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POLITICAL.

FROM THE ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE.

The facility and eagerness with which the revolution in Brazil has been effected, and the exemplary moderation that has succeeded it, are satisfactory proofs that the important science of ameliorating the condition of nations is becoming familiar to mankind; so that those apprehensions of the unmanageable violence generally attendant upon revolutions, which so often deterred wise and virtuous men from exerting themselves in the great cause of liberty, will soon cease to be an obstacle to reforms in government; and the men whom God has been graciously pleased to endow with talents and beneficence to break the spell of despotism, will not have cause much longer to be withheld by scruples about the consequences. If we look back even to the later and more enlightened eras of the history of the world, and consider the impetuous nature of the mounds behind which despotism has always entrenched itself, we shall have more reason to be astonished at the boldness and magnitude of what has been effected in favor of liberty, than to regret that more has not been done; and to wonder at, while we venerate the wisdom and virtues of those patriots who have gone before us, and who by the vigor of their souls made a practicable breach in the fortress of tyranny, through which their successors have gradually entered, and with less danger and violence sapped the foundations of the structure, rendering at length the complete accomplishment of its destruction a work of comparative ease and safety. It was said by a great political philosopher, in speaking of the murder of Louis 16th, that "kings would of necessity, from policy, become tyrants."—Such revolutions as that of Pernambuco, however, will make multitudes from policy and prudence be mild, and princes for their own interest, unite in the general amelioration of their species.

But this is not all—the danger which patriotic men, disposed to liberate their fellow citizens from the yoke of despotism, personally incurred as the consequences of their own success, was not less—indeed I think it greater—than that to which they were exposed in case of defeat.—On a certain occasion Mr. Fox declared, in the house of commons of England, that in case of a revolution, he had good reason to think that he would be the very first sacrifice. On every side therefore the intrepid promoter of reformation in government was beset with danger. God forbid that the passage to revolution was so smooth and easy, that restless and unprincipled people could harass the world with unnecessary experiments. It is however a subject of joy and triumph to mankind, that sovereigns and people are approaching every day nearer to each other, that they begin to understand one another, and what is much more difficult, to understand themselves—and that in all likelihood a very few years will bring things in that pass, that nothing manifestly calculated for the good of the whole will meet with any violent obstruction from either party. The reasonableness of this hope is evinced in the conduct of some of the European princes at this day; in that of Alexander, for instance, of the king of Prussia, and (I fear not to hazard the assertion) of the wise and benignant Louis the 18th.—As to Austria he is a dubious character—nothing by principle, anything by circumstance—and wavering in his weak nature, as the wind of expediency may blow, will be, just as circumstances shall arise, an Alexander or a Ferdinand.

There cannot be imagined a more interesting contrast than would be presented in a well drawn pair of pictures of the state of mankind at this day, and at that gloomy era when submission to the most abject despotism overmind, and the most galling tyranny over person and property were made articles of implicit religious faith, and when the chains of every base and degrading servitude were riveted at once by Monkish superstition and by a mistaken code of honor;—when the knight who sallied forth seeking to redress injuries and right wrongs, and the pretended keepers of the keys of Heaven at Rome, concerned, one in dragging with his lance, and the other in crushing with his crozier, any one that dared to utter a syllable about freedom and independence. What an amazing exhibition it would be to see the one, once an Amadis, laid in the gutter with closed eyes by a London ticket porter or a Dublin chimney-sweeper—and the other, who, by his bare mandate once made the royal hero of the age, Henry the 2d, whip himself at the tomb of a knavish priest, now crippled in power, beheld without awe and by most derided, or if respected by any, respected only like an old family picture to which a place is allowed in the lumber garret, only because it has passed down as the resemblance of some great-great-grand-aunt who was thought a very good sort of an old woman some two hundred or two hundred and fifty years ago.

This train of thinking has led me to the recollection of an historical fact—which, as it may perhaps atone for the dullness of the above, I will relate.

There lived in Florence, in the latter end of the fifteenth century, a Friar, of the name of Savonarola. What could have put it into the head of a Dominican at that time of the day to be a democrat, God only knows; but so the fact was—and this very Dominican rendered himself quite popular by preaching resistance to the Pope and to the aristocracy of Florence.—As he was bold, plausible and eloquent, and as people then as well as now, were easily taught to understand their rights, he succeeded to a miracle not only in awakening them to a sense of their privileges and of the value of freedom—but, with an integrity that did him honor, and which we seldom meet in modern demagogues, he taught them to distinguish between Liberty and Licentiousness.

The same sagacity which opened to his view the rights of his fellow-creatures, obscured though they were by a barbarous fog of despotism and superstition, enabled him, by a clear estimate of the state of Italy, to foretell an invasion of that country. The verification of his prediction, with some other displays of the same sagacity, procured for him the reputation of a prophet: he was worshipped as a saint by the admiring populace, who declared that he received communications from heaven. Had Cromwell, Chatham, or Burke, lived in those ages, they would probably, on the same grounds, have been apotheosized by the multitude, like Savonarola—and like him, perhaps, at last, be burned alive for their sagacity, by the representative of St. Peter.

There was one weakness, to which our friar was unfortunately for himself, a slave—to which we have never heard any of those others were liable. Either from vanity or from fraud, he assumed the reputation accorded to him by the superstitious multitude, and agreed to exchange his real character of a man of first-rate sagacity and brightness, for that of a very inferior divinity, and publicly avowed that his information was of divine origin.

The old lady with the keys, whose heart was all this time bursting with vengeance at this democrat's former opposition, hastened to take advantage of this circumstance, accused Savonarola of a blasphemous assumption of apostolic powers, and ordered him to be cited before an ecclesiastical tribunal. This attack upon their favorite excited discontent among the people; but their murmurs were soon silenced by the rumbling of the Vatican thunder, and they were enjoined, under the pains and penalties of the papal anathemas, to forbear punishing a man who without any authority from or connivance on the part of his holiness, had dared to pretend to supernatural information; the fickle superstitious multitude abandoned the man they had but just been deifying, and delivered him over to his tyrant, and their own—who after subjecting him to the mockeries of a trial, put the wretched man to the torture, and then ordered him to be hanged and burned. Thus did the ungrateful Florentines give up to the tigers and vultures of the Vatican, the man who had rendered them the most important services, and procured for them privileges they never before enjoyed; but which were taken from them when that able partizan was destroyed. So true is the remark made by a distinguished writer whom I am very fond of quoting—"It seems in all countries (says he) a common artifice with oppressors, to employ on every occasion the malignant passions of the people against themselves."

FOREIGN.

Napoleon and Wieland.—In the autumn of 1808, some of the princes, then assembled at the congress of Erfurt, came for a few days to visit the court of Weimar, and among them, Napoleon. He was accompanied by a troop of French players, who borrowed the theatre, and on the 6th October exhibited in it Voltaire's death of Cæsar. Wieland went to see this tragedy, in which Talma was to perform, and sat as usual in a private side-box of the second tier, reserved for the ducal family, to which he had been attached as preceptor. Napoleon observed him there, and inquired who was the venerable old man with the black velvet cabottee: this was the usual costume of Wieland, who, not liking to wear a wig, and being exposed by the baldness of his crown to colds of the head, had adopted a circular cap resembling that of the catholic priests.—After having been informed by the prince primat that this was Wieland, Napoleon signified a wish to see him after the play; and Wieland, accordingly, was ushered to the ball-room, which was to be the next place of rendezvous. In one of Wieland's letters the following account is given to the interview.

"I had not been many minutes there before Napoleon came across the room towards us; the dutchess then presented me to him regularly, and he addressed me affably, with some words of compliment, looking me steadily in the eye. Few mortals have appeared to me so rapidly to see through a man at a glance: he instantly perceived that, notwithstanding my celebrity, I was a plain, unassuming old man; and, as he seemed desirous of making for ever a good impression upon me, he at once assumed the form best adapted to attain his end. I never saw a man in appearance calmer, plainer, milder, or more un-

* The celebrated German writer.

assuming. No trace about him of the consciousness that he was a great monarch. He talked to me like an old acquaintance with his equal; and, what was very rare with him, chatted with me, exclusively, an entire hour and half, to the great surprise of all present. At length, about midnight, I began to feel inconvenience from standing so long, and took the liberty of requesting his majesty's permission to withdraw. 'Alex donc,' said he, in a very friendly tone, 'bon soir.'

"The more remarkable traits of our interview were these:—The previous play having drawn our conversation upon Julius Cæsar, Napoleon observed, 'that he was one of the greatest characters in universal history; and indeed,' added he, 'would have been without exception, the greatest, but for one blunder.' I was about to inquire to what anecdote he alluded, when he seemed to read the question in my eye, and continued: 'Cæsar knew the men who wanted to get rid of him, and he ought to have been rid of them first.' If Napoleon could have read all that passed in my inner mind, he would have perceived me saying—Such a blunder will never be laid to your charge.

"From Cæsar our conversation turned to the Romans; he praised warmly their military and their political system. The Greeks, on the contrary, seemed to stand low in his opinion. 'The eternal scuffle between their little republics was not formed (he said,) to evolve any thing great. But the Romans were always intent on grand purposes, and thus created the mighty Colossus which bestrode the world. I pleaded for the arts and literature of the Greeks; he treated both with contempt, and said, 'they only served to dispute about.' He preferred Ossian to Homer. In poetry, he professed to value only the sublime and energetic and pathetic writers, especially the tragic poets; but of Ariosto, he spoke in some such terms as cardinal Hippolito of Este did: not aware, however, I think, that in this he was giving me a box on the ear. For any thing humorous, he seemed to have no liking; and, notwithstanding the flattering friendliness of his apparent manner, he repeatedly struck me as if cast from bronze.

"At length, however, he put me so much at my ease, that I asked him how it came about that the public worship, which he had reformed in France, had not been ended more philosophic and more on a par with the spirit of the times. 'My dear Wieland, (he replied) worship is not made for philosophers: they neither believe in me nor my priesthood. As for those who do believe, you cannot give them, or leave them, wonders enow. If I had to make a religion for philosophers, it should be just the reverse.' In this tone the conversation went on for some time, and Bonaparte professed so much scepticism, as to question whether Jesus Christ had ever existed. This (adds Wieland) is very quotidian scepticism; and in his free-thinking I saw nothing to admire, but the openness with which he exposed it."

Bonaparte sent shortly afterwards to Wieland a brevet of admission into his legion of honor.

St. Domingo.—We have received intelligence from Petion. One of our countrymen who has gone on board a privateer under the flag of Buenos Ayres, writes to his correspondent in this city, that after a cruise of five months they had been very successful in their captures, which were sent into Port-au-Prince, for condemnation. He further states, that the privateer afterwards put into the same port, with all the hands on board in high spirits, in anticipation of the prize money that would fall to their share: this according to their calculation, would amount to the sum of nine hundred dollars per man. They entered the port full of these joyous anticipations, changed their apparel to make as respectable an appearance as possible, furlled up their sails, and were preparing peaceably to go on shore. He states further, that while himself and his comrades were enjoying these golden dreams, the vessel was boarded and taken possession of by the blacks, who plundered them of all their wearing apparel, took their watches from their fobs, the money from their pockets, and finally committed them to prison on a charge of piracy. They were finally suffered to regain their liberty, but were sent on shore without any means of obtaining their subsistence. In their distress they applied to the American consul, who administered relief from his own private funds. He further adds, that the consul took down his flag, declaring that he would no longer act as an American agent under so tyrannical a government, and that he shortly afterwards embarked for the United States, to represent the wrongs they had suffered to the American government. He states that all the prizes which they have sent in, to the amount of at least twenty-five thousand dollars, have been confiscated, and that the privateer itself is already condemned and sold as a vessel that has been employed in committing acts of piracy, instead of making captures. He further states that admiral Taylor was off the mouth of the harbor with his squadron, and had given notice to president Petion, that he would capture every vessel under his colors, until he had obtained two millions of dollars—that being the amount of the property captured and sent in by the ad-

miral, and which has been confiscated and condemned on the charge of piracy. He further states, that the navy of the ebony president consists of one frigate, two brigs, and a sloop of war, which it is deemed imprudent to send out. They look magnificent while riding in port, and possess a character truly grand and imposing. This property is too valuable to trust to the sea, for there it would stand a chance of being captured. We should recommend to his sable excellency to have his navy insured, and he could then, in case of a total or a partial loss, come upon the underwriters for damages.

WIDOW OF MARSHAL NEY.

Paris April 17.—The following autograph letter from the emperor of Austria to the relict of marshal Ney, is handed about in the circles of Paris; it is remarkable from the graciousness of its tone towards that lady, from the opinion it conveys upon the conduct of the ill fated marshal, and from the terms in which it designates Napoleon. As to its authenticity, I have nothing to say, that can either confirm or disprove it; your judgment on that head must rest on the bare merits of the letter itself:—

"Madame la Princesse de la Moskoway—
"Your letter of the 18th January has been delivered into our hands. You express therein the desire of finally settling your abode in the city of Florence. Our brother, the grand duke, would have hastened to meet your wishes on this point, had he not been desirous of leaving it to ourselves to express the satisfaction we should feel in possessing you, either in our hereditary states, or in the dominion of a prince of our family. The orders of our cabinet were not intended to apply to you, madam; you may therefore consider as final the authority to settle in Florence, which you received in April, 1816. You may also consider yourself at liberty to choose any residence that may be agreeable to you, within our dominions, it being our wish that you be treated as one of our dearest subjects. We deplore the fatality of the circumstances which brought on this misfortune of your illustrious husband, and impressed with the recollection of his having been the victim of his devotion to a prince, allied to us by the ties of blood, and to her majesty the dutchess of Parma, our beloved daughter, we make it our duty to concur in offering you every consolation in our power. At the same time that we invite his imperial highness the grand duke, our beloved brother, to transmit you himself this letter, which we have written in our hand, we beg of him to consider you as possessing our entire friendship.

"Whereupon, Madame la princesse de la Moskoway, I pray God to preserve you in his holy keeping.

FRANCIS.

Written at the palace of Blankembourg, 20th Feb. 1817."

The Journal of Ghent, of the 21st, under the head of Ghent, says that Mr. Santini, lately returned from St. Helena, declared at Ghent, that he was going to Italy to deliver letters from Bonaparte to the empress Maria Louisa.

The establishments of the Batavia and Helder, for the reception of foreign seamen, are ordered to be discontinued, by which the expense attendant hereon is removed. Communications, it is said, have been made to the several consuls resident here, for them to undertake the sending home their several countrymen, in a similar manner that all the English consuls abroad do with British seamen.—The American consul has already taken steps for this purpose, but with little success; and it is not improbable but the others will experience similar difficulties; so that the streets will be again infested with beggars who have refused the relief offered them of returning to their homes.

FROM THE LONDON LITERARY GAZETTE.

David still retains his reputation at Paris; for his last picture of Leonidas, he has refused a sum equal to 2500l and demands 100,000 francs for this admired specimen of his pencil.

The Dutchess of Devonshire still has her parties at Rome every week. She seems determined to rival her father, the late Earl of Bristol, in her patronage of the fine arts. She is about to publish, at her own expense, a splendid edition of Annibal Caro's celebrated translation of the Æneid, with illustrations executed by the first Roman artists, together with a translation of Horace's Journey to Brundisium, in the same splendid illustration. Her Grace has also undertaken, with the permission of the government, an excavation in the Roman Forum, which promises the most interesting results; and further still, it is understood that she intends giving a commission for some one work to every Roman artist who ranks above mediocrity. One cannot be surprised, after this, to hear of an author dedicating the first volume of his work to St. Peter, and the second to the Dutchess of Devonshire. This has literally occurred.

VALUABLE SALE.—In consequence of my having bought a place more convenient for my family, I wish to SELL MY HOUSES AND LOT, nearly opposite James Waugh's Store and Tavern. The lot contains one acre and a half: there are two dwelling houses on the lot, one 25 by 20, framed; the other log, two story, 22 by 28, with all suitable out-houses and a good well at the door. For farther information, apply to the subscriber.

C. WAGOMAN,
Charlestown, Stokes County, N. C.
N. B. Also, a piece of LAND, adjoining the lands of Col. Joseph Winston, in the neighbourhood of Germantown, containing between 45 and 50 acres.
June 4.