

THE
SPECTATOR

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF
NEWS, POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE.

VOLUME TWENTY-SECOND.

1849.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY JOSEPH CLAYTON, AT 9, WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND.

JULY 14, 1849 THE SPECTATOR

The Central Criminal Court was occupied during Thursday, Friday, and Saturday last week, in trying a misdemeanour under the Foreign Enlistment Act. Franco Maccagnone Granatelli, known as Prince Granatelli, Louis Scaglia, and John Moody, were indicted for unlawfully fitting out, in August last, the Bombay and Vectis steamers as ships of war, for the purpose of making war against the King of the Two Sicilies, the lawful sovereign of a friendly state. The indictment was preferred at the instance of Prince Castelcicala, Minister in this country of the King of the Two Sicilies: Sir Frederick Thesiger was chief counsel for the Crown, Sir Fitzroy Kelly for the defendants. The general nature of the criminal charge is known to our readers through the notes of it which appeared some weeks since in the police intelligence; the points of interest that came out last week were more of a political kind.

Colonel Aubrey was a leading witness: he was originally a Lieutenant in her Majesty's Thirty-first Foot; was then in the Royal Horse Guards (Blue), and served under the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsula; afterwards he entered the Spanish service, and obtained a Colonelcy. In September 1848, when at Pisa, he had a communication from the Revolutionary Government at Palermo, which led to his frequent presence at their councils of war. He received instructions to come to England, to enlist a body of men, and to fit out war-steamers, and officer them with English commanders. He received some money, and relied on a loan of 700,000*l.* from the French Government. He purchased the Bombay and Vectis of the Oriental Company, enlisted a body of men, and contracted for the fitting-up of the steamers, and the dress and accoutrements of 1,200 men. Lieutenant Waghorn was introduced to Prince Granatelli, and to M. Scaglia, as a dashing fellow who would go in and take twelve ships out of the eighteen of the Neapolitan fleet—though the other six could not be certainly answered for. "The Prince replied, "*Cela sera bon pour nous*" and rubbed his hands and appeared very delighted. The interview terminated by M. Scaglia saying that they would write to the Government at Palermo and recommend Lieutenant Waghorn; and they took down the address of that gentleman, in order that they might communicate "with him." In the end, Colonel Aubrey

found that money was not forthcoming; and, suspecting that he was going to be left in the lurch – “played rascally with” – he went over to the other party, “informed” about the expedition and was instrumental in getting the ships seized by the British Government under the Foreign Enlistment Act. After some fencing with counsel, he admitted that he was to receive 300*l* for these services.

Lord Palmerston testified, that no leave or licence had been granted by her Majesty, either by order in Council, sign-manual, or proclamation, to any persons to fit out vessels of war for the purpose of acting hostilely against the King of the Two Sicilies. This country was at peace with that country all last year, and still continues so. He knew Prince Granatelli and M. Scaglia; and had interviews with them at the Foreign Office and at his own house, in the character of organs of communication not officially received by her Majesty’s Government from the then existing *de facto* Government of Sicily.

Sir F. Thesiger – “By that expression, I take your Lordship to mean the representatives of persons exercising the powers of government at Palermo?”

Lord Palmerston—“Yes.”

In answer to Sir F. Kelly—“The defendants brought a letter to me from the Government they represented”.... “The defendants represented themselves as the agents of an independent existing Government at Palermo. The British Government had not acknowledged that Government as having an European existence; and therefore they were not received in that capacity, but merely as the organs of communication with a Government which was acknowledged as existing, but not as a recognized European power. That Government was hostile to the King of Sicily.”

Sir F. Kelly—“Was not the exact position of the defendants described in a despatch e from the Government of Palermo?”

Lord Palmerston—“It was.”

Sir F. Kelly—“Is not tills (bolding up a paper) the original document they brought to your Lordship?”

Lord Palmerston—"I believe that to be the original letter."

Sir F. Thesiger—"Where does It come from?"

Sir F. Kelly—"From the Foreign Office. Do you wish to have it read?" (*A laugh.*)

Sir F. Thesiger—"Certainly not." (*Renewed laughter.*)

Lord Palmerston then stated, that he believed the Government at Palermo declared.. itself independent early in 1848; that shortly afterwards nearly the whole of the kingdom was in the possession of the Insurgents, and the King was declared to be dethroned; but no hostile proceedings actually took place between the insurgents and) the kingdom of Naples until September.

Sir F. Thesiger—"I did not hear from the defendants that the members of the Provisional Government at Palermo had been taken away to Marseilles In the Vectis. The President was Ruggiero Settimo. I do not recollect the name of Lafarina being mentioned; but they told me that the Marquis Torrearsa was the Minister for Foreign Affairs. During the whole of this period, the Prince Castelcicala was the accredited Minister from Sicily to this country."

Prince Castelcicala, the Neapolitan Ambassador in London, gave some formal evidence as to his own Government and the insurrection; and stated that he had for some time had his eye on the movement of the promoters of the expedition. He wrote to Lord Palmerston about it; "but could not induce him or the Government to order the seizure of the vessel?" He therefore put the matter in the hands of his solicitors; and they took their own course, under proper advice. The prisoners were in no way connected with his Government. He had met them in Lord Palmerston's official residence. "Upon one occasion when I had an appointment with his Lordship, they were waiting in the ante-room. I have also seen them among the company at Lady Palmerston's soirées."

A number of witnesses deposed that the steamers were "fitted up" in every way as war-steamers.

Sir Fitzroy Kelly rested his defence much on a verbal criticism—the distinction between "fitting up" and "fitting out." A lady was "fitted up"

by having her ears bored, not "fitted out" till the earrings were actually in their ornamental situation: so here the vessel was "fitted up" perhaps, but no guns or other munitions were aboard; so she was not "fitted out," in the words of the forbidding law.

In summing up, Mr. Justice Coltman said, there was no doubt that the Neapolitan Government had as much right as any other Person under her Majesty's protection to adopt such proceedings as these. The Government of this country? might, if it had been so inclined, have put an end to the proceeding by entering a nolle-prosequi through its law-officers; but it had not done so; and it seemed to have been perfectly neutral, except, for some reason which did not appear, having ordered the discharge of the vessel after she had been seized by the Custom-house-officers. The indictment divided itself into three separate charges, —first, the enlisting of sailors; second, the enlisting of soldiers; and the third, which was the most material matter, was that of fitting out a ship or vessel with intent to employ it for warlike purposes against the King of Naples. A good deal had been said as to the intention of the act of Parliament; but if the Jury were satisfied that the vessel was fitted out for the purpose of committing hostilities, against the Neapolitans, and that the object was so far carried out as that by putting the armament on board she would have been ready to go into action, this would be quite sufficient. The offence certainly was no further immoral and improper than as being a violation of an act of Parliament. A great deal of the case for the prosecution consisted of alleged conversations; which was a description of evidence that was always looked upon with a good deal of caution, because it was obviously a most easy matter entirely to alter the effect of a conversation by a slight misrepresentation of what actually occurred.

The Jury intimated their opinion that the perusal of the ship's articles entered into at Liverpool would assist them in their deliberations. These were not, however, given to them. Retiring for half an hour, they gave a verdict of "Not guilty" as regarded all the defendants.

In the Insolvent Debtors Court, on Thursday, the Honourable Adolphus Charles Frederick Molyneux Capel appeared upon application for his final order. His income was about 1,000*l* wholly received from the bounty of relations. He had lived at the rate of 4,000*l*; his debts are 24,000*l*; and he now offers 200*l* a year to his creditors out of the income

of 600*l.* which his father-in-law *will* continue to allow him; the rest of his income being withdrawn. The granting of the final order was opposed by counsel for many of the creditors. Tho Chief Commissioner felt the painful position of the insolvent. Certainly he had answered all questions in the most straightforward and decorous manner; and if the judge was not mistaken, there was a subduedness of manner indicating a deep feeling for the position to which his improvidence had brought him. But if he granted the final order in this case, he should be ashamed to deal with a poor man's cast tomorrow—some struggling tradesman, perhaps, involved in difficulties—and say to him, “Go back, I can give you no help!” for he would be told, “Why, yesterday you allowed the son of a Peer to walk through this court.”—Final order refused.

Mr. George Bevington, a stock-broker, has appeared twice before the Lord Mayor on charges of defrauding people of money which had been intrusted to him to purchase stock. A Mr. Robinson made the first charge, that Bevington had received a sum of money to invest, and had not done so, but had sent a forged receipt for stock, purporting to be signed by a Bank official; but when the accused was brought up a second time, on Wednesday, Mr. Robinson did not appear; solus charge fell to the ground. Three other persons—one a poor widow—accused Mr. Bevington of appropriating their money to his own use. But there was fatal bar to proceeding in each case: the act of Parliament expressly requires that a purchaser of stock should give *written* instructions to the broker; the complainants had not done this, and so there could be no criminal charge fixed upon the accused. He was liberated. It was intimated that his friends are endeavouring to raise funds to repay the parties who have suffered.

A daring outrage was committed in the Broad Sanctuary, Weetmuatar, about twelve o'clock on Saturday night. As Mr. Georg Hennesy, a master tailor of Lamhath, was passing near the Abbey, three men suddenly set upon him, and left him insensible in the road, having first picked his pockets. When convoyed to the Westminster Hospital, it was found that the sufferer had sustained a fracture of the lower jaw; and it was not till Wednesday that he could give a coherent account of the attack. Three men were then arrested by the police, and Mr. Hennesy has identified two of them.