

PHILADELPHIA, December 6.

The following Letter from the President of the United States, was read on the 5th December, 1793, in the House of Representatives :

United States, December 5, 1793.
Gentlemen of the Senate, and of the
House of Representatives,

AS the present situation of the several nations of Europe, and especially of those with which the United States have important relations, cannot but render the state of things between them and us, matter of interesting enquiry to the legislature, and may indeed give rise to deliberations to which they alone are competent, I have thought it my duty to communicate to them certain correspondences which have taken place.

The representative and executive bodies of France have manifested generally a friendly attachment to this country; have given advantages to our commerce and navigation, and have made overtures for placing these advantages on permanent ground; a decree however of the national assembly, subjecting vessels laden with provisions to be carried into their ports, and making enemy goods, lawful prize in the vessel of a friend, contrary to our treaty, though revoked at one time, as to the United States, has been since extended to their vessels also, as has been recently stated to us. Representations on this subject will be immediately given in charge to our Minister there, and the result be communicated to the legislature.

It is with extreme concern I have to inform you, that the proceedings of the person whom they have unfortunately appointed their minister Plenipotentiary here have breathed nothing of the friendly spirit of the nation which sent him; their tendency on the contrary has been to involve us in war abroad, and discord and anarchy at home. So far as his acts or those of his agents, have threatened our immediate commitment in the war or flagrant insult to the authority of the laws, their effects has been counteracted by the ordinary recognizance of the laws, and by an exertion of the powers confided to me. Where their dangers was not imminent, they have been borne with, from sentiments of regard to his nation, from a sense of their friendship towards us, from a conviction that they would not suffer us to remain long exposed to the action of a person who has so little respected our mutual dispositions, and, I will add, from a reliance on the firmness of my fellow-citizens in their principles of peace and order. In the mean time I have respected and pursued the stipulations of our treaties, according to what I judged their true sense; and have withheld no act of friendship which their affairs have called for from us and which justice to others left us free to perform. I have gone further:—rather than employ force for the restitution of certain vessels which I deemed the United States bound to restore, I thought it more advisable to satisfy the parties by avowing it to be my opinion, that if restitution were not made, it would be incumbent on the United States to make compensation. The papers now communicated will more particularly apprise you of these transactions.

The vexations and spoliation understood to have been committed on our vessels and commerce by the cruisers and officers of some of the belligerent powers, appeared to require attention. The proofs of these however not having been brought forward, the description of citizens supposed to have suffered were notified, that on furnishing them to the executive, due measures would be taken to obtain redress of the past, and more effectual provisions against the future.—Should such documents be furnished, proper representations will be made thereon: with a just reliance on a redress proportioned to the exigency of the case.

The British government having undertaken by orders to the commanders of their armed vessels, to restrain generally our commerce in corn and other provisions to their own ports and those of their friends, the instructions now communicated were immediately forwarded to our Minister at that court. In the mean time some discussions on the subject took place between him and them; these are also before you; and I may expect to learn the result of his special instructions in time to make it known to the legislature during their present session:

Very early after the arrival of a British Minister here mutual explanations on the execution of the treaty of peace were entered into with that Minister, these are now laid before you for your information.

On the subjects of mutual interest between this country and Spain, negotiations and conferences are now depending. The public good requiring that the present state of these should be made known to the legislature in confidence only, they shall be the subject of a separate and subsequent communication.

G. WASHINGTON.

SKETCH OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

December 6.

The House resolved itself into a committee of the whole, Mr. Trumbull in the chair, on the draft of an answer to the President's address.—This draft was reported by the committee without amendment, the report was adopted by the house, and Messrs. Madison, Sedgwick, and Hartley, were appointed to wait on the President to learn when it will be convenient to him to receive this answer. They before adjournment reported that he would receive the address to-morrow at 12 o'clock.—This address follows:—

S I R,

THE Representatives of the people of the United States, in meeting you for the first time, since you have been again called, by an unanimous suffrage, to your present station, find an occasion, which they embrace with no less sincerity than promptitude, for expressing to you their congratulations on so distinguished a testimony of public approbation, and their entire confidence in the purity and patriotism of the motives which have produced the obedience to the voice of your country. It is to virtues which have commanded long and universal reverence, and services from which have flowed great and lasting benefits, that the tribute of praise be paid, without the reproach of flattery; and it is from the same sources that the fairest anticipations may be derived in favor of the public happiness.

The United States having taken no part in the war, which had embraced in Europe the powers with whom they have the most extensive relations, the maintenance of peace was justly to be regarded as one of the most important duties of the magistrate, charged with the faithful execution of the law. We accordingly witness, with approbation and pleasure, the vigilance with which you have guarded against an interruption of that blessing, by your proclamation admonishing our citizens of the consequences of illicit or hostile acts towards the belligerent parties: and promoting, by a declaration of the existing legal state of things, an easier admission of our rights to the immunities belonging to our situation.

The connection of the United States with Europe, has evidently become extremely interesting. The communications which remain to be exhibited to us, will, no doubt, assist in giving us a fuller view of the subject, and in guiding our deliberations, to such results, as may comport with the rights and true interests of our country.

We learn with deep regret, that the

measure, dictated by a love of peace, for obtaining an amicable termination of the afflicting war on our frontiers, should have been frustrated, and that a resort to offensive measures should again become necessary. As the latter; however, must be rendered more satisfactory, in proportion to the solicitude for peace manifested by the former, it is to be hoped they will be pursued under the better auspices on that account, and be finally crowned with more happy success.

In relation to the particular tribes of Indians, against whom offensive measures have been prohibited, as on all the other important subjects which you have presented to our view, we shall bestow the attention which they claim. We cannot, however, refrain, at this time from particularly expressing our concurrence in your anxiety, for the regular discharge of the public debts, as fast as circumstances and events will permit: and in the policy of removing any impediments that may be found in the way of a faithful representation of public proceedings throughout the United States; being persuaded with you, that on no subject more than the former, can delay be more injurious, or an economy of time more valuable; and that with respect to the latter, no resource is too firm for the government of the United States, as the affections of the people, guided by an enlightened policy.

Throughout our deliberations, we shall endeavour to cherish every sentiment which may contribute to render them conducive to the dignity, as well as to the welfare of the United States; and we join with you in imploring that being on whom the fate of nations depends, to crown with success our mutual endeavours.

Answer of the President of the United States, to the address of the House of Representatives:

GENTLEMEN,

I SHALL not affect to conceal the cordial satisfaction which I derive from the address of the House of Representatives.—Whatever those services may be, which you have sanctioned by your favor, it is a sufficient reward, that they have been accepted as they were meant. For the fulfilment of your anticipations of the future, I can give no other assurance, than that the motives which, you approve, shall continue unchanged.

It is truly gratifying to me to learn, that the proclamation has been considered as a seasonable guard against the interruption of the public peace. Nor can I doubt that the subjects which I have recommended to your attention, as depending on legislative provision, will receive a discussion suited to their importance. With every reason, then it may be expected that your deliberations, under the divine blessing, will be matured to the honour and happiness of the United States.

G. WASHINGTON.

L O N D O N, September 17.

The fall of the gallant and polite captain, Courtney, is a national misfortune, and renders the situation of his much respected and amiable lady the object of general concern, particularly to the more immediate circles of her acquaintance, who at this unfortunate juncture seem to vie with each other to afford her every consolation in their power.

The British fleet under lord Hood, now in the Mediterranean, consists of two of 100 guns, three of 98, twelve of 74, three of 64, store-ship of 44, two frigates of 39, seven of 32, two of 28, two of 24, one of 16, two of 12, and two fire-ships.

September 13. Yesterday evening despatches were brought by Mr. Silvester, who left the British camp, near Thouroute, on the 15th; and happily such information was immediately given from these, as related