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RELATIONS WITH G. BRITAIN.

We hope the length of the following article will not deter our readers from perusing it with that attention which its intimate connection with our present situation is calculated to excite. Stripping it of the inadmissible doctrine which the writer advances, apparently more with a view to his own consistency as its only supporter hitherto, than from any connection which it has with the present question; Mr. Cobbett's remarks present us with a forcible, and in many respects a very correct view of what has been and what ought to have been the policy of G. Britain towards this country. It will be seen that he completely justifies the Executive in the ground taken (though not at that time known to him) in relation to the blockade of May, 1806, which he declares to be the foundation and origin of the new system of blockade—whether distinguished by the name of blockades, decrees, or orders in council—which has harrassed our commerce and outraged the law of nations for the last five years. He does not entertain a doubt that the declaration of the French minister was to be viewed as an official anunciation of an act of his government—and supports his reasoning on this head by an apt allusion to a case in point, recently occurring between the British and French governments, in which the British government without hesitation offers to consider an official declaration by the French government in the light of an actual performance of the act declared or promised to be done. The inference is correctly and unanswerably deduced, that the British blockading system should have ceased, if not before, at least in the same manner as the French, immediately on the receipt by the British government of the note of the Duc de Cadore to Gen. Armstrong in August last; and that the refusal to relinquish it was a contradiction of all the declarations of his majesty and his majesty's ministers of their readiness to abandon the system whenever an opportunity should offer itself. The letter of the Marquis Wellesley on this subject he proves to be a mere evasion, a quibble unworthy a statesman or a great nation, and thus takes the ground from under those in our public print and on the floor of Congress who have bottomed an accusation against our Executive on the supposition that the declaration of the British minister in relation to the orders in council was of the same character with that of the French minister of foreign affairs in relation to the Berlin and Milan decrees: If any man has till now doubted the disposition of the British government, in defiance of justice or policy, to adhere to its vexatious and illegal orders, disregarding even that haughty consistency in error that nation has hereby affected to maintain, let him read this article and doubt no longer. It is entitled to the more attention as drawn from a source which no man ever suspected of partiality to America; as the production of a man, who, in whatever situation he has been placed, has invariably manifested the utmost contempt for our republican institutions, and laboured unceasingly to degrade them in the eyes of the world. When such a man takes the side of American right, a blush of shame should tinge the cheeks of those among us who have so heartily espoused the other side of the question

FROM COBBETT'S POLITICAL REGISTER.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

AMERICAN STATES.—Heavy as are the blows, which commerce has lately received, a blow greater than any of the rest seems now to await her. The dispute with the American States, relative to our restrictions upon their maritime trade, is of so long standing, and has been rendered so confused by the prodigious volumes, which the lawyer-like statesmen, on both sides of the water, have piled together upon the subject, that in order to render the matter intelligible to my readers, and to furnish them with the means of coming to a just decision thereon, I think it necessary to go back to the origin of the dispute, to trace it down to the present time, and to subjoin to these my statements and observations all the authentic documents necessary to be referred to. The public have seen the Proclamation of Mr. MADISON, the President of the American States, whence they will have perceived, that, unless we remove certain of our *Orders in Council* (which indeed, are now in part become *laws*) all intercourse between this country & the States of America will be interdicted after the 2d of February next, while the commercial communication between France and those States will be open, but will still be opposed to our obstruction.—The question for us to decide upon, is, whether the Orders of Council, of which America complains, *ought now to be revoked by us*. This is the question; and, as there is no time to be lost in deciding upon it, as the dispute is now come to a crisis, as there appears now to be nothing left but an immediate choice between *accommodation* and *hostility*, a decision is pressed upon us by considerations of interest as well as of honor. The dispute originated in certain restrictions, imposed by us upon neutral commerce, contained in regulations of *blockade*; which regulations the Emperor of France answered by others of similar or more violent sort. These drew other regulations from us. These produced others from him. We rejoined in the same sort of way. Both sides told the neutrals (or rather, the *neutral*, America, being the only nation really in that state) that, *as long as she submitted to the regulations of the one party, she must expect to be obliged to submit to those of the other party.*—We will now see what those regulations, or restrictions were. The first measure of this sort was adopted by England, and described in the subequent papers, No. 1 (I have numbered them for the purpose of easy reference) which is a letter from Mr. Fox, 8th April, 1806, to Mr. MUNROE, then American Minister in England. In this letter it is stated, that the *king of Prussia* having taken possession of various parts of the *electorate of Hanover*, and other dominions belonging to his Majesty, in a forcible and hostile manner, and having done other things injurious to English commerce in violation of the just rights of his Majesty, and contrary to the established law and practice of nations in amity with each other; that *for this cause*, His Majesty had ordered a blockade of the entrances of the Ems, the Weser, the Elbe, and the Trave; and that all neutrals would be treated accordingly, if they attempted to enter those rivers. Thus these restrictions began, then, in a measure for which the conduct of the *king of Prussia* towards his majesty's *German* dominions was the ground.—From Nos. 2 and 3, being letters from Mr. Fox and Lord Howick to Mr. MUNROE, dated 16th May, and 25th September, 1806, it will appear that these restrictions were modified; but Napoleon having conquered Prussia, or, at least, having overrun it, and taken possession of it, in the following month of November, he issued from BERLIN, the Decree, No. 4, in which Decree he declared the British Islands in a state of blockade; he declared that all commerce with them was interdicted; that every thing belonging to English subjects should be confiscated; that no vessels (including Americans, of course) coming from England or her colonies should be admitted into any port and that all vessels contravening, or attempting to contravene this decree, should be confiscated. Such was the famous *Berlin decree*, which, when the intelligence of its being issued reached England, drew forth the *first* of the measures of our government, which have become equally famous, under the name of the ORDERS IN COUNCIL.

It was dated on the 7th of Jan. 1807, and it set forth, that in consequence of the violation of the rights of nations committed by Napoleon, and expressed in Orders, as given in the city of Berlin Decree, England would be justified in going much further, but that she contented herself with ordering that no vessel should be permitted to trade from one port to another, both which should belong to, or be in possession of Napoleon or his allies, or should be so far under their controul as that British vessels might not trade freely thereat; and that neutral vessels attempting to act contrary to this order, after being duly warned not to do it, should be captured, brought in and considered as lawful prize. In this state things continued during the remainder of the time that the late ministry remained in power. But, after their successors, took the reins of government, more rigorous measures were adopted; and, under the date of the 11th and 25th of November, 1807, nine orders of council were issued, laying new restrictions upon the commerce of neutrals with the ports of France and countries depending upon, or under the influence of France. Indeed, these orders put an end to all neutral commerce, except by *licence* from England. By way of retaliation for these new and additional restrictions, Napoleon issued, from MILAN, dated 17th December, 1807, the decree known by the name of the *Milan decree*, and, as our orders had declared, that they should be continued in force *till the Berlin decree was revoked;* so this decree from Milan declares, that its restrictions and penalties should remain in force, *till the orders in council should be revoked.* Both the hostile nations made an appeal to America (for she was the *only neutral fact*) in this way; each said to her, it is your fault for suffering our enemy to enforce such restrictions; it is for *you* to compel our enemy to respect your flag, and, *until you do that*, I will enforce against you, my measure of retaliation which I do, not in hostility towards you, but as my only means of self defence against the tyrannical measures of my enemy. America, as was very natural in her situation, complained of *both*.—She talked of *war*, to which she, however, had always a hearty dislike; and, after having tried negociation in vain, she fell upon this expedient. She protested against the grounds of justification taken by both parties; she declared that both had violated her rights; but she at last, determined to submit, for the present, while she endeavoured to prevail upon one party or the other to give way first, and to revoke their Orders or Decrees. After long and fruitless efforts in this way, she passed, on the 1st of May, 1810, an Act, which she expected would have the effect desired. In this act it was provided, that, if either Great Britain or France should, before the 31st of March, 1811, so revoke or modify her edicts, that they should cease to violate the neutral commerce of America, the *fact* should be declared by the President by proclamation, and that, then if the other nation should not, in three months from that time, revoke or modify her edicts in *like manner* the NON-INTERCOURSE ACT should be *revived against that nation.* Thus things stood previously to the 5th of August, 1810, on which day the French minister for foreign affairs communicated officially to MR. ARMSTRONG the American minister at PARIS, that the decrees of *Berlin and Milan were revoked*, and that, *from the 1st of November*, 1810, *they would cease to be in force*, it being understood, that in consequence of this revocation, the English, should *revoke their orders in council, and renounce the new principles of blockade which they had attempted to establish.* Mr. ARMSTRONG having communicated this notification to Mr. PINKNEY, the American minister at London, the latter wrote on the 25th of August last to lord WELLESLEY, our Secretary of State for foreign affairs informing him of what had been done in France, and, at the same time observed, that he took it for granted, that the revocation of the British Orders in Council would follow as a matter of course, and that he hoped to be enabled to announce to his government, that such revocation had taken place, Lord WELLESLEY answered, that whenever the repeal of the French decrees should have actually taken effect and the commerce of neutral nations should have been *restored to the condition in which it stood previous to the promulgation of those decrees*, the king would have the highest satisfaction in relinquishing a system, which the conduct of the enemy had compelled him to adopt. This answer does not appear to have been relished much in America. It has a *reservation* in it, which does not seem to promise a full and unequivocal revocation on our part, even when the revocation of the French decrees shall have actually *taken place;* and we know, that a revocation did not take place in England. The French notification having been communicated to MR. MADISON, the President of the American states, he issued his proclamation, agreeably to the above mentioned act of Congress passed on the first of May, 1810, which proclamation, together with the circular letter of the Secretary of the American Treasury, have just been received, and they form the last document in the series which I now insert. In consequence of the revocation of the French decrees, and of the notification thereof in America, several ships have sailed from America for France, and have met (at least, so it is said) with the same treatment as they would have met with if those decrees had never been passed; in short, that they have been received as neutrals, carrying on a lawful commerce; have unladen their cargoes, and have sailed away unmolested in any manner whatever. Others of them are said, in our public papers to have been captured by our cruiziers, and brought in for condemnation, and that they now *await their fate*, the admiralty judge, SIR WILLIAM SCOTT, having suspended a decision on them. Thus then, when we have read the subjoined documents, we have the case fairly before us; for, though there have been other orders in council, modifying, or in some respects altering the orders, here inserted, still, if the latter had never existed, those which are here inserted would have produced the dispute in its present shape. We need not now agitate the question whether the making of our orders in council was just or unjust, expedient or inexpedient;—they were made, they have been enforced to this day, and the question for us now to decide upon, is, *whether they ought now to be revoked?* My opinion is *that they ought to be revoked*, and, indeed, that they ought to have been revoked in *August last*, upon the notification of the revocation of the Berlin and Milan decrees having been made to our government. The *reasons* upon which this opinion is founded, I will now state in as short and clear a manner as I am able, just observing first, that I am viewing the matter as a matter of *justice*; as a thing wholly depending upon *particular compact*, and not at all as a matter of *policy* or of *general principle*. I always thought the orders in council just and wise also, *as far as they went.* They did not go so far as I would have extended them; nor were they bottomed in a true and sound principle, the principle that SELDEN justified with the pen and that CROMWELL proclaimed from the cannon's mouth; that principle, which, when England can no longer maintain, and openly act upon, she may as well at once surrender her fleets and her dock yards into the hands of Napoleon. But the question now before us is altogether of a different nature. It arises out of a particular compact or agreement, which, though not embodied into a single instrument, with the appendages of dates, signatures and seals, is, and ought to be, as binding as any treaty made, like that lately made with the Prince Regent of Portugal, "in the name of the most holy and undivided Trinity." How then stands the case? We make certain maritime regulations which induce Napoleon to issue the *Berlin decree.*——This decree brings forth our *orders in council.*——These produce the *Milan decree.*——America complains of us both. Neither of us, the belligerent parties, attempt to stand by what we have done as acts just in *themselves.* We both expressly declare them to be acts of *retaliation;* and both declare, upon every occasion that presents itself, that as soon as America shall have prevailed upon our opponent to revoke his regulations, we will revoke ours. Each party said to America: by submitting to the decrees or orders of my enemy, you injure me: and I must, therefore, in self-defence make you submit to similar decrees or orders, which I shall impose.——But each declared, that, whenever the other party should revoke his decrees or orders, he would instantly revoke his.—Well, then, there appeared nothing wanting to accomplish the wishes of America but a *beginning* in this work of revocation. That it never could begin, unless one of the belligerent parties took the lead, was certain.——This, at last, Napoleon (who is obstinate only when his interest requires it) did, and apparently, without any reluctance, as we have seen in the letter of the French minister of foreign affairs to Mr. Armstrong. In that letter, an OFFICIAL INSTRUMENT, it is declared, that the decrees of Berlin and Milan "*are revoked*" and that they are to cease to have effect on the first day of November.—Now, when this was communicated to our government, as we see it was, on the 25th of August last, by the American minister here, in an OFFICIAL INSTRUMENT, why were not our orders in council, our *retaliatory* orders in council; why were they not also revoked in the *same way;* that is to say, why were they not *declared to be revoked*, and that they should cease to have effect on that first of November last? The orders were from first to last, declared to be acts of *retaliation;* they express the *regret* of the king of England at being obliged to adopt measures so injurious to the commerce of neutrals; they clearly convey the idea, that they are to continue in force no longer than the decrees of the enemy, whence they have arisen; and, our minister in America, in Feb. 1808, declared to the American government, "his majesty's *earnest desire* to see the commerce of the world restored to that freedom, which is necessary for its prosperity, and his *readiness* to abandon the system which had been *forced* upon him, whenever the enemy *should retract the principles which had rendered it necessary.*" If these words had any meaning at all, they meant, that our orders in council would be revoked whenever the French should revoke their decrees; for, in what *other way* were they to make a *retraction of their principles?* Indeed, no other sense can possibly be attributed to this declaration of our minister in America; unless it be pretended, that the king of England meant that France should make an express and formal confession of her having acted upon unjust and erroneous principles; and, I think there is no man, with any pretensions to fairness, who will attempt to support an opinion, that the words of our minister were either taken, or meant, in such a sense. If, then, the reader be of opinion, as I think, he must that the letter of the French minister for foreign affairs to Mr. Armstrong, fairly amounted to a *retraction of the principles* complained of by us, he will, of course, ask for the reasons why his majesty's *earnest desire* to see the commerce of the world restored to freedom and his *readiness* to abandon the system *forced* upon him, did not produce the effects which were naturally to be expected from them: or, in other words, what could now be the *reason* for not following *immediately* the example of the French in revoking the orders in council. Instead, however, of an immediate revocation, upon receiving from the American minister here, an official notification of the revocation of the French decrees, our minister for foreign affairs, Lord Wellesley, answers, "that whenever the repeal, of the French decrees shall have *actually taken place*, and the commerce of neutral nations shall have been *restored to the condition in which it stood previously to the promulgation of those decrees*," then the king will relinquish his present system. What, let me ask, was meant by the revocation having *actually taken place?* Had it not actually, that is to to say, *really*, taken place? The French minister says, "the decrees *are revoked.*" What was he to say more? In what way was an *actual* revocation to take place, if not in this way? And how was the fact to be communicated to us, except in the way in which it was communicated; that is to say, officially through the American minister, to whom or to whose government, the revocation would, of course, be announced by the government of France? Really, I cannot, for my part, form any notion of what we could require further or, of what could further be demanded as a proof that the revocation of the French decrees had *actually taken place.* Did Lord Wellesley mean, that we were to stop till the first day of Nov. in order to see whether the French would *act* upon the revocation, agreeably to their promise? If this was what was meant, how did it agree with the declaration about the king's *readiness* to renounce a system that had been *forced* upon him, and which he so *earnestly* desired to do away? For, if we refuse to *begin* our revocation, if we refuse to *declare* it, if we refused to declare it even conditionally, how was it to be expected, or hoped for that the French would act upon theirs at the day named in the notification of the French minister to Mr. Armstrong? What, in short, did such refusal or postponement amount to but this,—that though the French had officially announced to America the revocation of their decrees, to be acted upon on a certain day, yet, such was our opinion of the parties, that we must SEE it acted upon, before we would even DECLARE our revocation, to be acted upon at any time at all? If the reader thinks that this was what we could not reasonably expect any independent nation to hear with great complacency, that opinion will certainly be strengthened upon his being informed of the declaration of our minister in America to the American government in Feb. 1808, as laid before Congress in Nov. of that year. He, according to these documents, then "communicated the