 in the evening Lieut. Col. Stransban's regiment moved from Niagara Falls—at 8 o'clock, Mead's—and at nine Lieut. Col. Blau's regiment marched from the same place. All were in camp in good season.—Agreeably to my orders issued upon this occasion, the two columns were to pass over together, as soon as the heights should be carried Lieut. Col. Fenwick's flying artillery was to pass over; then Major Mullany's detachment of regulars; and other troops to follow in order.

At dawn of day the boats were in readiness, and the troops commenced embarking, under the cover of a commanding battery mounting 2 eighteen-pounders and two 6's. The movements were soon discovered, and a brisk fire of musketry was poured from the whole line of the Canada shore. Our battery then opened to sweep the shore; but it was, for some minutes, too dark to direct much fire with safety. A brisk cannonade was now opened upon the boats from three different batteries—our battery returned their fire, and occasionally threw grape upon the shore, and was itself served with shells from a small mortar of the enemy's. Col. Scott, of the artillery, by hastening his march from Niagara Falls in the night, arrived in season to return the enemy's fire with 2 six-pounders.

The boats were somewhat embarrassed with the eddies, as well as with a shower of shot; but Colonel Van Rensselaer, with about 100 men, soon effected his landing amidst a tremendous fire directed upon him from every point; but to the astonishment of all who witnessed the scene. This van of the column advanced slowly against the fire. It was a serious misfortune to the van, and indeed to the whole expedition, that in a few minutes after landing, Col. Van Rensselaer received four wounds—a ball passed through his right thigh, entering just below the hip-bone—another shot passed through the same thigh, a little below—the third through the calf of his leg, and the fourth contused his heel—This was quite a crisis in the expedition. Under so severe a fire it was difficult to form raw troops. By some mismanagement of the boatmen, Lieutenant-Colonel Christie did not arrive until some time after this, and was wounded in the hand in passing the river. Colonel Van Rensselaer was still able to stand, and with great presence of mind ordered his officers to proceed with rapidity and storm the fort. This service was gallantly performed, and the enemy driven down the hill in every direction. Soon after this both parties were considerably reinforced, and the conflict was renewed in various places—many of the enemy took shelter behind a stone guard-house, where a piece of ordnance was now briskly served. I ordered the fire of our battery to be directed upon the guard-house, and it was so effectually done, that with 8 or 10 shot the fire was silenced. The enemy then retreated behind a large store house; but in a short time the route became general, and the enemy's fire was silenced except from a one gun battery, so far down the river as to be out of the reach of heavy ordnance, and our light pieces could not silence it. A number of boats now passed over unannoyed, except from one unsilenced gun. For some time after I had passed over, the victory appeared complete: but in the expectation of further attacks, I was taking measures for fortifying my camp immediately—the direction of this service I entrusted to Lieutenant Totten, of the engineers. But very soon the enemy were reinforced by a detachment of several hundred Indians from Chipawa—they commenced a furious attack; but were promptly met and routed by the rifle and bayonet. By this time, I perceived my troops were embarking very slowly. I passed immediately over to accelerate their movements; but to my utter astonishment, I found that at the very moment when complete victory was in our hands, the ardor of the unengaged troops had entirely subsided. I rode in all directions—urged men by every consideration to pass over—but in vain. Lieutenant-Colonel Bloom, who had been wounded in action, returned, mounted his horse, and rode through the camp; as did