

SHORT MEMOIR

Of the famous Grotius, an anecdote of which Lavalette's is a counterpart.

Hugo Grotius, or De Groot, was born at Delft, in Holland, in 1533. He was a person of incomparable genius, and without controversy one of the greatest men of his age. When but eight years old, he made Latin verses which would have been no discredit to the mature age of an accredited poet. When but fifteen he had acquired a very critical knowledge of philosophy, mathematics, and jurisprudence. At 24 he was made advocate general. In 1613 he settled at Rotterdam, and became Syndic of that city. At this time Holland was greatly agitated with the disputes of the remonstrants and contra remonstrants. Barneveldt, the intimate friend and patron of Grotius, declared in favor of the former, and Grotius by his writing and influence supported the party of his benefactors. This business ended in the ruin of Barneveldt, who lost his life. Grotius was involved in his fall, was condemned to perpetual imprisonment, and shut up in the castle of Louvestein.

His wife observing the chest in which was his linen, &c. passed and repassed from the prison, had ceased to be inspected by the guards, advised him to shut himself up in it, and endeavour to make his escape. Holes were bored in the chest to let in the air, and Grotius was locked up in it and carried, but unobserved, his wife remaining in his stead. He was carried in safety to a friend's house at Gorcum, where dressing himself like a mason, and taking a trowel and rule in his hand, he passed unnoticed through the market-place took a boat, and arriving safe at Velvet, in Brabant, he took carriage, and got thence to Antwerp. Some of the Judges were of opinion that the wife of Grotius should be kept in prison in his stead; but she was liberated by a majority of voices, and her conduct universally applauded. Grotius after this retired to France, where Louis XIII. gave him a pension of 1000 crowns per annum; but of this he was deprived by the influence of Cardinal de Richelieu in 1631. In 1634, he became councillor of Christiana, queen of Sweden, who sent him ambassador to France eleven years; and when he returned to Sweden to give an account of his mission, he was asked, and with great difficulty obtained his dismissal. On his return to his own country, whither he had been warmly invited, (his enemies being almost all dead) he was taken ill on the way, and died at Rostock, April 28, 1645. Grotius was a great lawyer, a great critic, great divine, and a good man. His numerous writings have immortalized him, especially his treatise on the Christian Religion, and his treatise on peace and war.

A letter from New Orleans, dated the 17th of July, states that sufficient returns of the late election in Louisiana have been received to ascertain that General Villere is the Governor elect.

In speaking of the late disturbances in England, the Liverpool Advertiser thus remarks: "We are concerned to learn that in addition to the disturbances in the eastern district of the kingdom, some dangerous tumults have lately broken out in the south west; chiefly in the seat of the superfine cloth manufactories. In that quarter the distress, we believe, has long been urgent, but as they have always been noted for their orderly habits, we had not expected any public disturbances. They have of course been quickly put down; for these unfortunate persons must know, and ought to be made sensible, that nothing is to be remedied by a violation of the laws, and that men never succeed who try by such means to redress their own grievances."

From the Spanish Maine

Capt. Bowers, of the schr. Bonna arrived at New York in 17 days from Porto Cavallo, states that Gen. Bolivar landed on the 5th of July, at Ocumares, a small port 15 miles to the windward of Porto Cavallo, with his patriot army amounting to 800 men, principally blacks from St. Domingo, and was on his march for Carraccas, when he was met by Gen. Morales at the head of the royal army, and after a most sanguinary battle, was completely cut up, and

nearly all his army destroyed. Bolivar made his escape, leaving behind him, in the hands of the enemy, all his baggage, camp equipage, &c. and succeeded in getting on board his fleet at Ocumares, with a few of his followers; but the commander of the fleet (Biron) refused to put to sea, being in want of provisions. The men were then turned on shore, except a sufficient number to man the fleet, and all massacred by a furious populace. The fleet then steered for the island of Buyenayres, with Gen. Bolivar on board.

The return from Elba.

That there was a plot actively carried on while Bonaparte was at Elba, though so often and so boldly denied, is evident from the proofs on the trial of Rigard, who himself employed not less than 27,000 francs, in douceurs, to a light infantry regiment—in entertaining the Poles—in secret expenses throughout the department—the expenses of printing—in keeping an officer at Paris to transmit orders to him on the part of Bonaparte from Lallmand and Lefebre—in employing another emissary at Chalons to act as a spy on the Duke of Belluno, &c. It is to be observed that all this occurred while Rigard was acting as Commandant of the department of La Marde, commission from the King.

[Lon. Pap. July 4]

Origin of the late King MURAT.

The unhappy termination of this unfortunate man, who was raised to a throne by Bonaparte, is well known. But his birth and family are in greater obscurity than most of the French generals who distinguished themselves in the reign of Napoleon.

The following anecdote which has been related by several writers, tends to throw some light upon his history. After his elevation to the rank of a prince of the French empire, he stopped at a small town in Germany, where he stayed for two or three days; and on finding the bread prepared for his table of an inferior kind, he dispatched one of his suite to order the best baker in town, to attend him, to receive from him his directions respecting this precious article of life. A baker who had been long established in that place was selected for this purpose; and upon the aid-de-camp ordering him to wait upon the Prince immediately, he observed, to the no little surprise of the officer, "it is useless my going, the prince will never employ me." Upon being pressed to state his reasons, he declined assigning any; but as the order of the messenger was preremptory he followed him, and was immediately admitted to Murat, with whom he stayed about ten minutes and then retired. As he quitted the house in which the Prince lodged, he observed to the aid-de-camp, "I told you the Prince would not employ me, he has dismissed me with this," displaying a purse of ducats.—Upon being again pressed to explain the reason of this singular conduct, he replied, "The Prince Murat, when a boy, was apprentice to a biscuit baker in south of France, at the time I was a journeyman to him, and I have often threshed him for being idle; the moment he saw me just now, he instantly remembered me, and without entering into the subject of our acquaintance, or of that which led me to his presence, he hastily took his purse of ducats from the drawer of the table where he sat, gave it to me and ordered me to retire."

Anecdote.

A lawyer, upon a circuit in Ireland, who was pleading the cause of an infant plaintiff, took the child up in his arms and presented it to the jury, suffused with tears. This had a great effect, until the opposite lawyer asked the child what made it cry! "He pinched me!" answered the little innocent. The whole court was convulsed with laughter.

From the Baltimore American of Aug. 20.

We have the great satisfaction of announcing that General Espozand Mina, uncle and successor in the command of Navarre during the late Spanish war, to Gen. Mina

the younger, who is at present in the United States, has been released by Louis the 18th; with his unfortunate companion Count Toreno.

[From the National Intelligencer, Aug. 21.]

STATE BANKS.

The convention of delegates from the Banks of New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, which lately met at Philadelphia, decided to postpone the resumption of specie payments until, at the earliest the 1st of July next. The decision was communicated, as stated in an extract from a Baltimore paper, published in this paper on the 16th inst. to the Secretary of the Treasury; but we understand, that the Secretary was far from approving it, or suggesting, that in the discharge of his official duties, he could acquiesce in the proposed arrangement. The decision is in manifest collision with the measures of the Legislature, for establishing the Bank of the United States, and for the collection of the revenue, in the lawful currency of the United States. Its effects may be seen from the expressions of a letter which he has addressed to the Bank Commissioners at Philadelphia; and of which the following is a copy.

Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury to the Bank Commissioners at Philadelphia.

Treasury Department, 15th August, 1816.

GENTLEMEN.—The information communicated to this Department renders it probable, that in the course of a few days, the sum of 8,400,000 dollars in gold and silver coin, and in the public debt, will have been actually received, on account of the subscriptions to the capital of the Bank of the United States, exclusively of the public subscriptions; and it will then be your duty, to notify a time and place within the city of Philadelphia, for the election of the directors, who are to be chosen by the stockholders.

As an incident, in the performance of this duty, it is presumed that you will deem it proper to provide a suitable building for commencing the business of the Bank at the place designated for holding the election; and conforming to the general nature of your trust you will no doubt, be disposed to make such other preparatory arrangements as will facilitate and accelerate the operations of the institution. It is, indeed, of high importance to the people, as well as to the government, that the Bank of the United States should be in an organized and active state, before the 20th of February next, when the paper of the State Banks, which have not returned to metallic payments, must be rejected in the collection of duties and taxes; and when such banks will, unavoidably, cease to be the depositaries of the public revenue.

In this view of the subject, I am authorized by the President to recommend that you cause to be prepared such books, engravings, and paper, as you shall deem necessary for the commencement of the business of the bank, as soon as the directors shall be chosen by the stockholders. If, however, an opportunity occurs, it will be proper to consult the directors who have been appointed by the government, although not members of your Board, upon the measures pursued, in consequence of this recommendation.

With the advantages of the proposed anticipation it is believed, that the Bank of the United States may be in operation before the first of January next; and a hope is still indulged, that the State Banks will either conform to that event or adopt the period contemplated by the Legislature (the 20th of February) for a general resumption of specie payments.

I have the honor to be, gentlemen, very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

A. J. DALLAS.

Louisiana Rivers.

The cataract of the Missouri, from every description, are next to those of Niagara, the most stupendous in the world. The descent in the distance of eighteen miles, according to the estimation of Lewis and Clerk is 362 feet nine inches.

- The first great pitch 98 feet
- second 16—
- third 47—8 inches
- fourth 26—

besides a number of smaller ones. The width of the river is about three hundred and fifty yards.

The whole extent of navigation of this river which has no other cataract or considerable impediment, from the point of Jefferson river, the largest of the three forks, to its entrance into the Mississippi, is three thousand and ninety six miles; no other tributary stream in the world possesses such a navigation.

RED RIVER.

It takes its source in the Cordilleras, at no great distance north of Santa Fe. It is navigable six or eight hundred miles, with scarcely any obstruction. There is at that point a curious raft, formed of logs and earth, which entirely covers its channel; trees are growing upon it, and one might pass over without perceiving the river. Red River runs in a valley on an average fifteen miles wide, for at least eight hundred miles which is every where intersected with boyoux, and large lakes. The navigation meets with the first impediment one hundred and fifty miles up. The falls or rapids are about two miles in length, the breadth of the river two hundred and fifty yards. They are occasioned by a soft rock of freestone. The great pitch in low water not being more than eight or nine inches. This river might with much more justice than the Mississippi, be called the American Nile. A country lies on its borders more extensive than Egypt, and of a soil the richest perhaps in the world. Its waters, which are not potable, are very red, impregnated with some mineral. The river is remarkably narrow; it seldom spreads to the width of two hundred and fifty yards, and is more generally contracted to one hundred; it is also exceedingly crooked. The annual swell, which is early in the spring of the year, raises the water fifty or sixty feet, when it flows with great rapidity; but during the summer and season of low water, it is sunk within deep and ragged clay banks, of an unsightly appearance, and has not more than eight or ten feet water. The outlets from this river are more numerous than even from the Mississippi, and joined by streams which flow from the uplands, or pine woods. The course of the river is constantly subject to change; many of the boyoux which at present appear inconsiderable, at no distant period constituted the bed of the principal river.

ANIMALS.

The Buffalo, may be said to have retired north of the Illinois, and west of the Mississippi. The plains of Indiana and Illinois, were once his place of favorite resort, and he loved to frequent the banks of the beautiful Ohio; but encroaching settlements have driven him away. His proper country appears to be the plains of Missouri; those of Indiana and Illinois, are miniatures of these. Here the Buffalo is found in immense herds; frequently covering the plain as far as the eye can reach. Some of these herds have been estimated at fifty thousand heads. In the dry season, they are found in the neighborhood of the great rivers, but there are also regular migrations of them from north to south, when they are seen passing the Missouri, for several days in succession, like the march of Xerxes' army.

The wool of the buffalo has a peculiar fineness, even surpassing that of the morino. I have seen gloves made of it, little inferior to silk. But for the difficulty of separating the hair it might become a very important article of commerce. Should any means be discovered of effecting this, or should it be found that at certain seasons, there is less of this mixture, the buffalo wool must become of prime importance in manufactures.

The Prairie dog or squirrel, is a great curiosity. It lives in burrows, or as they are called towns, and is about a third larger than the fox squirrel. The head is thick and clumsy, it has large jaws, full large eyes, but the ear is not prominent, consisting of little more than the orifice. The body is long, and legs short, the tail not much larger than that of a common ground squirrel, and very delicate; the hair short and sleek, of a light grey excepting on the belly where it is white. It is without doubt a species of squirrel, though it has a cloven lip like the rabbit. It makes a noise very similar to that of the ground squirrel, though much louder; and resembling in a slight degree the bar-