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CHARACTER OF THOMAS JEFFER-

SON,

Now President of the United States.

The following elegant and we doubt not correct delineation of one of the most important political characters now in existence, we may be acceptable to our readers: this portrait of a great and upright statesman, patriot and philosopher, is the production of an American pen, and was drawn during the late political ferment in the United States.

The superior distinction which Mr. Jefferson has acquired, in the political world, is founded upon the alliance of virtue and courage. Great events give birth to great talents. It is not difficult to say, however, that had the evolution in America never taken place, he would have risen to considerable fame in the epic of letters and philosophy. The advantages of an excellent education, habits of application and study, were circumstances that gave to his mind an inclination for philosophical and literary pursuits. His "Notes on the State of Virginia," is a work replete with merit; it discovered at once a mind sagacious and inquisitive; a mind capable, by the gradual means of experiment and rational deduction, of unfolding the sublimest principles of truth. The same great event which has immortalized the genius of American patriotism, and drawn from obscurity the most brilliant talents in the field and cabinet, paid equal tribute to the virtues of Mr. Jefferson, and gave him distinction in the first rank of statesmen. At the first shock of that convulsion, which eventually separated the continent of America from Great-Britain, the philosophical apparatus fell from his hand. Directed by that genuine patriotism which sacrifices private interest to public felicity, he exchanged social ease and retirement for the bustle of active life, the researches of study for the more important duties of the cabinet. In this situation Mr. Jefferson seems to have been designed by character & talent, to combine with the solidity the durability of reputation;—his advancement was gradual, and every step of it was marked by a display of abilities that was really honourable to himself, and competent to the difficulties occasioned by the precipitancy of events. There is a contemptible activity, which sacrifices personal dignity and dependence to the rage of ambition, and the love of fame.—Not contented with the internal consciousness of deserving applause, and waiting with compposure for the period which shall baffle it, it goes in search of unmerited laurels, and courts the acquisition at the expense of every sentiment of delicacy and propriety. This imputation never tarnished the character of Mr. Jefferson. The suffrages of his country were wisely disposed of. He deserved consideration and he obtained it. He never followed fame, but fame appears to have pursued him through every department in which fortune or circumstances have placed him. An understanding clear and sagacious, integrity unpolluted by public reproach or private malice, and principles whose soundness and moderation are the best testimonials of their sincerity, were qualifications which called him to the highest departments of state. If I may be permitted to give an opinion of the political principles of Mr. Jefferson, it will be drawn from the aggregate qualifications of his character.—This mode, however, may commonly be a very fallible one in forming our judgment, because the most manly virtues, and most brilliant intellects are too often in conflict with the latent feelings of the heart. But it would be uncharitable in the present instance to conceive a disparity which nothing confirms but every thing requires. It would be barbarous to violate the sentiments of benevolence, and to reproach the judgment with defect without truth or reason. It is impossible to mark the progress of personal interest in the actions of a man, every part of whose conduct has been connected, together by a chain of uniform morality, whose tone is decisive, whose style and language are clear and nervous, whose principles convey the sense of justice and the convictions of experience and reflection. The political principles of Mr. Jefferson are drawn from an expanded intellect, that consults the maxims of nature and reason as its only guides.—Born at a period when the whole universe was convulsed by the conflicting passions of mankind, it was his study to reconcile the

jarring elements, and to extract felicity and order from misery and confusion. Experience and observation have pointed out to him the wrecks of ambition and despotism, of error and prejudice. They have conveyed his mind through the various regions of society, familiarized it with the melancholy exhibition of lost dignity, of injured innocence, of polluted virtue, and led it in the awful contemplation of scenes at which his humanity shudders. It is no wonder, therefore, that his opinions are the pious innovations of the philosopher, who wishes to repair the injuries which an unjust policy has occasioned in the world: that he cherishes them as a peculiar tribute to his own feelings, which the understanding confirms, & the heart ratifies. Upon this liberal plan of philanthropy Mr. Jefferson is the true citizen of the world. Like Cato, he feels an attachment to his country; but, like Socrates, his affections embrace the universe. It will be difficult to reconcile the principles of such a character, with the views and inclinations that govern the parasite of despotism. The first are founded upon a basis whose truth is irresistible, whose origin is nature, whose attribute morality, whose essence reason. The last sees nature at defiance, considers morality as mockery, and reason as a fool.—If, therefore, Mr. Jefferson differs in opinion with many of his countrymen, it is because he differs in the degree of estimation in which these things are mutually held. He considers nature the source of every human right, morality the basis, and reason the guide of every human action.—Of course, he perceives no grades of society, no partial distinctions; considers the people as the source of all power, as the guardians of their own rights. He makes allowances for the particular situation in which he has found mankind. He endeavours to reconcile their different interests by institutions calculated to produce the most extensive and complete felicity. Consulting nature, his maxims of government are pure and simple. They do not partake too much of that overstrained energy which borders on oppression, or of that loose, licentious fanaticism, which is connected with the subversion of all order and security in government. They point eventually to a reform of abuses which have constituted the greatest share of misery in society, which he considers as the excrescence of state and germ of despotism. It is said, that Mr. Jefferson is a philosopher, that consequently he possesses a peculiar cast of mind that unfit him for the duties of a statesman. Let this objection rest in the bosom of the illiberal parasites of power, who sit at the foot-stool of despotism, and dread the influence of a single qualification that might soften the afflictions of a nation. For my part, I see not the incompatibility complained of. The philosopher is nothing more than a being whose morality is elevated; whose opinions are drawn from the convictions of truth and reason; whose expanded intellect disdains the shackles of prejudice; and whose soul looks with complicity upon the errors and fallibilities of mankind.—The reverse of these qualifications constitutes the features of tyranny whenever it is blended with extensive power. There is an invisible chain which connects immorality with contempt for truth, a contempt for truth with the delusions of error, and the delusion of error with the most brutal tyranny.—Hence the licentiousness of courts, and the enormous crimes of ambition; hence the cold philosophy which chills the warmth of benevolence, and sacrifices on the polluted altars of despotism the happiness of millions. Distraining the character of a courtier, where pusillanimity and flattery are the steps by which the obsequious strive to fame and distinction, Mr. Jefferson has risen to the highest offices of government by his own intrinsic merit. The simplicity of his manners, and the reservedness of his temper, are the characteristics of a vigorous mind, which grasps at higher objects than the mere act of pleasing. Yet there is no man in private life at once so amiable and so dignified, and none whose manners possess in a higher degree the incomparable felicity of inspiring the combined emotions of attachment and respect. * * * * *

however, never fell a victim to the unmanly provocations which so often distract little minds. His contempt for unjust censure, his dignified reserve beneath the insolence of ministerial toquacity and his unshaken serenity, while the whole political world, was moving around him, mark a soul capable of holding calamity at defiance. Viewing mankind as they really are, biased by passion, swayed by prejudice, and with eyes continually open to the invocations of individual interest, he stands aloof in the tenement of his own exalted mind, and, like Jupiter from Olympus, surveys with serenity and silence the fate of empires. It is well known, that his enemies were of that obsequious tribe of court parasites, who moved in the inferior circles of respectability, and, seeing the influence of his talents, sought to decry them by arts of petulance and by lewdness. He has a knowledge of human nature, teaching him that this is the involuntary tribute of envy, and is conscious that it is the medium of the propagation of truth; is satisfied that he is not conscious of deserving reproach, and is silent. Surely a man who can preserve such equanimity of temper, who can maintain the composure of mind, and listen without the consciousness of deserving it, surely such a man is entitled to the first place in our esteem. They are attributes which few men possess, are the productions of the most difficult of all attainments, the knowledge and esteem of ourselves, and how from an elevated philosophy that seeks tranquility in conscious rectitude, which teaches forbearance, whilst it refines our knowledge of human nature, and views the conflicting passions of mankind as connected with the destiny of social life. To descend from this dignified sphere of human reason would be doing violence to the sanctuary of philosophy. His enemies may desire it, and seek occasion for that triumph which pernicious mediocrity sometimes acquires over the sublimity of genius. He seeks the most complete security in the celestial sanctuary of self-applause, in the steady discharge of duties committed to his care, in an inflexibility to ill, and in the obstinacy of justice. The arts of malice, and the rude voice of faction, assail him in vain. The senseless clamours of his enemies make no impression on him. He appears invulnerable to the shafts of malignity which fall every where around him, blunted by the invisible dignity of his character and the high respectability of his talents.

17 one pounds, and eight pence in money (£7,181 0 8); And for the interest due on these certificates, up to the dates of the respective purchases, I have issued, in obedience to the act above referred to, one hundred and twenty-eight (128) certificates, amounting in the whole to eight thousand five hundred and ninety-nine pounds eight shillings and five pence (£8,599 8 5).

In compliance with the directions of the last Assembly, I have vested the monies heretofore received by me for the use of North-Carolina, as the interest and reimbursement of her stock in the funds of the United States, up to the 31st of December last, in three per cent. and 8 per cent. stocks of the said funds. Those receipts amounted to sixteen thousand six hundred and forty dollars and fifteen cents. (Dels. 16,640 15) with which I have caused to be purchased six thousand nine hundred and ninety-six dollars of three per cent. stock, (D. 6,996) and eleven thousand one hundred dollars of eight per cent. stock (D. 11,100); the first at the rate of fifty-seven per cent. (57) and the latter at the rate of one hundred and eleven and a half per cent. (111 1-2) as per the account and vouchers herewith presented. I flatter myself, it will be readily perceived and admitted, that these purchases have been made on advantageous terms, and on a commission uncommonly low, and that the legislature will approve of, and be satisfied with them.

Unversed as I was in business of this kind, and far distant from those places at which purchases of stock might be made, I felt a little difficulty and embarrassment when it became necessary for me to decide on the mode through which the intentions of the legislature with respect to it, might be the most advantageously and completely effected. In this difficulty I applied to General STEELE, then at Washington, requesting his advice and assistance, and with offering to him a commission on the intended purchases, in case he would effect them. His answer purported, that he would readily, and with pleasure render to the state of North-Carolina, every aid and assistance in his power; but, that on this occasion, it must be explicitly understood, that he would assist me, on the express condition, that neither commission nor other compensation or reward whatever, should be offered him for so doing, as he would receive none: And thereupon, he obligingly procured me a warrant on the Bank of the United States, and advised and directed the business throughout. This is mentioned, not merely with the view of professing my personal obligations to Mr. STEELE for the assistance he was pleased to render me on this occasion; but in justice to him, and under the impression that I owe it to the legislature and to myself, not to withhold from them a circumstance which had such influence in the happy accomplishment of the business with which I was charged by them.

For the further information of the General Assembly, it may not be improper for me to add, that it will be found by the Committee of Finance, on their inspection of my public account, as settled with the comptroller, that the receipts at the treasury of state, from the first day of November, 1801, to the first day of November, 1802, amount to twenty-five thousand and thirty-eight pounds, nine shillings and ten-pence (£25,038 9 10); and that the disbursements, for the same period, including the monies burnt by the last Assembly, and those paid for certificates purchased, amount to thirty-five thousand four hundred and sixty pounds, thirteen shillings (£35,460 13 0) leaving in the Treasury, on the first day of November, 1802, the sum of fifty-two thousand four hundred and twelve pounds, eighteen shillings and two-pence (£52,412 18 2) belonging to the public and yet to be accounted

North-Carolina Legislature.

Tuesday, Nov. 25.

The Speaker laid before the house, the following communication from the Public Treasurer, which was read, referred, and ordered to be printed:

TO THE HONOURABLE
The General Assembly of the State of
North-Carolina.

GENTLEMEN,

IN the belief that it is proper, I would leave to inform you, that owing to a variety of causes, which it may not be necessary here to detail, the debt contracted by this state, with the government of Martinique, during the revolutionary war, had never been fully paid: To effect the extinguishment of it, and in compliance with the wishes of the legislature, from time to time expressed, I considered it my duty, and took occasion, soon after the rise of the last Assembly, to make the necessary remittance to the City of Washington. The sum due as the balance of this debt, although it had remained long unpaid, had not increased, inasmuch as it was for interest; the debt was therefore finally extinguished by the payment of five hundred & ninety-two pounds, eighteen shillings and eight pence, on the 26th day of January last, to M. Pichon, the French Consul resident at Washington. The remittance for this purpose I took the liberty of addressing to the Hon. Mr. MACON, of Congress, and should be unjust to him, were I not to add, that it was through his obliging aid and assistance, that this business has at length been finished, and that in a manner in which I hope will prove satisfactory to the General Assembly.

Out of the monies remaining in the Treasury last year, and pursuant to the act of the Assembly of 1801, for that purpose made and provided, I have purchased for the use of North-Carolina, and at the rate of fifteen shillings for the pound (15s.) the sum of nine thousand five hundred and seventy-four pounds, fourteen shillings & two pence (£9,574 14 2) principal of the certificates heretofore issued under the authority of this state; equal at that issue, to seven thousand, one hundred and eight