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From the National Intelligencer.
ATTEMPTS have been recently made by letters from, and representations of occurrences at Madrid, to excite the feelings of the public on the issue of a question of great magnitude to the United States. It is said that the king of Spain has refused to ratify the Convention for the indemnification for spoliated property, on several grounds, among which is assigned the legislative authority given to the President to erect a port of entry on the Mobile and its waters emptying into the Gulf of Mexico east of that river. Whether it be true that Spain has refused on this, or any other ground to ratify the Convention, we shall not undertake to say; much less to determine the accuracy of the fact that Mr. Pinckney has demanded his passports and is about returning to the United States; or whether we are on the eve of a war with Spain. We shall only observe that the pictures drawn in some of the Eastern prints appear to us so extravagantly coloured as to lead to a suspicion that they are intended to cover some commercial project. Waving, however, all considerations arising out of these circumstances, as unlikely from the little knowledge respecting them in possession of the public, to afford much important light, we have considered it proper to attempt laying before the public a view of the merits of the interesting question, "What are the boundaries of Louisiana," as acquired by the United States from France by the late treaty of cession. This point, independent of any connection it may have with the ratification of the convention, or with any pending negotiation, is extremely important; and although the discussion of it, at this time, may be premature, as it has been brought into public notice, it appears necessary to avoid erroneous impressions, to state the prominent facts on which its decision must depend. We shall at present attempt little more than this; our object being to take sure ground, and to exhibit a short and clear view of facts, and to draw those inferences only which immediately flow from them.

In order to exhibit this view the more distinctly, it is necessary to go back to an early period of the colonization of Louisiana.

In the year 1763, M. Joliet and Marquette, two French Canadians, excited by the information of the Indians, explored and struck the Mississippi, which they descended to the Arkansas. Their representations awakened the curiosity of M. de la Sale and M. Jonti, who in the year 1680, under the permission of the French government, explored the Mississippi. On the lower part of the Illinois he garrisoned a fort called Crevecoeur; and he sent father Hennepin down the Mississippi until he reached the ocean. In 1682, M. la Sale and M. Jonti went down the river with sixty men, named the country Louisiana, built a fort in the Chickasaw territory, 60 leagues below the Ohio, by the name of Prudhomme. M. la Sale then returned to France. The French government, entering with ardour into his scheme of forming settlements along the St. Lawrence and Mississippi from sea to sea, placed under his direction four vessels, with men and stores. He failed in 1684, but missing the mouth of the Mississippi, landed on the 18th of February, in the bay of St. Bernard. Here he made two successive establishments.

About this time the Chevalier Tontu defended to the mouth of the Mississippi, and on ascending the river, formed a permanent settlement on the Arkansas. Not long after this period several other small settlements were made by enterprising Frenchmen.

In 1689 war commenced between France and Spain, which lasted till 1697, during which period nothing appears to have been done by France to succour her colony. In 1698, M. D' Iberville was dispatched as Governor. He established two settlements, one at the Massacre, which he called the Dauphin, and the other at Mobile. It may be proper to observe that during the war in 1696, Spain had taken post at Pensacola.

From these facts it follows that France enjoyed the actual and undisturbed possession of the coast from the Mobile to the Bay of St. Bernard, and from the mouth of the Mississippi to the Illinois, which together with other territory, comprises what is now called West Florida, but which then, together with the country, as far as Canada, went by the common name of Louisiana.

In this condition things stood, when Louis XIV. by letters patent, on the 24th Sept. 1712, granted to M. Crozat, the exclusive commerce of this country, for fifteen years. This document is important, as it appears to contain the first formal recognition of the extent of the French possessions. The extracts in point, are as follows:

"Louis, by the grace of God, King of France and Navarre: To all who shall see these Letters, Greeting. The care we have always had to procure the welfare and advantage of our subjects having induced us, notwithstanding the almost continual wars which we have been obliged to support from the beginning of our reign, to seek for all possible opportunities of enlarging and extending the trade of our American colonies, we did in the year 1683 give our orders to undertake a discovery of the countries and lands which are situated in the Northern part of America between New France and New Mexico. And the Sieur de la Sale, to whom we committed that enterprise, having had success enough to confirm a belief that a communication might be settled from New France to the Gulf of Mexico by means of large rivers; this obliged us immediately after the peace of Ryswick to give orders for the establishing a colony there, and maintaining a garrison, which has kept and preserved the possession, we had taken in the very year 1683 of the lands, coasts and islands which are situated in the Gulf of Mexico between Carolina on the East, and Old and New Mexico on the West. But a new war having broke out in Europe shortly after, there was no possibility, till now, of reaping from that new Colony the advantages that might have been expected from thence, because the private men, who are concerned in the sea trade were all under engagements with other colonies which they have been obliged to follow: And whereas upon the information we have received concerning the disposition and situation of the said Countries known at present by the name of the Province of Louisiana, we are of opinion, that there may be established therein a considerable commerce, so much the more advantageous to our Kingdom, in that there has hitherto been a necessity of fetching from foreigners the greatest part of the commodities which may be brought from thence, and because in exchange thereof we need carry thither nothing but commodities of the growth and manufacture of our own kingdom; we have resolved to grant the commerce of the country of Louisiana to the Sieur Anthony Crozat, our Counsellor, Secretary of the Household, Crown and Revenue, to whom we entrust the execution of this project. We are the more readily inclined hereunto, because his zeal and the singular knowledge he has acquired in maritime commerce encourage us to hope for as good success as he has hitherto had in the divers and sundry enterprises he has gone upon, and which have procured to our kingdom great quantities of gold & silver in such conjunctures as have rendered them very welcome to us.

"For these reasons, being desirous to shew our favour to him, and to regulate the conditions upon which we mean to grant him the said commerce, after having deliberated this affair in our Council, of our certain knowledge, full power, and Royal Authority, We by these Presents, signed by our hands, have appointed & do appoint the said Sieur Crozat solely to carry on a trade in all the lands possessed by us, and bounded by New Mexico, and by the land of the English of Carolina, all the establishments, parts, bays, rivers, and principally the port and haven of the Isle Dauphin, heretofore called Massacre; the river of St. Louis, heretofore called Mississippi from the edge of the sea as far as the Islands, together with the river of St. Philip, heretofore called the Missouri, and St. Jerome, heretofore called Ouabatche with all the countries, territories, lakes within land, and the rivers which fall directly or indirectly into that part of the river St. Lewis.

"The ARTICLES—1st—Our pleasure is, that all the aforesaid lands, countries, streams, rivers, and islands, be and remain comprised under the name of the government of Louisiana, which shall be dependent upon the general government of New France, to which it is subordinate; and further that all the lands which we possess from the Illinois be united, so far as occasion require to the general government of New France, and become part thereof, reserving, however, to ourselves

the liberty of enlarging as we shall think fit the extent of the government of the said country of Louisiana."

This is a solemn declaration that the waters running directly or indirectly into the Mississippi, and the country they embrace, constituted the province of Louisiana. Within these limits France continued without disturbance to extend her settlements till the year 1763. During this period were formed the treaties of Ryswick in 1697, of Utrecht in 1713, and of Rastadt in 1714, to which Spain was a party, and which in none of their provisions invalidate the rights of France.

In 1718, the French took Pensacola from Spain, to whom it was restored at the peace of 1713; since which the Perdido, between Mobile and Pensacola, has been the acknowledged boundary between Louisiana and Florida.

The boundaries of Louisiana, then, as held by France, were the coast and islands from the Perdido to the Rio-Norte; up that river to its source; thence to the high lands and round the sources of the Missouri and Mississippi, and their waters to the Alleghany mountains, along those mountains and the high lands surrounding the waters of the Mobile to the head of the Perdido, and down that river to the ocean.

There was, it is true, a collision between these claims and those of the English colonies, whose charters extended from sea to sea; but these interfering claims were adjusted by the treaty of Paris of 1763; by which the Mississippi and the Iberville were made the limits of the English possessions on the East, and Louisiana on the West.

Thus far then, that is to the year 1763, there is no doubt that, what is now denominated West Florida, was a part of Louisiana.

To the war which commenced between France and England in 1755, Spain in 1762, became a party on the side of France. England having been so successful as to conquer a considerable portion of the Island of Cuba from Spain, negotiations were entered into for a peace. In these negotiations Great-Britain required Florida and that part of Louisiana between the Iberville and the Perdido, in exchange for Cuba. To enable Spain to offer these as an equivalent, France, by a secret treaty, dated November 3, 1762, (the same day on which the preliminary treaty of peace was signed) consented to cede to Spain all Louisiana. By the definitive treaty signed on the 10th of February, 1763, France ceded to England all Louisiana east of the Mississippi, except the island of New-Orleans; which with the remainder of the province she ceded to Spain. The cession to England, although formally on the part of France (for the treaty between France and Spain was still secret) was substantially made by Spain, who had become the real proprietor of all Louisiana.

England immediately divided the newly acquired possessions into two distinct governments; to one she gave the name of West Florida, which embraced the tract west of the Apalachicola; and to the other embracing the residue of her possessions, she gave that of East Florida.—This is the first that we hear of West Florida, it being a name given by Great-Britain to a subdivision of her territory.

At the close of the American war in 1783 Great-Britain restored to Spain Florida, and the country east of the Iberville. Spain, on taking possession, continued, with some modification, the English arrangements, placing, however, West Florida under the jurisdiction of the governor of Louisiana, who resided at New-Orleans; and since that time this territory, as well in public instruments, and in general conversation, has gone by the name of Louisiana and West Florida, sometimes the one and sometimes the other name being used.

On the 18th of October, 1800, by the treaty of St. Ildefonso, Spain ceded to France the "colony or province of Louisiana, with the same extent that it actually has in the hands of Spain—that it had when France possessed it—and such as it ought to be after the treaties passed subsequently between Spain and other states."

On the 20th of April, 1803, France ceded to the United States all the territory which she had thus acquired from Spain.

These are the facts on which a decision is to be made whether the cession by France to the United States does or does not embrace that portion of country called West Florida.

In the first place, Spain stipulates to cede Louisiana with the same extent that it actually has (in 1800) in the hands of Spain. To determine the import of this stipulation it is only necessary to ascertain the extent of country embraced by the term Louisiana. It has been clearly shewn that previous to the cession of France to Spain, Louisiana extended to the Perdido. Had any thing occurred previously to the date of the treaty of St. Ildefonso, to contract its limits? If nothing had occurred, the limits must be considered as unaltered. That portion of territory ceded in 1763 to Great-Britain, was restored to Spain in 1783, with the new name of West Florida, given by England. Restored to Spain, although this name was not formally dismissed, the territory which it covers was re-annexed to the government of Louisiana, and the old arrangements, previous to its cession to England, re-instated. By these arrangements Louisiana, as to its extent, was replaced in the same situation it occupied previous to the cession of a part of it to Great-Britain, which was the same with that it held when possessed by France, under whose arrangements West Florida formed a part of it.

But as it is tedious to remove all ambiguity, the treaty proceeds to stipulate, in the second place that Louisiana shall be ceded in the same extent it had when France possessed it (that is previously to the year 1763.) Now the fact is that France never possessed this province, with any extent which did not include the English province of West Florida. It may have occurred to the framers of the treaty of St. Ildefonso, that doubts might arise as to the meaning of the term "the province of Louisiana," after the cession of a part of it to Great-Britain, and its cession to Spain. Hence the propriety of dissipating all such doubts by declaring that the new cession should be in the same extent it had when France possessed it. This effectually settles all regard to the regulations of England. Supposing, then, the first stipulation to be of doubtful import, the second, so plain as not to admit of any other construction, comes in to remove all doubt. For it is an established principle of construction, that where there are two passages leading to the same end, one of which is doubtful, and the other clear, the last shall preponderate. The denial of this construction to the stipulation will be tantamount to saying that it shall have no meaning at all, which in so solemn an instrument as a treaty, and on so important an occasion as the transfer of territory, is altogether inadmissible.

In the third place it is stipulated that the cession shall be such as it ought to be after the treaties passed subsequently between Spain and other states—that is subsequently to the cession by France, which was in the year 1762. Now subsequently to this was formed the treaty of 1795 between Spain and the United States by which the former confirmed to the latter a degree of latitude (from 32 to 31 degrees) which she had alleged to be a part of Louisiana, unceded to France, and consequently belonging to her.

According to these stipulations, taken together, Spain ceded Louisiana to France exactly as France possessed it previous to the year 1763, with the only exception of a reservation of the rights acknowledged by Spain to attach to the United States, and in this precise shape France, thus possessed of Louisiana has ceded it to the United States. If the facts we have stated and the inferences deduced from them be correct, it follows that the Perdido is the boundary of Louisiana, and consequently that West Florida is a part of the cession to the United States.

The subject may admit of a much wider illustration; and several of the points which we have but cursorily noticed would doubtless be enforced by many incidents and arguments that might be associated with them; but we waive these for the present, under the persuasion that the concise sketch now offered is sufficient to evince the just pretensions alleged to be entertained by our government. It is possible that some of the facts assumed may not be correct; though we have taken pains to avoid error, and have omitted to introduce all doubtful matter.

FRANCE.
 ANNIVERSARY OF THE 14TH OF JULY.
 THE 25th of Messidor, the anniversary of the 14th of July, all the Members of the Legion of Honour who were in Paris,