

threaten to become the aristocratical order of the state. Several citizens, and among others those who had aided in establishing independence with their purses or their arms, conceived themselves aggrieved by those fiscal engagements. Hence an opposition which declares itself between the farming or agricultural interest, and that of the fiscal; federalism and antifederalism, which are founded on those new denominations, in proportion as the treasury usurps a preponderance in the government and legislation: Hence, in fine, the state, divided into partisans and enemies of the treasurer and of his theories. In this new classification of parties, the nature of things gave popularity to the latter; an innate instinct, if I may use the expression, caused the ears of the people to revolt at the names alone of treasurer and stockjobber: but the opposite party, in consequence of its ability, obstinately persisted in leaving to its adversaries the suspicious name of anti-federalists, whilst in reality they were friends of the constitution, and enemies only of the excesses which financiering theories threatened to attach to it.

5. It is useless to stop longer to prove that the monarchical system was interwoven with those novelties of finances, and that the friends of the latter favoured the attempts which were made, in order to bring the constitution to the former by insensible gradations. The writings of influential men of this party prove it: their real opinions too avow it, and the journals of the senate are the depository of the first attempts.

6. Let us, therefore, free ourselves from the intermediate spaces in which the progress of the system is marked, since they can add nothing to the proof of its existence.—Let us pass by its sympathy with our regenerating movements, while running in monarchical paths—Let us arrive at the situation in which our republican revolution has placed things and parties.

7. The antifederalists disembarrass themselves of an insignificant denomination, and take that of patriots and of republicans. Their adversaries become aristocrats, notwithstanding their efforts to preserve the advantageous illusion of ancient names; opinions clash, and press each other; the aristocratic attempts which formerly had appeared so insignificant, are recollected: the treasurer, who is looked upon as their first source, is attacked: his operations and plans are denounced to the public opinion; nay, in the sessions of 1792 and 1793, a solemn enquiry into his administration was obtained. This first victory was to produce another, and it was hoped that, faulty or innocent, the treasurer would retire, no less by necessity in the one case, than from self love in the other. He, emboldened by the triumph which he obtained in the useless enquiry of his enemies, of which both objects proved equally abortive, seduced besides by the momentary reverse of republicanism in Europe, removes the mask and announces the approaching triumph of his principles.

8. In the mean time, the popular societies are formed; political ideas center themselves, the patriotic party unite and more closely connect themselves; they gain a formidable majority in the legislature; the abatement of commerce, the slavery of navigation, and the audacity of England, strengthen it. A concert of declarations and censures against the government arises: at which the latter is even itself astonished.

9. Such was the situation of things towards the close of the last and at the beginning of the present year. Let us pass over the discontents which were most generally expressed in these critical moments. They have been sent to you at different periods, and in detail. In every quarter are arraigned the imbecility of the government towards Great-Britain, the defenceless state of the country against possible invasions, the coldness towards the French republic: the system of finance is attacked, which threatens eternizing the debt, under pretext of making it the guaranty of public happiness; the complication of that system which withholds from general inspection all its operations—the alarming power of the influence it procures to a man whose principles are regarded as dangerous, the preponderance which that man acquires from day to day in public measures, and in a word the immoral and impolitic modes of taxation, which he at first presents as expedients, and afterwards raises to permanency.

10. In touching this last point we attain the principal complaint of the western people, and the ostensible motive of their movements. Republicans by principle, independent by character and situation, they could not but

accede with enthusiasm to the crimination which we have sketched. But the excise above all affects them. Their lands are fertile, watered with the finest rivers in the world: but the abundant fruits of their labour run the risk of perishing for the want of means of exchanging them, as those more happy cultivators do for objects which desire indicates to all men who have known only the enjoyments which Europe procures them. They therefore convert the excess of their produce into liquors imperfectly fabricated, which badly supply the place of those they might procure by exchange. The excise is created and strikes at this consoling transformation; their complaints are answered by the only pretext that they are otherwise inaccessible to every species of impost. But why, in contempt of treaties, are they left to break the yoke of the feeble Spaniard, as to the Mississippi, for upwards of twelve years? Since when has an agricultural people submitted to the unjust capriciousness of a people explorers of the precious metals? Might we not suppose that Madrid and Philadelphia mutually assisted in prolonging the slavery of the river; that the proprietors of a barren coast are afraid lest the Mississippi, once opened, and its numerous branches brought into activity, their fields might become deserts, and in a word that commerce dreads having rivals in those interior parts as soon as their inhabitants shall cease to be subjects? This last supposition is but too well founded; an influential member of the senate, Mr. Izard, one day in conversation nudgedly announced it to me.

11. I shall be more brief in my observations on the murmurs excited by the system for the sale of lands. It is conceived to be unjust that these vast and fertile regions should be sold by provinces to capitalists, who thus enrich themselves, and retail with immense profits, to the husbandmen, possessions which they have never seen. If there were not a latent design to arrest the rapid settlement of those lands, and to prolong their infant state, why not open in the west land offices, where every body without distinction, should be admitted to purchase by a small or large quantity? Why reserve to sell or distribute to favourites, to a clan of flatterers, of courtiers, that which belongs to the state, and which should be sold to the greatest possible profit of all its members.

12. Such, therefore, were the parts of the public grievance, upon which the western people most insisted. Now, as the common dispatches inform you, these complaints were systematizing by the conversations of influential men who retired into those wild countries, and who from principle, or by a series of particular heart burnings, animated discontents already too near to effervescence. At last the local explosion is effected. The western people calculated on being supported by some distinguished characters in the east, and even imagined they had in the bosom of the government some abettors, who might share in their grievances or their principles.

13. From what I have detailed above, those men might indeed be supposed numerous. The sessions of 1793 and 1794 had given importance to the republican party, and solidity to its accusations. The propositions of Mr. Madison, or his project of a navigation act, of which Mr. Jefferson was originally the author, sapped the British interest, now an integral part of the financiering system. Mr. Taylor, a republican member of the senate, published, towards the end of the session, three pamphlets, in which this last is explored to its origin, and developed in its progress and consequences with force and method. In the last he asserts that the decrepid state of affairs resulting from that system, could not but presage, under a rising government, either a revolution or a civil war.

14. The first was preparing: the government which had foreseen it, re-produced, under various forms, the demand of a disposable force which might put it in a respectable state of defence.—Defeated in this measure, who can aver that it may not have hastened the local eruption, in order to make an advantageous diversion, and to lay the more general storm which it saw gathering? Am I not authorized in forming this conjecture from the conversation which the secretary of state had with me and Le Blanc, alone, an account of which you have in my dispatch, No. 3? But how may we expect that this new plan will be executed? By exasperating and severe measures, authorized by a law which was not solicited till the close of the session. This law gave to the one already existing for collecting the excise, a coercive force which hi-

* Disponible.

therto it had not possessed, and a demand of which was not before ventured to be made. By means of this new law, all the refractory citizens to the old one, were caused to be pursued with a sudden rigour; a great number of writs were issued; doubtless the natural consequences from a conduct so decisive and so harsh were expected; and before these were manifested, the means of repression had been prepared; this was undoubtedly what Mr. Randolph meant in telling me, that under pretext of giving energy to the government, it was intended to introduce absolute power, and to mislead the president in paths which would conduct him to unpopularity.

15. Whether the explosion has been provoked by the government, or owes its birth to accident, it is certain that a commotion of some hundreds of men who have no notion of being found in arms, and the very pacific union of the counties in Braddock's field, a union which has not been revived, were not so great a force as 15,000 men. Besides the principles uttered in the declarations hitherto made public, rather announced ardent minds to be calmed than anarchists to be subdued. But in order to obtain something on the public opinion prepossessed against the demands contemplated to be made, it was necessary to magnify the danger, to disfigure the views of those people, to attribute to them the design of uniting themselves with England, to alarm the citizens for the fate of the constitution, whilst in reality the revolution threatened only ministers. This step succeeded; an army is raised; the military part of the suppression is doubtless Mr. Hamilton's, the pacific part, and the sending of commissioners are due to the influence of Mr. Randolph over the mind of the president, whom I delight always to believe, and whom I do believe, truly virtuous, and the friend of his fellow-citizens in principle.

16. In the mean time, although there was a certainty of having an army, yet it was necessary to assure themselves of co-operation among the men whose patriotic reputation might influence their party, and whose lukewarmness or want of energy in the existing conjuncture might compromise the success of the plans. Of all the governors whose duty it was to appear at the head of the requisitions, the governor of Pennsylvania alone enjoyed the name of a republican: his opinion of the secretary of the treasury and of his systems was known to be unfavourable. The secretary of this state possessed great influence in the popular society of Philadelphia, which in its turn influenced those of other states; of course he merited attention. It appears, therefore, that these men, with others unknown to me, all having, without doubt, Randolph at their head, were balancing to decide on their party. Two or three days before the proclamation was published, and of course before the cabinet had resolved on its measures, Mr. Randolph came to see me with an air of great eagerness, and made to me the overtures of which I have given you an account in my No. 6. Thus with some thousands of dollars, the republic could have decided on civil war or on peace! Thus the consciences of the pretended patriots of America have already their price! † It is very true that the certainty of these conclusions, painful to be drawn, will forever exist in our archives! What will be the old age of this government, if it is thus early decrepid! Such, citizen, is the evident consequence of the system of finances conceived by Mr. Hamilton. He has made of a whole nation a stockjobbing, speculating, selfish people. Riches alone here fix consideration; and as no one likes to be despised, they are universally sought after.

Nevertheless this depravity has not yet embraced the mass of the people; the effects of this pernicious system have as yet but slightly touched them. Still there are patriots, of whom I delight to entertain an idea worthy of that imposing title. Consult Monroe, he is of this number; he had apprised me of the men whom the current of events had dragged along as bodies devoid of weight. His friend Mason is also an honest man. Jefferson on whom the patriots cast their eyes to succeed the president, had foreseen these crisis. He prudently retired, in order to avoid making a figure against his inclination in scenes, the secret of which will soon or late be brought to light.

(To be concluded in our next.)

† This law was mentioned in the correspondence upon the laws of the last session, enclosed in No. 9, of the correspondence of the ministers. ‡ Tariff.