

Correspondence between Adm. Cochrane and the Secretary of State.

Copy of a letter from Vice Admiral C. COCHRANE to Mr. MONROE.

*His Britannic Majesty's ship,
the Tonnant in the Patuxent Ri-
ver, 18th August, 1814*

SIR,

HAVING been called upon by the Governor General of the Canadas to aid him in carrying into effect the measures of retaliation against the inhabitants of the U. States, for the wanton destruction committed by their army in Upper Canada, it has become imperiously my duty, conformably with the nature of the Governor General's application, to issue to the naval force under my command, an order to destroy and lay waste such Towns and Districts upon the coast, as may be found assailable.

I had hoped that this contest would have terminated, without my being obliged to resort to severities which are contrary to the usage of civilized warfare, and as it has been with extreme reluctance and concern that I have found myself compelled to adopt this system of devastation, I shall be equally gratified if the conduct of the Executive of the U. States will authorise my staying such proceedings, by making reparation to the suffering inhabitants of Upper Canada; thereby manifesting that if the destructive measures pursued by their army were ever sanctioned, they will no longer be permitted by the Government.

I have the honour to be, sir,

With much consideration,

Your most ob^d. humble serv^t,

(Signed) ALEX. COCHRANE.

Vice Admiral and Commander in
Chief of H. B. Majesty's ships &
vessels upon the North American
Station.

*The Hon. JAMES MONROE,
Secretary of State, &c. &c. Washington.*

Copy of a letter from Mr. MONROE to
Sir ALEXANDER COCHRANE, Vice
Admiral, &c. &c.

Department of State, Sept. 6, 1814.

SIR,

I have had the honour to receive your letter of the 18th of August, stating that having been called on by the Governor General of the Canadas, to aid him in carrying into effect measures of retaliation against the inhabitants of the United States, for the wanton destruction committed by their army in Upper Canada, it has become your duty, conformably with the nature of the Governor General's application, to issue to the naval force under your command, an order to destroy and lay waste such towns and districts upon the coast as may be found assailable.

It is seen with the greatest surprise, that this system of devastation which has been practised by the British forces, so manifestly contrary to the usage of civilized warfare, is placed by you on the ground of retaliation. No sooner were the U. States compelled to resort to war against G. Britain, than they resolved to wage it in a manner most consonant to the principles of humanity, and to those friendly relations which it was desirable to preserve between the two nations, after the restoration of peace. They perceived however with the deepest regret that a spirit like just and humane was neither cherished nor acted

on by our government. Such an assertion would not be hazarded, if it was not supported by facts, the proof of which has perhaps already carried the same conviction to other nations that it has to the people of these States.—Without dwelling on the deplorable cruelties committed by the savages in the British ranks, and in British pay, on American prisoners at the River Raisin, which to day have never been disavowed or atoned, I refer, as more immediately connected with the subject of your letter, to the wanton desolation that was committed at Havre-de-Grace, & at George Town, early in the spring 1813. These villages were burnt and ravaged by the naval forces of G. Britain, to the ruin of their unarmed inhabitants, who saw with astonishment that they derived no protection to their property from the laws of war. During the same season, scenes of invasion and pillage, carried on under the same authority, were witnessed all along the waters of the Chesapeake, to an extent inflicting the most serious private distress, and under circumstances that justified the suspicion, that revenge and cupidity, rather than the manly motives that should dictate the hostility of a high minded foe, led to their perpetration. The late destruction of the houses of the government in this City is another act which comes necessarily into view. In the wars of modern Europe, no examples of the kind, even among nations the most hostile to each other, can be traced.—In the course of ten years past, the capitals of the principal powers of the continent of Europe have been conquered, and occupied alternately by the victorious armies of each other, and no instance of such wanton and unjustifiable destruction has been seen. We must go back to distant and barbarous ages to find a parallel for the acts of which I complain.

Altho' these acts of desolation invited, if they did not impose on the government the necessity of retaliation, yet in no instance has it been authorised.—The burning of the village of Newark in Upper Canada, posterior to the early outrages above enumerated, was not executed on that principle. The village of Newark adjoined Fort George, and its destruction was justified by the officer who ordered it, on the ground that it became necessary in the military operations there. The act, however, was disavowed by the government. The burning which took place at Long Point was unauthorised by the government, & the conduct of the officer subjected to the investigation of a military tribunal. For the burning at St. David's, committed by stragglers, the officer who commanded in that quarter was dismissed without a trial, for not preventing it.

I am commanded by the President distinctly to state, that it as little comports with any orders which have been issued to the military and naval commanders of the United States, as it does with the established and known humanity of the American nation, to pursue a system which it appears you have adopted. This government owes it to itself, to the principles which it has ever held sacred, to disavow, as justly chargeable to it, any such wanton, cruel, and unjustifiable warfare.

Whatever unauthorised irregularities may have been committed by any of its troops, it would have been ready, acting upon these principles of sacred & eter-

nal obligation, to disavow, and, as far as might be practicable, to repair. But in the plan of desolating warfare, which your letter so explicitly makes known, and which is attempted to be excused on a plea so utterly groundless, the President perceives a spirit of deep-rooted hostility, which, without the evidence of such facts, he could not have believed existed, or would have been carried to such an extremity.

For the reparation of injuries, of whatever nature they may be, not sanctioned by the law of nations, which the military or naval force of either power may have committed, against the other, this government will always be ready to enter into reciprocal arrangements. It is presumed that your government will neither expect nor propose any which are not reciprocal.

Should your government adhere to a system of desolation, so contrary to the views and practice of the U. States, so revolting to humanity, and repugnant to the sentiment and usages of the civilized world, whilst it will be seen with the deepest regret, it must and will be met with a determination and constancy becoming a free people, contending in a just cause for their essential rights, and their dearest interests.

I have the honour to be,

With great consideration, sir,

Your most ob^d. humble serv^t,

(Signed) JAMES MONROE.

Vice Adm. Sir Alex. Cochrane,
Commander in Chief of H. B.
M. ships and vessels, &c.

BRITISH OFFICIAL ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE AT ERIE.

Head Quarters, Montreal,
August 25 1814.

GENERAL ORDER

In promulgating to the troops an extract a district general order issued by Lieut. Gen. Drummond to the right division of this army, in consequence of the capture of two of the enemy's schra. co-operating in the defence of the enemy's position at Fort Erie, the commander of the forces avails himself of the opportunity it presents to acknowledge the high sense he entertains of the valuable services rendered to the right division by Captain Dobbs of the Royal Navy, and the officers and seamen of the vessels placed under command for that purpose, by Commodore Sir James Yeo.

This event, so nobly planned and so gallantly executed, was followed by a general attack of the enemy's Forts and intrenchments.

Lieut. General Drummond reports, that the spirit with which it was undertaken enabled our troops to surmount every obstacle. Fort Erie and the intrenchments were entered; the guns turned on the barrack block house, (the enemy's last refuge) when unfortunately a most violent explosion occurred on the battery: in its effect destroying & disabling many a valuable officer and soldier, and caused so considerable a consternation, as to induce the remaining troops to abandon the works, and all those advantages which they had gained by their determined conduct, and precipitately to retire to our first approach.

From other causes almost inseparable from night operations carried on in a close and difficult country, the right column failed in the object it had to accomplish.

With deep regret the commander of the forces records the loss his majesty's service has sustained on this occasion.

*Return of killed, wounded, and missing
of the right division, in the assault
of Fort Erie, on the 15th August,
1814.*

Killed—1 col. 1 lieut. col. 1 captain,
1 lieut. 1 sergeant, 1 drummer, 51 rank
and file.

Wounded—1 maj. 9 capt's. 11 lieut's.
2 ensigns, 1 master, 20 sergeants, 3
drummers, 262 rank and file.

Missing—2 captains, 3 lieutenants,
2 ensigns, 1 adjutant, 1 midshipman,
4 sergeants, 3 drummers, 486 rank &
file.

Total—1 col. 1 lieut. col. 1 major, 12
captains, 15 lieutenants, 4 ensigns, 1
adjutant, 1 master, 1 midshipman, 62
sergeants, 7 drummers, 799 rank and
file.

Officers killed—1st or Royal Scots,
Captain Torrens; 8th or King's Regt.
Lieut. Noel; 103d regt. Col. Scott;
104th regt. Lieut. Col. Drummond.

Officers wounded—Royal navy, capt.
Dobbs, and Lieut. Stevenson, slightly;
Mr. Harris, master, severely.

1st or Royal Scots, Captain Rowan,
severely; Lt. Vaughan slightly.

8th or Kings, lieut. Young, slightly.
41st Regt. flank companies, captains
Glew and Bullock, severely; Lieut.
Hailes, slightly; Ensign Townshend,
severely.

89th regt. captain Barney, acting as
assistant engineer, severely.

100th regt. Lieut. Murray, wounded
and prisoner; volunteer Fraser, se-
verely.

103d Regt. major Smelt and captain
Gardner, severely; captain Colclough
and lieut. Charlton, severely and pri-
soner; lieut. Fallon, severely; Lieut.
Cappage, jun. dangerously; lieutenant
Magher, slightly; Lieuts. Burrows,
Hazen, and Ensign Nash, severely.

104th, flank companies, Capt. Leon-
ard and Lt. M'Laughlin, severely.

OFFICERS MISSING—General Staff,
Capt. Elliott, dep'y. assist. qr. master
general.

Royal Navy, Mr. Hyde, midship-
man.

41st flank company, Lt. Gardner, and
Ensign Hall.

103d regt. captain Irwin, lieutenant
Kaye; ensign Huoy; lieut. and adjt.
Pettet.

(Signed) EDW. BAYNES,
Adj. Gen. North America.

CHARLESTON, (S. C.) SEPT. 13.

Never have we witnessed so numer-
ous and respectable a meeting of our
fellow citizens, as that held yesterday
forenoon in the Exchange. The Hall
was literally overflowing. To the true
friends of the country it was a delight-
ful sight. There were seen men of all
ranks and ages, acting with one voice
and with one mind; not for the purpose