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From the National Intelligencer.

Towards the latter end of last December I received a letter from a venerable patriot, Samuel Adams, dated Boston, Nov. 30. It came by a private hand, which I suppose was the cause of the delay. I wrote Mr. Adams an answer, dated January 1st, and that I might be certain of his receiving it, and also that I might know of that reception, I desired a friend of mine at Washington to put it under cover to some friend of his at Boston, and desire him to present it to Mr. Adams. The letter was accordingly put under cover while I was present and given to one of the clerks of the Post-Office to seal and put in the mail. The clerk put it in his pocket book, and either forgot to put it in the mail, or supposed he had done so among other letters. The Post-master General, on learning the mistake, informed me of it last Saturday, and as the cover was then out of date, the letter was put under a new cover with the same request, and forwarded by the post. I felt concern at this accident, lest Mr. Adams should conclude I was unmindful of his attention to me; and therefore lest any further accident should prevent or delay his receiving it, as well as to relieve myself from that concern, I give the letter the opportunity of reaching him by the news-papers. I am the more induced to do this, because some manuscript copies have been taken of both letters and therefore there is a possibility of imperfect copies getting into print; and besides this, if some of the federal printers, (for I hope they are not all base alike) could get hold of a copy, they would make no scruple of altering it and publishing it as mine. I therefore send you the original letter of Mr. Adams and my own copy of the answer.

THOMAS PAINE.

Federal city, Jan. 22, 1803.

Boston, Nov. 30, 1802.

SIR,

I have frequently with pleasure reflected on your service to my native, and your adopted country. Your Common Sense, and your Crisis unquestionably awakened the public mind, and led the people loudly to call for a declaration of our national independence. I therefore esteemed you as a warm friend to the liberty and lasting welfare of the human race. But when I heard, that you had turned your mind to a defence of infidelity, I felt myself much astonished, and more grieved, that you had attempted a measure so injurious to the feelings and so repugnant to the true interest of so great a part of the citizens of the United States. The people of New-England, if you will allow me to use a Scripture phrase, are fast returning to their first love. Will you excite among them the spirit of angry controversy, at a time, when they are hastening to unity and peace? I am told that some of our newspapers have announced your intention to publish an additional pamphlet upon the principles of your Age of Reason. Do you think, that your pen, or the pen of any other man can unchristianize the mass of our citizens, or have you hopes of converting a few of them to assist you in so bad a cause? We ought to think ourselves happy in the enjoyment of opinion without the danger of persecution by civil or ecclesiastical law.

Our friend, the present President of the United States, has been calumniated for his liberal sentiments by men, who have attributed that liberality to a latent design to promote the cause of infidelity. This, and all other slanders have been made without a shadow of proof. Neither religion nor liberty can long subsist in the tumult of altercation, and amidst the noise and violence of faction.

Felix qui cautus,
Adieu.

SAMUEL ADAMS,

Mr. Thos. Paine.

To SAMUEL ADAMS.

My dear and venerable friend,

I received with great pleasure your friendly and affectionate letter of Nov. 30, and I thank you also for the frankness of it. Between men in pursuit of truth, and whose object is the happiness of man both here and hereafter, there ought to be no reserve. Even error has a claim to indulgence, if not to respect, when it is believed to be truth. I am obliged to you for your affectionate remembrance of what you stile my services in awakening the public mind to a declaration of inde-

pendence and supporting it after it was declared. I also, like you, have often looked back on those times, and have thought, that if independence had not been declared at the time it was the public mind could not have been brought up to it afterwards. It will immediately occur to you, who were so intimately acquainted with the situation of things at that time, that I allude to the black times of Seventy-six; for though I know, and you my friend also know, they were no other than the natural consequences of the military blunders of that campaign, the country might have viewed them as proceeding from a natural inability to support its cause against the enemy, and have sunk under the despondency of that misconceived idea. This was the impression against which it was necessary the country should be strongly animated.

I now come to the second part of your letter, on which I shall be as frank with you as you are with me.—“But (say you) when I heard you had turned your mind to a defence of infidelity, I felt myself much astonished &c.” What, my good friend, do you call believing in God infidelity? for that is the great point maintained in the Age of Reason against all divided beliefs and allegorical divinities. The bishop of Landaff, (Doctor Watson) not only acknowledges this, but pays some compliments upon it in his answer to the second part of that work. “There is (says he) a philosophical sublimity in some of your ideas when speaking of the Creator of the Universe.”

What then (my much esteemed friend) for I do not respect you the less because we differ, and that perhaps not much, in religious sentiments) what I ask, is this thing called infidelity? If we go back to your ancestors and mine, three or four hundred years ago, for we must have had fathers and grandfathers or we should not be here, we shall find them praying to saints and virgins, and believing in purgatory and transubstantiation, and therefore all of us are infidels according to our forefathers belief. If we go back to times more ancient we shall again be infidels according to the belief of some other forefathers.

The case, my friend, is, that the world has been ever run with fable and creeds of human invention, with sectaries of whole nations, against other nations, and sectaries of those sectaries in each of them against each other. Every sectary, except the quaker, has been a persecutor. Those who fled from persecution persecuted in their turn, and it is this confusion of creeds that has filled the world with persecution and deluged it with blood. Even the depredation on your commerce by the barbarity powers, sprang from the crusades of the church against those powers. It was a war of creed against creed, each boasting of God for its author, and reviling each other with the name of infidel. If I do not believe as you believe, it proves that you do not believe as I believe, and this is at all that it proves.

There is however one point of union wherein all religions meet, and that is in the first article of every man's creed, and of every nations creed, that has any creed at all. *I believe in God.* Those who rest here, and there are millions who do, cannot be wrong as far as their creed goes.—Those who chuse to go further may be wrong, for it is impossible that all can be right since there is so much contradiction among them. The first, therefore, are in my opinion on the safest side.

I presume you are so far acquainted with ecclesiastical history as to know, and the bishop who has answered me has been obliged to acknowledge the fact, that the books that compose the New Testament were voted by *yeas and nays* to be the word of God as you now vote a law, by the popish councils of Nice and Landocin, about 1450 years ago. With respect to the fact there is no dispute, neither do I mention it for the sake of controversy. This vote may appear authority enough to some, and not authority enough to others. It is proper however that every body should know the fact.

With respect to the Age of Reason, which you so much condemn, and that I believe without having read it, for you say only that you heard of it, I will inform you of a circumstance because you cannot know it by other means.

I have said in the first page of the first part of that work, that it had long been my intention to publish my

thoughts upon religion, but that I had reserved it to a later time of life. I have now to inform you why I wrote it and published it at the time I did.

In the first place I saw my life in continual danger. My friends were falling as fast as the guillotine could cut their heads off, and as I every day expected the same fate, I resolved to begin my work. I appeared to myself to be in my death bed, for death was on every side of me, and I had no time to lose. This accounts for my writing at the time I did, and so nicely did the time and the intention meet that I had not finished the first part of that work more than six hours before I was arrested and taken to prison.—Joel Barlow was with me, and knows the fact.

In the second place, the people of France were running headlong into Atheism, and I had the work translated and published in their own language to stop them in that career, and fix them to the first article (as I have before said of every man's creed, who has any creed at all, *I believe in God.*) I endangered my own life, in the first place by opposing in the convention the execution of the king, and labouing to shew they were trying the monarchy and not the man, and that the crimes imputed to him were the crimes of the monarchical system; and I endangered it a second time by opposing Atheism, & yet some of your priests, for I do not believe they all are perverse, cry out in the war whoop of monarchical priest-craft. What an infidel! What a wicked man is Thomas Paine! They might as well add, for he believes in God, and is against shedding blood.

But all this war whoop of the pulpit has some concealed object: Religion is not the cause, but is the stalking-horse. They put it forward to conceal themselves behind it. It is not a secret that there has been a party composed of the leaders of the Federalist, for I do not include all Federalists with their leaders, who have been working by various means for several years past, to overturn the Federal constitution established on the representative system, and place government in the new world on the corrupt system of the old. To accomplish this a large standing army was necessary, and as a pretence for such an army, the danger of a foreign invasion must be belloyed forth, from the pulpit, from the press, and by their public orators.

I am not of a disposition inclined to suspicion. It is in its nature a mean and cowardly passion, and upon the whole, even admitting error into the case, it is better, I am sure it is more generous, to be wrong on the side of confidence, than on the side of suspicion. But as I know as a fact, that the English government distributes annually fifteen hundred pounds sterling among the Presbyterian Ministers in England, and one thousand among those of Ireland, and when I hear of the strange discourses of some of your ministers and professors of colleges, I cannot, as the quakers say, find freedom in my mind to acquit them. Their anti-revolutionary doctrines invite suspicion even against one's will and in spite of one's charity to believe well of them.

As you have given me one scripture phrase, I will give you another for these ministers. It is said in Exodus, chapter 22, verse 28, “*Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.*” But those ministers, such I mean as Dr. Emmons, curse ruler and people both, for the majority are, politically the people, and it is those who have chosen the ruler whom they curse. As to the first part of the verse that of *not reviling the gods*, it makes no part of my scripture. I have but one God.

Since I began this letter, for I write it by peace meals, as I have leisure I have seen the four letters that passed between you and John Adams. In your first letter you say, “let divines and philosophers, statesmen and patriots, unite their endeavours to renovate the age by inculcating in the minds of youth the *fourth love of the Deity, and universal philanthropy.*” Why, my dear friend, this is exactly my religion, and is the whole of it. That you may have an idea that the Age of Reason (for I believe you have not read it) inculcates this reverential fear & love of the Deity, I will give you a paragraph from it:

“Do we want to contemplate his power? We see it in the immensity of the creation. Do we want to contemplate his wisdom? We see

“it in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehensible whole is governed. Do we want to contemplate his munificence? We see it in the abundance with which he fills the earth. Do we want to contemplate his mercy? We see it in his not withholding that abundance even from the unthankful.”

As I am fully with you in your first part, that respecting the deity, so am I in your second, that of *universal philanthropy*; by which I do not mean merely sentimental benevolence of wishing well, but the practical benevolence of doing good. We cannot serve the Deity in the manner we serve those who cannot do without that service. He needs no service from us. We can add nothing to eternity. But it is in our power to render a service acceptable to him, and that is not by praying, but by endeavouring to make his creatures happy. A man does not serve God when he prays, for it is himself he is trying to serve, and as to hiring or paying men to pray, as if the Deity needed instruction, it is in my opinion an abomination.—One good School Master of more use and of more value than a load of such persons as Dr. Emmons and some others.

You, my dear and much respected friend, are now far in the vale of years; I have yet, I believe, some years in store; for I have a good state of health and a happy mind, and I take care of both, by nourishing the first with temperance and the latter with abundance.

This, I believe, you will allow to be the true philosophy of life. You will see by my third letter, to the citizens of the United States, that I have been exposed to, and preserved through, many dangers, but instead of buffeting the Deity with prayers as if I distrusted him, or must dictate to him, I reposed myself on his protection; and you my friend, will find even in your last moments, more consolation in the silence of resignation than in the murmuring wish of prayer.

In every thing which you say in your second letter to John Adams respecting our rights as men and citizens in this world I am perfectly with you.—On other points we have to answer to our creator, and not to each other.—The key of heaven is not in the keeping of any sect, nor ought the road to it to be obstructed by any. Our relation to each other in this world is as men, and the man who is a friend to man and to his rights, let his religious opinions be what they may, is a good citizen, to whom I can give, as I ought to do, and as every other ought, the right hand of fellowship, and to none with more hearty good will, my dear friend, than to you.

THOMAS PAINE.

Federal City, Jan. 1, 1803.

NEW-YORK, Jan. 13.

By the Prosperity, capt. Jaughin, which arrived yesterday in 32 days from Gibraltar, we learn that the United States Frigates John Adams and Adams were both there. Our consul at that place informed capt. J. that the United States frigate Constellation had carried away her foremast in a gale of wind, and was repairing at Malaga.

The ship Enterprize, of this port, chartered by government, had arrived at Gibraltar with provisions for our vessels of war, four days before the Prosperity sailed.

A Tripoline corsair of 20 guns, lay there, & was closely watched by the Adams, which lay at Algieras.

We are also informed that a great number of British troops under command of General Knox, had arrived at Gibraltar and proceeded up the Mediterranean for Malta.

From the Scioto Gazette.

[COPY]

Department of State, Nov. 22, 1802.

SIR,

The President observing in an address lately delivered by you to the convention, held at Chillicothe, an intemperance and indecorum of language towards the legislature of the United States, and a disorganizing spirit and tendency of very evil example, and grossly violating the rules of conduct enjoined by your public station, determines that your commission of governor of the north-

western territory shall cease on the receipt of this notification.

I am,
Sir, respectfully
your obedient servant,
JAMES MADISON.
Arthur St. Clair, Esq }
Chillicothe.

To the hon. James Madison, Secretary of State.

Cincinnati, 21st Dec. 1802.

SIR,
Your letter of the 22d November, notifying to me that the president had determined that upon the receipt of that letter, my commission of governor of the north-western territory should cease, was delivered to me by Mr. Secretary Byrd; on the 14th day of this month. I request of you, sir, to present my humble thanks to the President for that favor, as he has thereby discharged me from an office I was heartily tired of, about six weeks sooner than I had determined to rid myself of it; as he may have observed from an address, not to the convention, but to the people, on the 8th inst. I cannot, however, agree with the President that, in my address to the convention, which is assigned as the reason of my being dismissed, that there was either an intemperance, or indecorum of language towards the legislature of the United States or a disorganizing spirit of evil tendency and example; unless an honest and true representation of facts deserve those epithets or that “the rules of conduct enjoined by my public station” were, in any way violated, unless it be understood that the rule of conduct for men in office is an implicit and blind obedience.—As the convention, sir, was to meet in pursuance of an act of Congress, whereby the election of the members was directed to be made according to a law of the territory that had existed, but had been long repealed: a sense of public duty led me to cause the elections to be made conformably to the spirit of the act, and the existing election laws, as they could not be made conformably to the words of the act; and when the convention was met, I had done within my public capacity.—Every citizen had a right to address that body, either openly or in writing, and that right was common to me with the rest; and I believe, sir, it is a paramount duty which every one owes to the community of which he is a member to give warning either to the representatives or to the body, when he sees that the rights of that community are invaded, from whatever quarter the invasion may come, and to direct them, if he can, to the means of warding it off, or of repelling it; and I scruple not to say that the violent, hasty, and unprecedented intrusion of the legislature of the United States into the internal concerns of the north-western territory, was at least indecorous and inconsistent with its public duty, & I might add, that the transferring above five thousand people, without their knowledge or consent, from a country where they were in possession of self-government, to another where they will be at least for a time deprived of that privilege, was something more than indecorous, and that, had it happened in Germany, where such things have happened, no man in America, would have hesitated to call it by a harsher term.

Degraded as our country is, and abject as too many of her sons are become, there are still a vast proportion of them who will be at no loss for the proper term.

Be pleased also, sir, to accept my thanks for the peculiar delicacy you observed, in committing the delivery of your letter, and in furnishing him with a copy of it, to Mr. Byrd, against whom there were in your hands to be laid before the President, complaints of something more than mere indecorum, and of a total neglect of and refusal to perform his official duties. It is, sir, such strokes as this which serve to develop character, and, like the relief in painting, bring out the