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Terms of the Star

ARE TWO DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS per annum, payable half yearly IN ADVANCE: No paper can be discontinued until the same is paid for.—

ADVERTISEMENTS,

ARE inserted *three weeks* for *ONE DOLLAR*, and continued *weekly*, for *TWENTY-FIVE CENTS* per square.

TORPEDO WAR.

A work has been lately published in New York under this title. The project has been long before the public in various views, but not before the present occasion in a satisfactory and systematic form. It has been a subject of applause to those who have investigated it, while it has been a theme of abuse, reprobation, misrepresentation, and ridicule to those who either knowing nothing about it, or fearing that its efficacy would produce effects the most momentous to military navies, have endeavored to depreciate the *torpedo system*.

To any man of common understanding who has considered the natural tendency of the *explosive* power of gunpowder, its operative projectile power, in throwing balls or shells; its common operation even in the explosion of a rocket, of a few ounces weight, the height to which it ascends in the atmosphere; it would appear not very extraordinary, that an augumentation of the quantity of powder from the load of a rocket, or of a twelve pounder fired horizentally, that the effects of an increased quantity and an explosion upwards would prove terrible wherever it could be brought into operation.

The effects of the explosion of powder mills, which have produced concussions terrible as earthquakes; the effects of artificial mines blown up in military sieges, have been contemplated rather by men who have made military subjects a study, than by legislators or private citizens.

A private citizen during the American revolution, made an attempt to realize the effect of a submarine explosion on ships of war, but public patronage was wanting, or secret corruption prevailed against public utility, and Bushnell it is believed died unrewarded and neglected.

We have now a citizen, a native of Philadelphia, whose independence of fortune & whose zeal for science, place him out of the scope of corruption, and above the sordid spirit of avarice, who has at his own expence matured experiment and given demonstration to the efficacy of an invention which for simplicity and power, as well as for the importance of its consequences, once bro't into practice, every calculation that can be attempted must fall far short of its power or its consequences.

MR. FULTON, the author of this work, is a native of Philadelphia, and has spent several years in Europe, where he has matured his *torpedo* system in conjunction with other great branches of engineering and mechanics; he is also the first successful navigator by philosophical power, against wind, and tide, and weather, as proved by his steam boats which ply on the Hudson and Rariton, and of which there is a prospect to the national advantage to see lines established in the Mississippi, Ohio, and lake Champlain, as well as on the Delaware; and we trust at no remote period on the Potomac and James river.

The *torpedo*, which is the subject of our present attention, takes its name from a fish, whose physical electric properties are generally known, to strike with the touch.

The torpedo system extends to ships at anchor, to ships entering ports and harbors, and to ships under sail; either in bays or road-steads or on the high seas.

Against this system of defence the admirers of the *British naval* dominion are particularly strenious; were it an innocent invention, their zeal would not be either so vehement or so sensibly alive; and we just quote in this place the substance of a short note from page 7, to shew what one of the first admirals of the British navy thought of it.

Mr. Fulton has endeavored to exhibit the power of the torpedo both in England and in France, and he hopes by its means to render military navies altogether inefficacious; "In my first interview with earl St. Vincents," says Mr. Fulton, "he was very communicative; I explained to him a torpedo, and the experiment performed on the Dorothea; he reflected for some time, and then said—" Pitt is the greatest fool that ever existed, to encourage a mode of war, which *we, who have the command of the seas do not want, and of which this system if successful would deprive us.*"

This sentiment of earl St. Vincents, is the best eulogy upon the torpedo system, and points it out to the United States, who have no naval force adequate to the defence of all our ports and harbors, as the most speedy, cheap and certain mode of defence. *Aurora.*

Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8.

Mr. *P. B. Porter*, after a speech of considerable length on the subject of internal improvements, and the benefits to be derived to the United States from fostering and promoting them, offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to examine into the expediency of appropriating a part of the public lands, or of the proceeds thereof to the purposes of opening and constructing such roads and canals, as may be most conducive to the general interests of the union; and that they have leave to report by bill or otherwise."

After some conversation on the propriety of authorising the committee to report by bill, the resolution was agreed to without a division, and a committee appointed consisting of twenty members.

The bill to prevent the issuing of sea letters, except to certain vessels, was read a third time and passed.

Friday, February 9.

The following letter was laid before the house:

To the honorable J. B. Varnum, Speaker of the House of Representatives.

SIR.—Having published a pamphlet explaining my experience on the practice and effects of torpedoes, I beg leave to present you and each member of the House of Representatives one copy.—Should the House consider this subject of sufficient interest to merit further explanation, I should be happy to give a lecture at such time and place as may be most convenient, in which I will exhibit the various modes of attack with the torpedoes and harpoon guns as prepared for action, with such models and demonstrations as will lead to a clear understanding of the subject.

I have the honor to be, &c.

ROBERT FULTON.

Kalorama, February 9, 1810.

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Leave was given to present the pamphlets mentioned in the above letter as requested.

Mr. *Burwell*, from the committee appointed on the subject, reported a bill authorizing the President of the United States to employ the public armed vessels and permitting merchants to arm for the defence of the American commerce.

The following message was received from the President of the United States by Mr. Edward Coles, his Secretary:

To the House of Representatives of the United States.

I transmit to the House a report of the Secretary of State, complying with their resolution of the 22d of January.

JAMES MADISON.

February 8, 1810.

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The Secretary of State, to whom the President has been pleased to refer the resolution of the House of Representatives of the 22d of last month, has the honor to state, that it appears from the records in this department that in the years 1801 and 1802, the Executive had endeavored to obtain for the citizens of the United States residing on the waters of Tombigbee and Alabama rivers, the free navigation of the Mobile river to its confluence with the ocean; 1st. by claiming this navigation as a neutral right sanctioned by the general principles of the law of nations applicable to rivers similarly situated; and 2d, by endeavoring to purchase the country held by Spain on the Mobile.

These efforts were made before it was known that Spain had ceded Louisiana to France, and consequently before the purchase of that province by the United States. Since that purchase, the country held by Spain on the Mobile has been claimed as being included therein.

The Spanish government having objected to this claim in a manner which justified a belief that the question would not be soon decided, our minister at Madrid was instructed again to claim the free navigation of the Mobile under the general principles of the law of nations, and to represent to his Catholic Majesty the propriety and necessity of giving orders to his officers not to interrupt the free communication with our territories through the waters of the Mobile.

In addition to what has been done through this department, it appears that the governor of the Orleans Territory and other officers of the United States have endeavored to induce the Spanish authorities on the Mobile to abstain from exacting duties on the passage of our merchandize or produce up or down that river. Notwithstanding, however, every thing which has been done, it is understood that these authorities have continued to exact (with some occasional relaxations) a duty of 12 per centum "on all articles of the growth or manufacture of the United States, which are conveyed thro' said river to and from the city of N. Orleans."

All which is respectfully submitted.

R. SMITH.

Department of State, Feb. 8, 1810.

February 19.

Propositions to Belligerents, &c.

The following message was received from the President of the U. S.

To the House of Representatives of the United States,

I transmit reports of the Secretaries of State and of the Treasury, complying with your resolution of the fifth instant.

JAMES MADISON.

February 17, 1810.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

February 14, 1810.

Agreeably to the resolution of the House of Representatives, of the 5th instant, requesting the President of the United States to cause to be laid before that House copies of the several communications made to the governments of France and Great Britain, in pursuance of the authorities vested by Congress in the Executive, with respect to several orders and decrees of either violating the lawful commerce and neutral rights of the United States, except such parts as may, in his judgment, require secrecy; and also to communicate to the same House such information as he may have received touching the forgery of papers purporting to be those of American vessels, the Secretary of state has the honor of laying before the President the following papers, viz.

1st. Extract of a letter from Mr. Smith, Secretary of State, to General Armstrong, Minister Plenipotentiary of the U. States, at Paris, dated March 15th, 1809.

2d. Copy of a note from Gen. Armstrong, to Count Champagny, Minister of exterior relations at Paris, dated 29th April, 1809.

3d. Extract of a letter from Mr. Smith to Mr. Pinkney, Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States at London dated March 25th, 1809.

4th. Extracts of a letter from Mr. Pinkney to Mr. Smith, dated the 1st of May, 1809.

A. Extracts of a letter from John M. Forbes, consul of the U. States at Hamburgh to Mr. Madison, Secretary of State dated November 13th, 1807.

B. Extracts of a letter from Mr. Lee, commercial agent of the United States, at Bordeaux, to the same; dated Nov. 1, 1808.

C. Copy of a letter from Mr. Hackley consul of the U. States at St. Lucar, to Mr. Smith, dated Cadiz, 23d March, 1809.

D. Sundry original documents belonging to, and concerning the ship Aurora of New York.

E. Extract of a letter from Mr. Harris, consul of the United States at St. Petersburgh, to Mr. Smith, dated 25th October, 1809. covering certain papers belonging to the ship called the Georgia, of New York.

F. Extract of a letter from John M. Forbes, dated November 7, 1809, to Mr. Smith, covering the forged sea letter of the ship Arno, of Boston, dated August 21st, 1809, also a letter of the same date, signed Stephen Higginson and company, to captain William Kempton.

G. Extract of a letter from William Kirkpatrick, consul of the U. States at Malaga, to Mr. Smith, dated November 23, 1809.

It may be proper moreover to state, that various other communications have been received at this department from the agents of the United States in foreign countries, which mentioned that the practice prevails of forging American ships papers and documents; but as they do not afford any details they are not included in this report which is respectfully submitted.

R. SMITH.

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Extract of a letter from the Secretary of State, to general Armstrong, minister plenipotentiary of the United States at Paris, dated

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,

March 15, 1809.

"The proceedings of Congress at their late session, combined with the Executive communications, affording, as they do, additional proofs of the pacific disposition of this government, and of its strict observance of whatever the laws of neutrality require, you will not fail to avail yourself of the just arguments thence deducible in urging the equitable claims of the United States.—

The 1, 2, 3, 4, 11 and 17th sections of the act interdicting our commercial intercourse with Great Britain and France will, in that view claim your attention, and especially the 11th section, authorizing the Executive to renew our commerce with the nation withdrawing the operation of its illegal edicts. And you will be careful to let it be understood that the authority thus vested, will, of course, be exercised in the event stated in the law."

—

General Armstrong to Count Champagny.

"PARIS, 29th April, 1809.

"The undersigned, minister plenipotentiary of the United States, has the honor of presenting to his excellency the minister of exterior relations, the enclosed copy of a law recently passed by the legislature of the Union.

"This law, as may be seen by the several provisions of it, has been forced upon them by the extraordinary circumstances of the times, and is to be regarded as an act of precaution, taken with the view only of protecting their own property and rights, and of once more appealing to the interest and justice of those who would disturb or destroy them.

"Your excellency may be assured, that as nothing has given more disquietude to the U. States than the necessity which has compelled them to the adoption of this measure, so nothing will give them more satisfaction, than to see that necessity cease. It is in the spirit and sincerity of this declaration, that the undersigned is instructed to add, that any interpretation of the Imperial decrees of the twenty-first of Nov. 1806, and seventeenth of Dec. 1807, which shall have the effect of leaving unimpaired the maritime rights of the Union, will be instantaneously followed by a revocation of the present act, and a re-establishment of the ordinary commercial intercourse between the two countries.

"I offer to your excellency, &c. &c.

(Signed)

JOHN ARMSTRONG.

"*His excellency Count Champagny.*"

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Extract of a letter from the Secretary of State to William Pinkney, Esq. Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States in London, dated Department of State, March 15, 1809.

"The proceedings of Congress at their late session, combined with the Executive communication, affording as they do, additional proofs of the pacific disposition of this government and of its strict observance of whatever the laws of neutrality require, you will not fail to avail yourself of the just arguments thence deducible in urging the equitable claims of the United States. The 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, 11th and 17th sections of the act interdicting our commercial intercourse with Great Britain and France, will, in that view, claim your attention, and especially the eleventh section, authorising the Executive to renew our commerce with the nation withdrawing the operation of its illegal edicts. And you will be careful to let it be understood, that the authority thus vested, will of course be exercised in the event stated in the laws."

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Extract of a letter from Mr. Pinkney, Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States, at London, to Mr. Smith, Secretary of State, dated

LONDON, May 1, 1809.

"Upon receipt of your letter of the 15th of March, it became my obvious duty to ask a conference with Mr. Canning. It took place accordingly on Monday the 17th of April.

"With a view to do justice to the character and tendency of the law of the first of March, I called the attention of Mr. Canning in a particular manner to the 11th section, which provides for the renewal of commercial intercourse with the power revoking or so modying its edicts as they should cease to violate the neutral commerce of the United States; and in obedience to my instructions I assured him that the authority vested in the President to proclaim such revocation or modification, would not fail to be exercised as the case occurred."

"I entered into a minute explanation of the law of the first of March, and in the course of it availed myself of every inducement of interest which it could be supposed to furnish to this government to retract its orders in council, and of the proofs with which it abounds of the sincere desire of the American government to cultivate peace and friendship with Great Britain, even while it was repelling what is deemed encroachments and injuries, the most pernicious and alarming."

—

Treasury Department, Feb. 15, 1810.

SIR,

I have the honor to enclose a statement transmitted by the Collector of Boston, in relation to the ship Arno, which entered Tonningen with a forged sea-letter.

Exclusively of the cases respecting forged marine papers which have from time to time been communicated by the Department of State, one only has come to the knowledge of the Treasury, the particulars of which are explained by the enclosed letter from the Collector of New-York, and the papers accompanying the same.

I have the honor to be, &c.

ALBERT GALLATIN.

The President of the United States.

The above documents, and others, accompanying the message, were ordered to be printed.

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FROM THE LONG-ISLAND STAR.

MR. KIRK,

On a perusal of the "*London Methodist Magazine*," of July last, my attention was drawn to the following article, which I send you with a request, that you will give it a place in your paper, for the benefit of my fellow citizens, who may be afflicted with that complaint; the *Epileptic Fits*, which I understand is very prevalent at this time; the remedy being simple, (I know it can do no injury, if it does not have the desired effect) I recommend to my fellow citizens to make trial of it.

A SUBSCRIBER.

"About thirty years ago, Mr. Floyd, who had been educated in the Medical and Surgical line, and was then an Itinerant Preacher, was stationed in Bristol. Breakfasting one morning at Miss Chapman's he related to us the following story of a pious young man in the North of Ireland, which happened whilst Mr. Floyd, was in those parts. The young man was afflicted with *epileptic fits*, and found no relief from the means used.—One night he dreamed, that a person bade him go to a bridge about a mile from his dwelling, gather some herbs, which he would find growing at the side, pound them, and take a table spoonful of the juice, fasting for nine or ten mornings, and it would remove his fits. This dream was repeated more than once, and made such an impression on his mind, that he believed it to be sent of God. Therefore he rose and went, found the herbs, used them as he was directed, and was cured. The herb was that which we call, *Pellitory of the Wall*, and grows abundantly in dry places, in and near old walls. Mr. Floyd added, that he had mentioned this to a friend at Bristol, whose daughter was afflicted with violent fits of an *hysteric kind*, and she had been benefited by the use of the herb. At that time I had in part the care of a young person who had *epileptic fits*, and I immediately tried the remedy, which was happily successful; nor did the fits return. 'I am, Sir,

'Respectfully yours,

"E. M. B."

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By the returns made to the Adjutant General's office it appears that the number of the Militia of this commonwealth, is at present *forty thousand four hundred and seventy two.*

Kentucky pap.

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We learn, that the Baltic had been frozen up, but that it was open again. The Swedish ports were shut to the British Flag. *Mercantile Adver.*