

The SAINT JOHN GAZETTE.

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THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE
COURT AND CABINET OF ST. CLOUD.
In a series of Letters from a resident in Paris to a Noble-
man in London, written during the months of
August, September and October, 1805.

LETTER XXXIV.

MY LORD, Paris, August, 1805.

AFTER the discovery of Charlotte Encores attempt, Buonaparte, who hitherto had flattered himself that he possessed the good wishes, if not the affection, of his female subjects, made a regulation, according to which no women, who have not previously given in their names to the prefects of his palaces, and obtained previous permission, can approach his person or throw themselves at his feet, without incurring his displeasure, and even arrest. Of this imperial decree, ladies, both of the capital, and of the provinces, when he travels, are officially informed. Notwithstanding this precaution, he was a second time, last spring, at Lyons, near falling the victim of the vengeance or malice of a female.

In his journey to be crowned King of Italy, he occupied his uncle's episcopal palace at Lyons, during the forty-eight hours he remained there. Most of the persons of both sexes, composing the household of Cardinal Fesch, were from his own country, Corsica; among these was one of the name of Pauline Riotti, who inspected the economy of the kitchens. It is Buonaparte's custom to take a dish of Chocolate in the forenoon, which she, on the morning of his departure, against her custom, but under pretence of knowing the taste of the family, desired to prepare. One of the cooks observed that she mixed with it something from her pocket, but without saying a word to her that indicated suspicion, he warned Buonaparte, in a note delivered to a page, to be upon his guard. When the chamberlain carried in the chocolate, Napoleon ordered the person who had prepared it to be brought before him. This being told Pauline, she fainted away, after having first drank the remaining contents of the chocolate pot. Her convulsions soon indicated that she was poisoned, and, notwithstanding the endeavours of Buonaparte's physician Corvisart, she expired within an hour, protesting that her crime was an act of revenge against Napoleon, who had seduced her when young, under a promise of marriage; but who, since his elevation, had not only neglected her, but reduced her to despair, by refusing an honest support for herself and her child, sufficient to preserve her from the degradation of servitude. Cardinal Fesch received a severe reprimand for admitting among his domestic individuals with whose former lives he was not better acquainted; and the same day he dismissed every Corsican in his service. The cook was, with the reward of a pension, made a member of the legion of honour, and it was given out by Corvisart that Pauline died insane.

Within three weeks after this occurrence, Buonaparte was at Milan, again exposed to an imminent danger. According to his commands, the vigilance of the police had been very strict, and even severe. All strangers who could not give the most satisfactory account of themselves, had either been sent out of the country, or were imprisoned. He never went out but strongly attended, and during his audiences the most trusty officers always surrounded him; these precautions increased in proportion as the day of his coronation approached. On the morning of that day, about nine o'clock, when full dressed in his imperial and royal robes, and all the grand officers of state by his side, a paper was delivered to him by his chamberlain Talleyrand, a nephew of the minister. The instant he had read it, he flew into the arms of Berthier, exclaiming, "My friend, I am betrayed; are you among the number of conspirators? Jourdan, Lafes, Mortier, Bessieres, St. Cyr, are you also forsaking your friend and benefactor?" They all instantly embraced him, begging that he would calm himself; that they were all what they always had been, dutiful and faithful subjects. "But read this paper from my prefect Salmatoris; he says that if I move a step I may cease to live, as the assassins are near me, as well as before me."

The commander of his guard then entered with fifty grenadiers, their bayonets fixed, bringing with them a prisoner, who pointed out four individuals not far from Buonaparte's person, two of whom were Italian officers of the royal Italian guard, and two were dressed in Swiss uniforms. They were all immediately seized, and in their boots were found three daggers. One of those in Swiss regimentals exclaimed, before he was taken, "Tremble, tyrant of my country! Thousands of the descendants of William Tell have, with me, sworn your destruction. You escape this day; but the just vengeance of outraged humanity follows you like your shade. Depend upon it, an untimely end is irretrievably reserved for you." So saying, he pierced his own heart, and fell a corpse into the arms of the grenadiers, who came to arrest him.

This incident suspended the procession to the cathedral for an hour, when Berthier announced that the conspirators were punished. Buonaparte evinced on this occasion the same absence of mind and of courage as on the 9th of November 1799, when Arena and other deputies drew their daggers against him at St. Cloud. As this scene did not redound much to the honour of the Emperor and King, all mention of the conspiracy was severely prohibited, and the deputations, ready to congratulate him on his escape, were dispersed to attend their other duties.

The conspirators are stated to have been four young men, who had lost their parents and fortunes by the revolutions effected by Buonaparte in Italy and Switzerland, and who had sworn fidelity to each other, and to avenge their individual wrongs, with the injuries of their countries at the same time. They were all prepared and resigned to die, expecting to be cut to pieces the moment Buonaparte fell by their hands; but one of the Italians rather superstitious, had, before he went to the drawing-room, confessed, and received absolution from a priest, whom he knew to be an enemy of Buonaparte: but the priest, in hope of reward, disclosed the conspiracy to the master of the ceremonies Salmatoris. The three surviving conspirators are said to have been literally torn to pieces by the engines of torture, and the priest was shot for having given absolution to an assassin, and for having concealed his knowledge of the plot an hour after he was acquainted with it. Even Salmatoris had some difficulty to avoid being disgraced, for having written a terrifying note, which had exposed the Emperor's weakness, and shown that his life was dearer to him at the head of empires than when only at the head of armies.

My narrative of this event I have from an officer present, whose veracity I can guarantee. He also informed me that, in consequence of it, all the officers of the Swiss brigades in the French service, that were quartered or encamped in Italy, were to the number of near fifty dismissed at once. Of the Italian guards, every officer who was known to have suffered any losses by the new order of things in his country was ordered to resign, if he would not enter into the regiments of the line.

Whatever the police agents did to prevent it, and in spite of some unjust and cruel chastisement, Buonaparte continued, during his stay in Italy, an object of ridicule in conversation as well as in pamphlets and caricatures. One of these represented him in the ragged garb of a Sans Culotte, pale and trembling, on his knees, with bewildered looks, and his hair standing upright on his head, like pointed horns, tearing the map of the world to pieces, and, to save his life, offering each of his generals a slice, who in return regarded him with looks of contempt, mixed with pity.

I have just heard of a new plot, or rather a league, against Buonaparte's ambition. At its head the generals Jourdan, Macdonald, Le Courbe and Desolles are placed, though many less victorious generals and officers, civil as well as military, are reported to be its members. Their object is not to remove or displace Buonaparte as an Emperor of the French; on the contrary, they offer their lives to strengthen his authority, and to resist his enemies; but they ask and advise him to renounce for himself, for his relations, and for France, all possessions on the Italian side of the Alps, as the only means to establish a permanent peace, and to avoid a war with other states, whose safety is endangered by our great encroachments. A mutinous kind of address to this effect has been sent to the camp of Boulogne, and to all other encampments of our troops, that those generals and other military persons there, who chose, might both see the object and the intent of the associates. It is reported that Buonaparte ordered it to be burnt by the hands of the common executioner at Boulogne; that sixteen officers there, who subscribed their names in approbation of the address, were broken, and dismissed with disgrace; that Jourdan is deprived of his command in Italy, and ordered to render an account of his conduct to the emperor. Desolles is also said to be dismissed, and with Macdonald, Le Courbe; and eighty-four others his Majesty's subjects, whose names appeared under the remonstrance, or petition (as some call it) exiled to different departments of this country, where they are to expect their sovereign's farther determination, and in the mean time remain under the inspection and responsibility of his constituted authorities and commissaries of police.

As it is as dangerous to inquire as to converse on this and other subjects, which the mysterious policy of our government condemns to silence or oblivion, I have not yet been able to gather any more or better information concerning this league, or unconstitutional opposition to the executive power; but as I am intimate with one of the actors, should he have an opportunity, he will certainly write to me at full length, and be very explicit.

LONDON, January 1.

The resources of the Danish Government, the confidence which it reposes in the loyalty and attachment of the people, furnished strong ground of hope, that the Danes would display a spirit equal to that which distinguishes the Swedes; that they would not truckle to Bonaparte or be cajoled by his promises, but that they would even resist force by force if driven to that extremity.

The latest intelligence from that country tended to strengthen these expectations; for it was stated, that Denmark was arming extensively by land and sea; and it was natural to suppose, that these preparations were the result of the violent conduct of the enemy towards those states which could not defend themselves. A recent occurrence, however, may raise some doubts as to these points: the last mails made up for Hufum, it is said, were yesterday returned to the Post-Office from Harwich. It is reported, that on the arrival of the packet at Hufum, the letters for Denmark were permitted to be landed; but all English letters for Hamburg were refused, and have consequently

been brought back. If this was done by order of the Danish government, it is not unreasonable to suppose, that Napoleon has succeeded, either by threats or promises, in bringing over the cabinet of Copenhagen as a party to his prohibitory system, which it is certain he would make almost every sacrifice to extend. But we are inclined to think, that the whole of the above occurrence relative to the letters being sent back, originated in a very commendable cause; for, it is said, that the English Agent at Hufum, very prudently exercised his own discretion, opened the letters for Hamburg, and returned such as he thought might involve those to whom they were addressed, in fears and difficulties beyond what they already experience.

It is likely that the Danish Capt. Lundberg founded his report of the defeat of the Russians on the following paragraph which appeared in the Journal du Commerce of the 7th ult. which he called a Bulletin:—"Several letters from Berlin have announced, that the Russians have been beaten and completely routed, in the neighbourhood of Warlaw; and that a German gazette, speaking of this affair, represented the loss of the Russians, in killed, wounded and prisoners, at 36,000 men."

This paragraph evidently alludes to an exaggerated statement in the Thirty-sixth Bulletin, of the skirmish between the French and Russians, on the retreat of the latter behind the Vistula.

The reports circulated in an Evening paper of yesterday, respecting the defeat of the French by the Russians, on the Vistula, and a check they received at Stralsund, are without any foundation. The Post-Office, from whence the paper pretended to derive its information, has not received any such intelligence.

JANUARY 3. AMERICAN TREATY.

We are to congratulate our Commercial readers on the adjustment of the difference between Great-Britain and America.—A letter, of which the following is a copy, was, with due attention to the mercantile interest of the country, transmitted to Philip Sansom, Esq. chairman of the committee of American merchants, and by him sent to Lloyd's and the American Coffee-houses.

Downing-Street, January 1.

Sir, I have the honour of acquainting you, for the information of the merchants concerned in the trade with America, that the treaty of amity, commerce and navigation, between his Majesty and the United States of America, was yesterday signed by the Commissioners respectively appointed for the purpose by the two governments. The treaty will be immediately transmitted to America; but, until the ratifications on both sides shall have been exchanged, it cannot be made public.

I have the honour to be, &c.

P. Sansom, Esq. HOWICK.
Chairman of the Committee.

The very important terms of this arrangement we are not otherwise acquainted with than from report, but we understand, that the circuitous trade with the Belligerent Powers, through America, is to be allowed under certain conditions. We heartily congratulate the country upon the accommodation of a misunderstanding, which we understand, the enemy were sedulously endeavouring, both by their agents in the United States, and the corrupt and disloyal factions, which disgrace that country, to kindle into a war.

A mail from Lisbon arrived yesterday, brought by the Aukland packet in ten days to Falmouth. The letters by the mail state, that great apprehensions are still entertained that the Spaniards are about to make an attack on Portugal, in consequence of an order from Bonaparte. The Spanish government is extremely tardy in their proceedings, because it is with reluctance that they undertake the expedition.

Some neutral ships, which sailed within these few days for Holland, were not suffered to enter a Dutch port. On their arrival off the coast, a boat was sent off to them to stop their coming in, as an embargo had been laid in every port; and no ships were permitted to go out or in.

No less than three messengers arrived at Lord Howick's office yesterday afternoon, with dispatches from Petersburg, and other parts of the North. One of these brought dispatches from Lord Hutchinson, the contents of which have not transpired; but report says, that they mention some advantages having been obtained by the Russians over the enemy on the Vistula.

The Emperor of Russia we understand, has issued a short but spirited Manifesto, in which he declares that he will use all the means which providence has put in his power, to extirpate the common Enemy of Man; and that if necessary, he will bring 500,000 men into the field for that purpose.

JANUARY 4.

Yesterday letters were received in town from Petersburg, Riga, and Elisneur; the latter to the 28th December, by the Mercury, Jackson, and Relief, Taylor, which on Thursday arrived at Hull. By these we have obtained intelligence some days later than the last Mails, and are enabled to state that to the 14th ult. no action had taken place in Poland. Bonaparte, at that date, continued at Posen, and was not expected to leave that city till the 23d. The advanced corps of Davout's division had not, on the 13th, proceeded beyond Skara,