WASHINGTON CITY, Nov. 16.

On Friday last, we understand, the Secretary of the Navy laid before the Committe of the House of Representatives on aggressions, a detailed statement of the circumstances attending the outrage committed on the Chesapeake, together with those which occurred prior and subsequently to that event. To gratify the public solicitude on this important subject, we publish the following opinion of the Court of Inquiry and hope to be shortly enabled to submit to the public the other documents connected with this affair, which are said to be in the highest degree interesting.

At a Court of Enquiry assembled on board the United States Ship Chesapeake, in the harbor of Norfolk and State of Virginia, by order of the Hon. Robert Smith, Secretary of the Navy of the United States, and continued by adjournment from day to day from Monday the 5th day of October, 1807, *until Wednesday the 4th day of November,* 1807.

PRESENT,

CAPTAIN ALEXANDER MURRAY, *President*, and

Captains *Isaac Hull*, and *Isaac Chauncey* } Members thereof.

The following opinion and report was unanimously given and directed by the court to be transmitted to the Hon. the Secretary of the Navy of the U. States.

PURSUANT to an order from the Honorable Robert Smith, Secretary of the Navy of the United States, to Captain Alexander Murray directed, dated the twelfth day of September, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and seven, the court proceeded to enquire into the causes of the surrender of the Chesapeake, a frigate of the United States, then under the command of James Barron, Esquire, a captain of the navy of the United States, to a British vessel of war, which surrender was made (as is in the said order stated) without that defence being made which might have been expected from the known valor of Americans; and having heard all the evidence adduced, as well by the Judge Advocate, as by the said captain James Barron, and having maturely and thoroughly considered the same, (captain James Barron having declined to offer any defence) REPORT to the honorable the Secretary of the Navy of the United States, as by his said warrant is required, a state of the matters touching the said surrender, together with their OPINION thereon, as followeth:

1.—It appears to the court, that the United States ship Chesapeake, then under the command of James Barron, Esquire, a captain in the navy of the United States, sailed from Hampton Roads, on an intended cruize in the Mediterranean sea, on the morning of the 22d of June last past, having on board a crew consisting of more than three hundred and seventy men, and completely equipped with every thing necessary for such a ship of war, sailing on such a cruise.

2.—It appears to the court, that captain Barron was appointed commodore of the ships and vessels destined for the Mediterranean service on the 15th of May last past, and hoisted his broad pendent on board the Chesapeake, the first time he came on board of her after her arrival in Hampton Roads, to wit, on or about the 6th day of June last past.

3.—It appears to the court, that commodore Barron visited the Chesapeake only twice during the period she remained in Hampton roads, and before he came on board to proceed to sea; on neither of which occasions, did he examine particularly into her state and condition.

4.—It appears to the court, that the guns of the Chesapeake were never exercised before she proceeded to sea; that her crew were quartered but a few days previous to that time, and had never been called to quarters more than three times prior to her sailing for sea.

5.—It appears to the court, that the ship was reported to commodore Barron to be ready for sea on the 17th day of June, that he came on board on the 21st, and that the ship sailed on the morning of the 22d of June last past.

6.—It appears to the court, that antecedent to the sailing of the Chesapeake, there had been received on board of her some persons who had been claimed by the British government as deserters from their service, but who were not ordered to be delivered up by the American officers—That there was also a report in circulation, and generally known on board the Chesapeake, that a threat had been used by the captain of the British ship of war Melampus, to take these men from the Chesapeake—That commodore Barron had full knowledge of the facts that such men were on board his ship, that they had been demanded by the British government, and had not been delivered up, the court are perfectly satisfied; but no positive evidence has been adduced to prove, that the report of the threat above mentioned was communicated to him before his ship sailed.

7.—It appears to the court, that the Chesapeake in proceeding from Hampton Roads to sea, passed a British squadron at anchor in Lynhaven Bay, who at the time of her passing them were making signals to each other, which was not only reported to commodore Barron by one of his officers, but actually observed by himself.

8.—It appears to the court, that the British ship of war Leopard of fifty guns, one of the squadron then at anchor within the limits of the United States, weighed immediately after these signals were thrown out, and stood to sea.

9.—It does not appear to the court, that at this time there was any vessel in sight, or any other object to induce her to go to sea, but the Chessapeake.

10.—It appears to the court, that at the time the Leopard got under weigh, the wind was at south-south-west, and therefore fair for her to proceed to sea; but instead of availing herself of this to clear the land, she hauled by the wind, close round Cape Henry, and stood to the southward, under easy sail; thereby shewing that it was not her intention to get off the land speedily.

11.—It appears to the court, that after this the wind became light and baffling, and likely to shift, and came out from the eastward; that when this happened, the Leopard shortened sail, and stood to the eastward.

12.—It appears to the court, that after this the wind did come out from about south-south-east, and that the Leopard then having thus got the weather-guage, preserved it, by tacking in shore when the Chesapeake did so in order to get off her pilot, and after the Chesapeake again stood off to the eastward, the Leopard wore, and bore down for her.

13.—It appears to the court, that when the Leopard tacked and stood in shore, on the same tack with the Chesapeake, that her lower deck ports were all triced up.

14.—It appears to the court, that when the Leopard run down for the Chessapeake, she rounded to on her starboard quarter, and to windward of her and that at this time her tompions were out of her guns.

15.—It appears to the court, that commodore Barron was upon deck, observing the Leopard, during the time these manoeuvres were practising, and these appearances exhibited.

16.—The court is of opinion, that the circumstances above stated were in themselves so suspicious, as to have furnished sufficient warning to a prudent, discreet, and attentive officer, of the probable designs of a ship of war conducted in that way, and ought to have induced commodore Barron to have prepared his ship for action, especially with the information he possessed of the situation of his crew generally, of those who had been demanded by the British government particularly, and of the general state of the ship at that time.

17.—It appears to the court, that commodore Barron nevertheless did not order his ship to be cleared for action, and that he did not call his men to quarters.

18.—It appears to the court, that when the Leopard came along side of the Chesapeake, an officer was sent from her, with a communication from capt. Humphries, the captain of the Leopard, to commodere Barron, which the latter could not and did not misunderstand, but very correctly concluded to be a demand with which he ought not and could not comply, and one which, if refused, would be enforced if possible.

19.—It appears to the court, that although such was the situation and impression of commodore Barron at this time, yet that he did not still order his ship to be prepared for action, although ample time was allowed for that purpose, the British officer being detained on board the Chesapeake from 35 to 45 minutes.

20.—The court is of opinion, that the neglect of commodore Barron to prepare his ship for action under such circumstances, is a direct breach of the fourth article of the rules and regulations for the government of the Navy of the United States, adopted by an act of the Congress of the United States, passed on the 23d day of April, 1800, entitled "An act for the better government of the Navy of the United States."

21.—It appears to the court, that after the British officer left the Chesapeake, bearing a positive refusal from commodore Barron to the demand which had been made by capt. Humphries, and after commodore Barron, was himself satisfied that an attack upon his ship would be made, he did not take prompt, necessary and efficient means to prepare his ship for battle—That his first order was merely to clear his gun deck, and the second given after the lapse of some time, was to get his men to quarters secretly, without beat of drum; although with such a crew as he had on board, and in such a situation as the ship then was, it was not to be expected that such orders could be effectually accomplished.

22.—It appears to the court, that the conduct of commodore Barron during the attack of the Leopard manifested great indecision, and a disposition to negociate, rather than a determination bravely to defend his ship. That he repeatedly hailed the Leopard during her attack upon him.—That he drew his men from their guns to lowering down boats, to send on board of the attacking ship—and that he ordered his first lieutenant from his quarters during the attack, to carry a message on board of the Leopard, at that time firing upon him.

23.—It appear to the court, that during the attack, commodore Barron used language in the presence of his men calculated to dispirit his crew, by ordering them to keep down, that they would all be cut to pieces.

24.—It appears to the court, that commodore Barron ordered the colors of the Chesapeake to be struck, and, that they were struck, before a single gun of any kind was fired from her; and that at the time they were so struck, her main deck battery was in a situation which would have enabled the return of a broadside in a very short time.

26.—The court is therefore of opinion, that the Chesapeake was prematurely surrendered, at a time when she was nearly prepared for battle, and when the injuries sustained either on the ship or crew did not make such a surrender then necessary; and that for this commodore Barron falls under a part of the sixth article of the rules and regulations for the government of the navy of the United States, adopted by an act of the Congress of the United States, passed on the 23d day of April, 1800, entitled "An act for the better government of the navy of the United States."

26.—The court is of opinion, that although the conduct of commodore Barron, before and during the attack of the Leopard, evinced great inattention to his duty and want of decision, yet that during that attack he exposed his person, and did not manifest either by his orders or actions any personal fear, or want of courage.

27.—It appears to the Court, that although the Chesapeake might and ought to have been better defended than she was, yet that she was not in a situation at the time of the attack made upon her, to have enabled so gallant a defence being made as might be expected. Some of her guns were not securely fitted in their carriages, some of her spunges and wads were too large, but few of her powder horns were filled, her matches were not primed, some of her rammers were not in their proper places, her marines were neither supplied with enough cartrigdes, or were those which they had of the proper size. None of these circumstances however could have influenced Commodore Barron in striking his colors, because they were not known to him at the time.

28—The Court is of opinion, that the conduct of all the other officers of the ship, except those whose duty it was to have remedied the deficiencies before stated, and of the crew generally, was proper, commendable and honorable.

A true copy.

L. W. TAZEWELL,
JUDGE ADVOCATE.

DOCUMENTS

Accompanying the bill making further appropriations for the support of the navy of the United States, during the year 1807. *Presented the 5th of November,* 1807.

Committee Room,

SIR,

November 2d, 1807.

The committee of ways & means to whom was referred "an estimate of extraordinary expences incurred by the navy department, since the 22nd. day of June last, for the service of the year one thousand eight hundred and seven," have instructed me to request that you will furnish them with such information relative to this subject, as may be in possession of the navy department, and which you may deem material.

I have the honor to be,
With high respect,
Your most obedient,
G. W. CAMPBELL.

Honorable Robert Smith,
Secretary of the Navy.

Navy Department,
November 3d, 1807.

SIR

In answer to your letter of the 2d instant in which you ask for such information as may be in possession of the navy department and which may be deemed material by me, "relatively to the estimate of the expences incurred by the navy department, since the 22d June, 1807;" I have the honor to state, that under existing circumstances, it was deemed sound policy and good economy to procure in season a supply of those articles which, in the event of war, could not be procured without difficulty, and then at very advanced prices. Of the article salt-petre it was early determined to lay in a large supply, as we had none on hand, and but a scanty supply of powder. We have consequently purchased all that has been offered for sale at a reasonable price. For that stated in the estimate, we have given different prices, the lowest of which has been 16, the highest 18 cents per lb. For powder, cannon, cannon ball, copper, canvas and cordage, we have contracted at the ordinary market prices.

The President further determined to prepare all our gun-boats for actual service, and to encrease the marine corps from 500 non-commissioned officers, musicians and privates, (the number estimated for, for the service of the year 1807,) to 1044, the number authorized by law. Hence the expences incurred, as stated in the estimate, for arming, manning and provisioning our vessels, and for cloathing and pay, &c. of the marine corps.

On reviewing the estimate, which from necessity was hastily prepared, I discover an item which should not have been included. I mean 64000lb. of sheet iron, stated under the head of repairs of vessels, amounting to $ 9012 12. This item having been returned in the general statements, of contracts and purchases, made by the navy agents since the 22d June last, in pursuance of a circular addressed to them, was taken from these general statements and introduced into the estimate, without the object for which was intended having been adverted to. Upon examination I find that it was purchased under the appropriation law of the 7th January, 1807, and is intended to be used not in repairing of vessels, but in roofing buildings at the navy-yard. This item having been thus already provided by law, need not be included in the appropriation now to be made. Deducted from the estimate for repairs of vessels, it reduces that item from $ 151,896 73 to $ 142,884 61, and consequently the whole amount of the estimate will be $ 677,064 47, instead of $ 686,076 59, as first stated.

I have the hornor to be,
Respectfully, sir,
Your most obedient,
R. SMITH.

Hon. G. W. Campbell,
Chairman Committee Ways and Means.

The following ADDRESS was on Friday last presented to the President of the U. States:

To THOMAS JEFFERSON,
President of the United States.

We, the representatives of the Yearly Meeting of Friends, for the Western Shore of Maryland, the adjacent parts of Pennsylvania and Virginia, and the state of Ohio, being convened in the city of Baltimore, on those concerns which relate to our society, apprehend that we feel our minds engaged to address thee on behalf of ourselves, and the religious society which we represent.

Permit its to say, that whilst we desire to be preserved from intermeddling with the policy of those governments, under which we live; we believe it to be our indispensible duty, consistently with that Cristian obligation, in relation to governments, to "lead a quiet and peaceable life under them, in all godliness and honesty."

We feel gratitude to the Sovereign Ruler, of the Universe, in that he hath influenced the councils of the General Government of our country, to decide upon several important subjects agreeably to the principles of eternal justice and right.

Amongst the most prominent of those acts, which claim our approbation, we are induced to notice the evidences of thy efforts to preserve our country from the calamities and ravages of War, by cultivating a disposion, and pursuing a conduct marked with conciliation and friendship towards all nations whom we have intercourse; thereby avoiding those grounds of dissension, which are often the sources from whence this desolating scourage has its origin, to the reproach of Christianity. For, as we are firmly persuaded of its obligation as a *religious* principle, so it is our fervent desire, in regard to all men, that even the smallest germ of enmity may be eradicated. And our ardent prayer to the Father of the Universe is, that though the over-ruling order of his Providence, the hearts and understandings of his erring and contending creatures, may be illuminated, so to behold the excellency of brotherly affection, as to become willing to admit the spirit of universal reconciliation.

We are also bound to acknowledge those philanthropic exertions, which have been used to ameliorate the condition of the Indian natives, by introducing amongst them a knowledge of agriculture, and of some of the mechanic arts. We sincerely congratulate thee on their progress in civilization, and the very encouraging prospect, abundantly evinced, that this truly benevolent and laudable undertaking will ultimately be crowned with the desired success—an undertaking which, whilst it increasingly obviates the wretchedness of their former condition converts them from dangerous neighbors to valuable friends.

But there remains a subject, inexpressibly dear to our hearts, which has particularly interested our feelings. We rejoice in the prospect of a termination to the wrongs of Africa, and that a traffic, heretofore legalised in a district of our country, in its nature abhorrent to every just and tender sentiment, and reproachful to humanity, to say nothing of christian principles, is interdicted by our government. For the exertion of thy influence, united with the National Legislature, (may we not say,) to relieve our country, from the complicated evils attendant upon this cruel and inhuman trade, we are engaged, through this medium, to testify our warmest approbation.

And may the future Councils of our country, yield to the influence of Him who is called "WONDERFUL, COUNSELLER, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, THE PRINCE OF PEACE;" so that the exercise of additional acts of justice and mercy, towards this greatly oppressed part of the Human Family, may utterly remove the cries of oppression, from this highly favored land.

With sentiments of respect, due from us to those, who, in the ordering of divine Providence are set over us, we, are thy friends.

Signed on behalf of the Meeting.
By
GERARD T. HOPKINS,
CLERK.

To the foregoing Address, the President of the United States returned the following ANSWER.

Friends and Fellow-Citizens,

I thank you for the Address you have kindly presented me, on behalf of that portion of the society of friends, of which you are the representatives: and I learn with satisfaction their approbation of the principles which have influenced the councils of the general government, in their decisions on several important subjects confided to them.

The desire to preserve our country from the calamities and ravages of war, by cultivating a disposition and pursuing a conduct, concilliatory and friendly to all nations, has been sincerely entertained and faithfully followed: it was directed by the principles of humanity, the precepts of the gospel and the general wish of our country; and it was not to be doubted that the Society of friends, with whom it is a *religious* principle, would sanction it by their support.

The same philanthropic motives have directed the public endeavors to ameliorate the condition of the Indian natives, by introducing among them a knowledge of agriculture and some of the mechanic arts, by encouraging them to resort to these as more certain, and less laborious resources for subsistence, than the chase, and by withholding from them the pernicious supplies of ardent spirits. They are our brethren, our neighbours; they may be valuable friends, & troublesome enemies. Both duty & interest then enjoin, that we should extend to them the blessings of civilized life, and prepare their minds for becoming useful members of the American family. In this important work I owe to your society, an acknowledgement that we have felt the benefits of their zealous co-operation, and approved its judicious direction towards producing among those people habits of industry, comfortable subsistence, and civilized usages, as preparatory to religious instruction and the cultivation of letters.

Whatever may have been the circumstances which influenced our fore-fathers to permit the introduction of personal bondage into any part of these states, and to participate in the wrongs committed on an unoffending quarter of the globe, we may rejoice that such circumstanees, and such a sense of them, exist no longer. It is honorable to the nation at large that their legislature availed themselves of the first practicable moment for arresting the progress of this great moral and political error; and I sincerely pray with you, my friends, that all the members of the human family may, in the time prescribed by the Father of us all, find themselves securely established in the enjoyments of life liberty and happiness.

TH: JEFFERSON.

Nov. 13, 1807.

FRANKFORT, (Ken.) October 22.

The following communication, from Governor Harrison was received by the last mail.

The undersigned the goverver of the Indiana Territory and superintendant of Indian affairs, is happy to have it in his power to inform his fellow-citizens that their does not at present exist the smallest probabllity of an Indian war. Confidential agents whom he has employed to visit the several tribes have lately returned and brought with them the result of several meetings and councils held by the chiefs, in all of which it was unanimously determined to preserve their relations of peace and amity with the United States, even if a war between us and Great Britain should take place.

The few Indians upon the lakes who are under the British influence, are too contemptible in point of number and character as warriors, to undertake any hostile enterprise without the aid and concurrence of the Indians of the Wabish, who are decidedly for peace. The undersigned pledges himself for the peaceable disposition of the Delaware, Miami, Wea, Piankashaw and Kickapoo tribes.

WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON.

Vincennes, 13th October, 1807.

A letter received from Captain Felt, of Salem, dated at Palermo, mentions the massacre of 15,000 christians at Constantinople by the Turks.