

MARYLAND GAZETTE.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 1781.

LONDON, Aug. 10.

The Panther man of war arrived at Portsmouth from Gibraltar, etc. led the vigilance of the Spanish Squadron by pushing out in the night. A Spanish packet which she took on board and brought in with her, has many of the Libon mail advice, that Spaniards have opened their batteries at Gibraltar, the English made a salpêtre them, in which they repulsed a party of the besiegers, many of whom were put to the sword.

The sitting out warlike squadrons by northern powers, and the arrival of Russian men of war in our ports, present a new era in naval history. The time the Russian fleet entered our ports, they were supplicants for assistance in maritime affairs: we furnished them with stores, and lent them officers, by which means we gave them the first hope of becoming a naval power. We have thus warmed the frozen heart, who in return whets her talons on us.

A private letter received yesterday from Holland, by the Dutch mail, says, that there are thirty sail of ships in the Texel, ready laden for sea, bound with stores to France, and that they are only waiting the arrival of some Russian men of war to convey them there.

If the above account is really true, we may conclude says a correspondent, that the spirit and design of the northern conspiracy goes somewhat further than seems consistent with that strict neutrality, which the powers pretend to adopt. In circumstances like the present, the protection of their own trade is all that the law of nations will adjudge to any people; and even that much, in particular cases, may appear problematical. But surely there can be no licence or authority, extended in the regulations hitherto established among sovereign states, for any state to assume a right of protecting another in carrying on a commerce to the prejudice of a third party. The moment therefore, that Russia takes the Dutch ships under convoy, she may be considered as having virtually declared war against Great-Britain.

Aug. 16. It is to be hoped that our ministers will keep a vigilant watch over the neutrality armaments, lest they may be used as a pretext to cover some hostile design. Much is to be apprehended from the profound policy of the Russian queen, joined to the artful projects of the sagacious Mynbeers.

Almost all the neutral powers in Europe, except Portugal, seem to have joined this league, which, though it should be really neutral, as it is pretended, for the protection of commerce, is yet very formidable for the facility with which it may be turned to the accomplishments of any other purpose.

By the last returns made of the volunteer corps of the kingdom of Ireland, now an army, they absolutely amount to 15,000 men.

A few days since a commission was dispatched to Sir George Rodney, giving him very extensive and almost unlimited powers in the punishment of such of his captains, as, by their baseness, prevented the total defeat of the French fleet.

Sept 1. The West-India merchants are using all possible expedition in getting out a fleet, and have applied to the lords of the Admiralty for a convoy, to sail the first fair wind after the 30th of October.

If the letter which appeared in many of the newspapers, signed Bernardo de Galvez, and addressed to the president of the congress, was really written by that general, it is in fact an acknowledgment of American independence; and cautious as Spain was in her memorial to our court, not to make the least mention of the Americans as an independent people, no sensible person can doubt but it is with the leave of the court of Madrid that the governor of a Spanish province writes to a rebel, and an assembly not acknowledged by their own prince.

PHILADELPHIA, Jan. 23.
Extract of a letter from Paris, dated Oct. 4, 1780.

"I am glad to see the American spirit roused again; and am much pleased with the subscription of the ladies and merchants. They have confuted the assertion of that scotch writer, who says, that women have not the *amour patrie*; and that the merchants are attached to no country."

By a prisoner lately arrived here from New-York, and letters from some of our captains in that city, we learn that the American prisoners never were treated with more severity and inhumanity than they are at present by the enemy. This is done with an evident design to engage them to enter into the British service, for which they have large premiums, and particular promises of the kindest treatment. By these means, we are told, several hundred of our seamen have been compelled to enter on board their ships, as a refuge from their distress, who would have despised the reward and the service, had the circumstances of their captivity been only tolerable. Should things go on in this way, the greatest part of our seamen may be translocated to the vessels of the enemy. This is considered here as a point of no small importance, and deserving the particular and unremitting attention of congress. If the facts above stated are found upon due enquiry to be true, ought not the law of retaliation to be immediately put in force, as the most likely, and, perhaps, the only means to procure proper treatment for our prisoners, and prevent, for the future, such outrages upon humanity, and such discouragements to our cause?

Friday last arrived here the brig Fanny, captain Tanner, and schooner ——— captain Vicary, from the Havannah.

Yesterday came into port a prize brig, taken by the Fair American, captain Jackways, on her intended voyage from New-York to Charles-town. She has on board a valuable cargo, consisting of salt, wine, dry goods, &c. &c.

The British forces which lately embarked at New-York have landed in Virginia. We hear that major-general Philips (of Burgoyne's convention troops, but lately exchanged) commands on this expedition, although it is said that Arnold acts as a principal officer: this is confirmed by the following extract of a letter from Frederickburg, received yesterday per post:

"Arnold, with about 1500 men and a few light horse, landed 13 miles below Richmond, and marched into that town on Friday, about 10 o'clock, they have destroyed Westham and all the public works, great quantities of rum and sugar, but do not understand they destroyed any tobacco. They retreated on the Saturday, about 12 o'clock, the same way they came: General Nelson is collecting the militia as fast as possible, and following them in order to harass their rear. We hourly expect the particulars."

Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Amsterdam to his friend in this city, dated September 16.

"The capture of 55 ships at once; so much wealth; so many seamen and soldiers; and such quantities of stores, is a severe stroke to the English, and cannot but have the most excellent effects for us, both in the West-Indies and North-America. The tight vein is now opened, and it is to be hoped that the courts of France and Spain will now be in earnest in conveying their own commerce and cruising for that of their enemies. This is the short, easy and infallible method of humbling the English, preventing the effusion of an ocean of blood, and bringing the war to a conclusion. In this policy I hope our countrymen will join with alacrity. Privateering is as well understood by them as any people whatever; and it is by cutting off supplies, not by attacks, sieges or assaults, that I expect deliverance from our enemies; and I should be wanting in my duty if I did warn them against any relaxation of exertions, by sea or land, from a fond expectation of peace; they will deceive themselves if they depend upon it. Never, never, will the English make peace while they have an army in North-America."

IN CONGRESS, Jan. 5, 1781.
THE committee to whom were referred the letter of Abraham Skinner, commissary-general of prisoners, and other papers relative to the treatment of prisoners in the hands of the enemy, delivered in a report; as follows:

"That, notwithstanding every effort of congress to obtain for our people, prisoners in the hands of the enemy, that treatment which humanity alone should have dictated, the British commander, unmindful of the tenderness exercised towards their men, prisoners in our hands, and regardless of the practice of civilized nations, have persisted in treating our people, prisoners to them, with every species of insult, outrage and cruelty. Officers and men are indiscriminately thrown into the holds of prison ships and into loathsome dungeons, and there deprived of fuel and the common necessaries of life, by which means many of the citizens of these states have been compelled to enter into their service, to avoid those distresses which a conduct so contrary to the law of nations had brought upon them. Our seamen taken upon the American coast have been sent to Great-Britain, or other parts beyond seas, to prevent their being exchanged, or to force them to take arms against their country: that, in the opinion of the committee, an exercise of the law of retaliation has become necessary, as a justice due to those citizens of America, whom the fortune of war has thrown into the power of our enemy; whereupon

Resolved, That copies of the letter of Mr. Skinner, and the other papers referred, be transmitted to the commander in chief, and that he be directed to enquire into the manner in which our people, who are prisoners, are treated by the enemy, and that he give immediate orders to the commanding officers: at the different ports to take particular care that the British prisoners receive the same allowance and treatment, in every respect, as our people, who are prisoners, receive from the enemy.

Resolved, That it be recommended to the respective executives to take effectual measures for carrying into execution the act of congress of January 13, 1780, respecting prisoners taken by the citizens, troops or ships of particular states:

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