

sequent examination, and after having acquired a knowledge of the comparatively harmless state of the prisoners, it may be but fair to consider, whether in such a moment of confusion and alarm, as that appears to have been, the officer commanding could have fairly estimated his danger, or have measured out with precision the extent and nature of the force necessary to guard against it.

But when the firing became general, as it afterwards appears to have done, and caught with electric rapidity from the square to the platforms, there is no plea nor shadow of excuse for it, except in the personal exasperation of the soldiery, nor for the more deliberate, and therefore more unjustifiable, firing which took place into three of the prisons, No. 1, 3, and 4, but more particularly into No. 3, after the prisoners had retired into them, and there was no longer any pretence of apprehensions as to their escape. Upon this ground, as you, sir, will perceive by the report, Mr. Larrent and myself had no difference of opinion, and I am fully persuaded that my regret was not greater than his in perceiving how needless would be the attempt to trace to any individuals of the military these outrageous proceedings.

As to whether the order to fire came from Captain Shortland, I yet confess myself unable to form any satisfactory opinion, though perhaps the bias of my mind is, that he did give such an order. But his anxiety and exertions to stop it after it had continued for some little time, are fully proved, and his general conduct previous to this occurrence, as far as we could with propriety enter into such details, appears to have been characterized with great fairness, and even kindness, in the relation in which he stood towards the prisoners.

On the subject of any complaints against their own government existing among the prisoners, it was invariably answered to several distinct questions put by me on that head, that none whatsoever existed or had been expressed by them, although they confessed themselves to entertain some animosity against Mr. Beasley, to whom they attributed their detention in this country; with what justice you, sir, will be better able to judge. They made no complaint whatsoever as to their provisions and general mode of living and treatment in the prison.

I have transmitted to Mr. Beasley a list of the killed and wounded on this melancholy occasion, with a request that he would forward it to the United States for the information of their friends at home, and I am pleased to have it in my power to say, that the wounded are for the most part doing well.

I have also enclosed to Mr. Beasley the notes taken by me of the evidence adduced before us, with a request that he would have them fairly copied, as also a copy of the depositions taken before the Coroner, and desired him to submit them to you when in order.

I cannot conclude, sir, without expressing my high sense of the impartiality and manly fairness with which this inquiry has been conducted on the part of Mr. Larrent, not without mentioning that every facility was afforded to us in its prosecution; as well by the military officers commanding here and at the prison, as by the magistrates in the vicinity.

I have the honor to be, with much respect, your most obedient humble servant.

(Signed) CHARLES KING.  
His Excellency J. Q. Adams, &c. &c.

LONDON, April 8, 1815

SIR—At the request of Lord Castlereagh, we have had interviews with him and Mr. Goulburn on the subject of the transportation of the American prisoners now in this country, to the United States, and of the late unfortunate event at Dartmoor.

On the first subject, we agreed to advise your acceptance of the proposition of Lord Castlereagh to transport the prisoners at the joint expense of the two countries, reserving the construction of the articles of the treaty, which provides for the mutual restoration of prisoners, for future adjustment. It was stated by us, and was so understood, that the joint expense, thus to be incurred, is to comprehend as well the requisite tonnage as the subsistence of the prisoners; and moreover that measures of precaution should be adopted relative to the health and comfort of the prisoners similar to those which had taken place in America.

The details of this arrangement, if you concur with us as to the expediency of making it, are left to you to settle with the proper British authority.

On the other subject, as a statement of the transaction has been received from the American prisoners, differing very materially in fact from that which had resulted from an inquiry instituted by the port admiral, it has been thought advisable [that some means should be devised of procuring information as to the real state of the case, in order on the one hand, to show that there had not been any wanton or improper sacrifice of the lives of American citizens, or, on the other, to enable the British government to punish their civil and military officers, if it should appear that they have resorted to measures of

extreme severity without necessity, or with too much precipitation.

Lord Castlereagh proposed that the enquiry should be a joint one, conducted by a commissioner selected by each government. And we have thought such an inquiry most likely to produce an impartial and satisfactory result.

We presume that you will have too much occupation on the first subject and the other incidental duties of your office, to attend to this enquiry in person. On that supposition we have stated to the British government that we would recommend to you the selection of Chas. King, Esq. as a fit person to conduct it in behalf of the American government. If Mr. King will undertake the business, he will forthwith proceed to Dartmoor, and in conjunction with the British commissioner, who may be appointed on the occasion, will examine the persons concerned, and such other evidence as may be thought necessary, and make a joint report on the facts of the case to John Q. Adams, Esq. Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States at this court and to the British government.

The mode of executing this service must be left to the discretion of Mr. King and his colleague. If they can agree upon a narrative of the facts after having heard the evidence, it will be better than reporting the whole mass of testimony in detail, which they may perhaps find it necessary to do, if they cannot come to such an agreement.

We are, sir, your obedient humble servants,

(Signed) H. CLAY,  
ALBERT GALLATIN

R. G. Beasley, Esq. &c. &c.

LONDON, April 30, 1815.

SIR—In my letter of the 19th inst. I informed you of the measures which had been adopted here in consequence of the late unfortunate event at Dartmoor Prison.

I have now the honor to transmit the copy of a letter addressed to me by Mr. Clay and Mr. Gallatin, relative to that occurrence, and to the transportation of the American prisoners in this country to the United States.

In the absence of Mr. Adams it becomes my duty to communicate for the information of our government, the result of the investigation at Dartmoor. I inclose a copy of the joint report of the Commissioners appointed for that purpose, also of a letter from Mr. King to Mr. Adams, and of a list of the killed and wounded on that melancholy occasion.

I shall leave to Mr. Adams any further steps which he may deem it proper to take in this business. I cannot, however, forbear to notice the erroneous impression of the prisoners, that their detention so long has been owing to me. You are aware, sir, of my constant exertions during the war to effect their liberation. Immediately on the signing of the treaty of peace at Ghent, I renewed my instances on that subject; proposing as a condition, that all the prisoners who might be delivered over to me by the British government, should be considered as prisoners of war, and not at liberty to serve until regularly exchanged, in the event of the treaty not being ratified by the President. This proposition was declined and in a peremptory manner.

On the receipt of the intelligence of the ratification from America, I lost not a moment in requesting the release of the prisoners, according to the terms of the treaty, and the number of vessels which I had hired, as mentioned in my letter of the 13th, and which are now on their voyage to the U. States, will shew that the necessary steps were taken to provide for their immediate transportation to their country. The prisoners, also, were informed of these measures, and of the exertions which had been made, from the commencement to return them to their homes with the least possible delay. Therefore, whatever may have been their uneasiness under confinement, and whatever hostile feelings they may have had towards me, as noticed in the reports, in Mr. King's letter, I must say with confidence, that I could not prevent the one nor have I deserved the other.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

R. G. BEASLEY.

The honorable John Mason, &c. &c. &c.

From Cobbett's Weekly Register.

TO THE EARL OF LIVERPOOL.

On the Naval Force of the United States of America.

MY LORD—From the beginning, and before the beginning of the late war with America, I thought it my duty to warn you, that one of the consequences of that war would be the creating of a great naval force in that country. I endeavored to describe to you the immense means of America for such a purpose. Her fine rivers, bays, and harbors; her excellent ship builders; her hemp, iron, pitch and timber, all of her own produce, and, above all, her matchless seamen. Of the truth of this account you and your colleagues must, by this time, be pretty well convinced; but I cannot help quoting, and addressing to you a paragraph, from the Times newspaper of the 16th inst. in the following words: Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, dated the 17th of March

Congress have at length determined to have a navy; a bill has passed the Legislature appointing a navy board.—Commodores Hull, Bainbridge, & Rodgers, it is expected will be appointed admirals, and put in commission. A very powerful force, under the command of Com. Bainbridge, is now fitting out for Algiers; it will consist of two new 74 gun ships, 5 frigates, and 10 sloops of war. If I am not mistaken, the Algerines will rue the day, when they provoked the vengeance of our tars. The Guerriere, under the command of Morgan, sailed from this port yesterday for New-York, where she is to be joined by the Constellation and Java frigates, from the Chesapeake, & the United States and Macedonian from Long Island Sound; three frigates, with six sloops of war from the first division against Algiers, and it is said that 2,000 of Brown's rifle veterans will go with the squadron. The whole nation is decided for a navy; the Pennsylvania, a 74 gun ship, will be launched at this place in the month of May. Large quantities of timber are daily brought down the Delaware & Schuylkill ship building. It is no more extraordinary than true, with what dispatch they build their ships of war in this country. The Peacock, of 18 guns, was built at New-York in 18 working days! The Wasb was built at Portsmouth, N. H. in twenty days! The Superior, Commodore Chaucey's flag ship, of 64 guns on Lake Ontario, took up only thirty days from the laying of her keel until she had all the guns on board, and was ready for a cruise. It is said congress intend to have the frames of the lake squadron removed to the Atlantic. Now what does your Lordship think of this? Do you think that it indicates any thing of that desire, of which you were pleased to speak some time ago, on the part of the American people to put themselves under the protection of His Majesty's Government! Or, do you begin to think with me, that it indicates the speedy appearance of an American fleet of 20 ships of the line and as many frigates on the ocean? Really, my lord, this is of far greater consequence to us, and to the world, than the erecting of Hanover & Holland into kingdoms. The "regular government" of Algiers will now find, I dare say, that it must change its course; but the American navy will not be employed solely against this very "regular government." It will, and it must make a figure in the world.—It must act a great part. Four years will swell it to a respectable size. Before the end of that time, if we have war with France, I predict, that we shall see an American fleet of great force and carrying its "bits of striped bunting" across the Atlantic.

It is for you, my lord, who are a statesman and a prime minister, and for your bright colleague, who has recently returned from Vienna, it is for you and not for me, to say, precisely, what will be the consequence of this very important change in the naval power of the world; but, as it is a Yankee subject, I will venture to guess, that the friendship of Jonathan will soon begin to be courted by every nation who has either ships or commerce: and, that, even already, some of them have their eyes upon alliances to be formed with him, in order to deprive us of the power of exercising a mastership on the high seas. At present the main use that I would make of the above information is, to urge it on you as a reason for remaining at peace with France. I do not want to see an American newspaper to know what the people in that country will think of the threatened war in Europe. I know they will not have patience to read one single article in the Times Newspaper, without throwing it down and crying out for more ships to be built and manned. The war ended in a way to provoke and at the same time to encourage them. The past, the future, resentment, glory: every thing will concur in favoring wishes for a new contest; and, though they build ships very quickly in peace, they would do it more quickly in war.

Some will say, that, seeing this danger, we ought, without delay, to fall upon Napoleon, and to destroy him, conquer France, and burn or capture all her fleet, before the Americans have time to build a large fleet. Yes, if you could be sure of doing all this in the course of this summer. But, if you should fail. Failure is possible. We may, indeed, do all that is wished; but, we may be obliged to come to a peace without doing any part of it; nay, we may, as in the war of 1793, draw the French armies out of France to over run our Allies. Louis le Desire ascribes the former successes of Napoleon to providence, who permitted him, for a while, to make conquests. But, as Providence has permitted him to come back to France, and even to put out the Bourbons, why may not Providence permit him, in case France is attacked, first to defend her, and then to sally forth in pursuit of her assailants?

If this should be the case, I think we may rely upon seeing the American admirals in our seas; and, therefore, this should come in as an item on our estimates of the consequences of war, if now made against France. With a stout American fleet at sea, our West India colonies, and the Azores, belonging to our ally, Portugal, would be in any thing but a satisfactory state. In

short, it would require fifty ships of the line, and fifty frigates to defend them all. The slave trade would soon be at an end; and the whole face of the naval and commercial world would be changed. The fleets of France would revive. Example, emulation, have powerful effect. I beg you to think well, and in time, of these things. I beg you to take your eyes for a little, from Hanover and Belgium, and to cast them on the other side of the Atlantic, where you will see what is much more dangerous to England than is the army of Napoleon, numerous and brave as that army may be.

I am, &c.  
WM. COBBETT.  
Botley, 17th May, 1815.

From Cobbett's Register—May 27.

AMERICA & ALGIERS.

As the war, which has now begun between the "Democratic Rulers" of America and the "Regular Government" of Algiers, may lead to important consequences, it is proper to insert here the grounds of this war, as far as we can come at them. We have American official accounts only. America has a tell-tale sort of government. It has no state secrets. It blabs out the proceedings in negotiations, while the negotiators are still assembled. Not so the Regular Government of Algiers, which is one of the "ancient and venerable institutions" which the Bostonian Noblesse so much admire; one of the "gems in the crown of ancient glory," of which Mr. Chateaubriand speaks so feelingly and so foolishly; one of the links in the chain of the "social system" which has recently been under the hammers of so many able artisans at Vienna. The Regular Government of Algiers does not make any pretences to war. It observes a dignified silence till it has actually begun and made some progress in the war! Till it has made a good haul of the enemy's ships, before he knows that he is looked upon as an enemy. This is the practice of the Regular Government; the "ancient and venerable institution" in Algiers. I shall now insert, first, an account of the grounds of war from the National Intelligencer, published at Washington; next the report of Congress upon the subject; and last, the Act of Congress declaring war against Algiers. For, the reader will observe, that in the Irregular government of America, war cannot be declared by the Chief Magistrate, without the consent of the people's real representatives. I reserve a few remarks to follow the documents.

[Here follow the report of the committee of which Mr. Gaston was chairman, &c. and the act of Congress on the subject of the Algerine war.]

There is one circumstance connected with this Algerine war, which I think worthy of particular notice; and that is, this Regular Government began, it appears, its depredations on the Americans, just as these latter were entering upon war with US! some of our modest and honest gentlemen; some of our most honorable men, have called America an assassin, because she made war against us, while we were at war with Napoleon. What will they say now of the venerable head of this African state? The same honorable worthies have said that because America went to war with us, while we had to fight Napoleon, she was the slave of Napoleon. But I hope they will not apply this reasoning to the present war between America and Algiers: I fervently hope, that no one will pretend, that because Algiers went to war with America, while America had to fight with us, Algiers was the slave of England! As to the result of the war, I have no doubt, that the Dey will not have to rejoice much at the success of his undertaking. A dry blow instead of millions of dollars is likely to be his portion. As an Englishman, I must wish that the Algerines may be beaten by those, who have, unfortunately, so often beaten my own countrymen. The Times newspaper has told us, that it is suspected, that the Algerine war is, with America, a PRETEXT for increasing her navy.—Indeed, Doctor; and, in what civilian have you discovered that America is restrained from augmenting her navy at her pleasure? What need has she of pretexts? I know, indeed, that amongst your other follies, you did, during last summer, insist upon it that in making peace with America, she should at last, be compelled to stipulate not to have any ships of war beyond a certain size and number. But the stipulation was not obtained; and now, instead of big words and menaces, you throw out your suspicions for the cogitations of the wise John Bull. Away driveller! and await a similar fate to your predictions as to the humiliation of France.

THE FIRE AT PETERSBURG.

From the Petersburg Intelligencer.

The gay, the flourishing town of Petersburg has been visited by a calamity, which for the suffering, the distress, the wretchedness it has caused, may be truly termed, if language have the power adequately to paint its horrors, unparalleled, overwhelming, dreadful! Great God! to think what an awful change a few short hours have produced! How happy, how cheerful, how gay, how animated, how joyous but a little while since—how wretched, how

gloomy, how desponding now! prosperous merchant or mechanic tent with his lot, pleased with his best gains, basking in plenty, and, lying in the smiles of friendship and joys of domestic bliss, idly indulging flattering anticipation, that some misfortune, long strangers to his lot, would never twice their folds around him, nor mix their with the happiness of life. So though vain, delusive fatal which destroys, levels with the those fairy edifices itself had made. Where now is that long line of ings, from which the busy multitude would issue, as bees from a hive, pursuit of their various avocations upon which their proud lords gaze, and triumphantly boast the id and substantial wealth—defying elements, in their worst fury, drive them off? Alas! the smoke which wafts their destruct the Heavens—the tumbling walls, heaps of ashes—the groups of wretched beings, houseless and wretched where they once have stood—a choly wreck!

Let these feelings be excused, spring from the heart! We too had our share of calamity—we too known what it was to be thrown the charity of our friends, with home to shelter us! Yet our was but a drop in the vast ocean row, whose troubled waves over and destroy, the fondest hopes, blight the fairest prospects of friends and fellow-townsmen.

Last Sunday night, about half nine o'clock, the cry of fire was in our streets; a volume of flame burst through the roof of a wooden building, in a cluster of houses, kitchens, stables, &c. same materials, between Bolling and Back-streets—communicatingly, the fire rose to an awful height and spread with the rapidity of lightning. Simultaneously bending in destructive fury north, east and west, the whole of Bollingbrook and the side of Back-street were entirely consumed, from the intersection of more to the lane below Mr. Davison's, which crosses from Bollingbrook to Back-street, and from to the late residence of Mrs. Manning. Having reached the head of Bollingbrook, it was hoped that the ing up of both the corner houses impeded its progress. This was effectually done; but so far smothering, it seemed to agitate the fury of the potent element. With renewed vigor, in spite of effort, the corner of the row of buildings on the west side of Sycamore and the head of Bollingbrook—one of which was occupied as the of the Petersburg Intelligencer, soon in a blaze. The new and elegant building of Mr. Francis Lynch caught, and in a few minutes the of the commercial part of Sycamore street from Bank to Old-street, presented one solid mass of fire! Effort was now made to prevent its king hold on Old-street. The two ner houses, on opposite sides, a front of Sycamore, were blown up their fragments levelled with the ground. But all would not do—seizing the ran parallel as far as the new brick ding of Mr. John B. Read, on the side, and the wooden tenement ex opposite, in the occupancy of Simpson. Here, with unparalleled ertion, it was at length got under; ing ragged with destructive fury nine hours and a half. About F HUNDRED HOUSES, principal stores and shops, are calculated to been destroyed—among them the Market House and Theatre. The loss property is estimated at THREE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS!

Many lives were lost; their bodies are to be seen among the ruins, but is not known who the sufferers were. Three persons are said to have been blown up in the explosion at the foot of Sycamore, one of them a young man by the name of Myers, late in the employment of Mr. Thomas Waller; two or three children were burnt to death in the lower part of Bollingbrook and the bleach burnt bones of one unfortunate victim were to be seen at back door of the tenement lately occupied as our office. Many more undoubtedly perished—for it was with utmost difficulty that a great number of the citizens, animated by a noble desire to save the property of their friends and neighbors, could be restrained from entering the houses even after matches had been fixed to blow them to atoms.

The citizens generally manifested disposition to save the town; but was confusion and dismay from the commencement. No one seemed willing to assume responsibility, or to take a leading part. Several Engines appeared upon the ground—but they as well have been suffered to remain in their houses. They were of no service. Their puny efforts resemble the pouring of a drop of water into lake of unquenchable fire!

Our distant readers may form some idea of the solemn horrors of the night when they are informed that the fire was distinctly seen in Richmond, 15 miles from Petersburg—and that many flakes were observed to ride on the wind at least ten miles from the town.