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State of the Negotiation between France and America.

PARIS, 18 Thermidor, August 6.

The conferences opened at Paris with the envoys of the United States are at present suspended; and there is little hope of their being successfully resumed for some time. It appears that the powers vested in the envoys are too limited to enable them to conclude a treaty which shall give the same advantages to the Republic as those granted the English by the treaty made with Mr. Jay. France chooses rather to decline treating with the United States, than to sanction the privileges which they have acceded to her enemy.

The question in dispute will appear from the following particulars.

The United States and England, by the 25th article of their treaty, mutually stipulate a free entrance into their respective ports, with complete protection to the privateers and ships of war of the two countries, and the prizes taken from their enemies. And they engage never to conclude a treaty extending the same favour to any nation at war with either of the contracting parties. The treaty of 1778, between France and the United States having been annulled by the latter, and now regarded as if it never existed, they conceive that they cannot give the same privileges to France, without violating their treaty with England. The French Republic does not seem disposed to satisfy, to her own prejudice, and in favour of the English, her enemies and rivals, a proceeding so unexpected on the part of the Americans, with whom she recently made a common cause against those very enemies, directed to the same object for which France herself is now at war—the attainment of liberty and independence.

It is unfortunate that the United States so precipitately annulled the treaty of 1778. They themselves, now repent that they were induced to take that step, as it deprives them of the power of giving to France, or any other country the same advantages which they have conferred on the English. Their diplomatic agents must have been very short sighted, or very partial to the interest of England,—or their Envoys must give a wrong interpretation to their instructions and the treaty alluded to; since it appears that France, renouncing the claims she may have from the priority of the treaty of 1778, now offers to treat without demanding any other advantage than those enjoyed by the English, and which they have exercised during the present war—and the Ambassadors to negotiate a peace, if they are not vested with power to accede to those conditions.

The negotiation was opened, on the part of the French Commissioners, on the supposition that the treaty of 1778 was still in force. It was, indeed, natural to suppose that, the two nations never having been in a state of war with each other, this treaty could not have been annulled without the consent of both countries; and in this point of view it was that the French Commissioners offered an indemnification to the Americans, by admitting the principle of compensation for illegal captures.

They even proceeded further; instead of demanding from the Americans, the indefinite guarantee of the French colonies, the article of the treaty which was most disadvantageous to the former, they agreed to the substitution of a special guarantee, such as appears to be contained in the instructions of the preceding ambassadors, according to the copy of them published by Congress. But the American Envoys were not authorized to renew this treaty, even after retrenching the article respecting the guarantee of the French islands. France, therefore, conceived herself exempted from the obligation of compensating for the captures—the Americans themselves having, by abrogating the treaty, destroyed the basis on which only their claim could have been founded.

It thus appears that the negotiation turned chiefly on three points.

1. The continuance in force, or the modified renewal of the treaty of 1778. France waived this point, in consequence of the assurance of the American Envoys that they could not renew it.

2. The principle of compensation for illegal captures. This point France offered to admit; but on condition only that the treaty of 1778 should be renewed, with the modifications stated in the instructions given by Washington.

3. The 25th article of the treaty between the United States and Great Britain, relative to the protection granted to the armed vessels of that nation. France will most probably insist upon enjoying the same advantage as long as it is possessed to her injury by her enemies.

There is another principle which France is anxious to establish; & on the adoption of which she has strong-

ly insisted; a principle which it is still more the interest and policy of the Americans to carry into execution. But the treaty of 1793 with the English prevents them from acceding to this system, namely, that neutral bottoms shall constitute neutral property. France, however, hopes to reduce the powers of the North to establish this system, to be excluded from the benefit of which would be highly injurious to the Americans.

It appears, however, that these diplomatic conferences have been conducted in the most amicable manner, and so as to leave only an impression of regret that it was impossible to remove the difficulties which had occurred. The American Ambassadors, during their residence at Paris, have been treated with every possible mark of respect, and enjoyed all the distinctions conferred on the Ministers of our Allies. As it is at present, the principle and system of France to respect and protect the law of nations, and the rights of neutrality, it is to be hoped that the frank and equitable conduct which she holds, with regard to neutral States, will soon remove the difference which have occurred between her and the United States; and that even should the present negotiation not terminate in a treaty, the American flag shall, notwithstanding, continue to be respected, and their vessels treated as those of a friendly nation in our courts of law.

Orders are issued to the privateers to respect all neutral flags, among which the American is undoubtedly the most numerous, and American vessels are daily released by the courts, with damages against the owners of privateers. There are now about fifty causes before the Council of Prizes respecting vessels taken in the European seas, and those of the vessels which really belong to Americans will assuredly be restored. The fate of such, however, as were furnished with letters of marque, does not appear to be yet determined. It is thought that they cannot be given up without sanctioning the conduct of the Americans in arming them, unless the restitution should result from a new treaty of amity.

The preceding particulars, though not official, have been communicated by the most respectable authority.

SERIOUS CONSIDERATIONS

On the Election of a

PRESIDENT:

ADDRESSED TO THE

Citizens of the United States.

Fellow-Citizens,

THE time is drawing near, when you will be called to give your voice in the election of a President. In the exercise of this important privilege, it will be granted, that great deliberation is necessary; and that upon the choice of a suitable person depends, under Divine Providence, the prosperity of our nation. A few considerations, therefore, will be received by you with candor, and allowed all the weight which you may think them entitled. The writer of them has neither held, nor does he expect ever to hold any office under government; he means not to be an advocate for any particular man; he is not actuated by a mere regard to the political principles of any party; but, if his heart deceive him not, by a sincere desire for the public welfare.

It is well understood that the Honorable Thomas Jefferson is a candidate for the Chief Magistracy of the United States, and that a number of our citizens will give him all their support. I would not presume to dictate to you who ought to be President, but entreat you to hear with patience my reasons why *he* ought not.

To the declarations of disinterestedness and sincerity already made, I think it proper to add, that I have no personal resentment whatever against Mr. Jefferson, and that it is with pain I oppose him; that I never was in his company, and would hardly know him; that I honor him as holding a high office in government; that I admire his talents, and feel grateful for the services which he has been instrumental in rendering to his country; and that my objection to his being promoted to the Presidency is founded singly upon his disbelief of the Holy Scriptures; or, in other words, his rejection of the Christian Religion and open profession of Deism.

Notwithstanding the general character of Mr. Jefferson, and the proofs of his Deistical principles which have been partly published at different times, there are some who still doubt; or, if they admit the truth, are disposed to say that he is no worse than his opponents. Whether he is worse or not will be shown hereafter.—When the spirit of party is so violent as we have seen it in this country, and the vilest calumnies have been propagated respecting the best characters, it is not surpris-

ing that the reports which are circulated should be received with caution, especially when there is not ready access to the highest and most infallible sources of information. I shall endeavour in this address, to present to your view, the collective evidence of Mr. Jefferson's principles as to religion, and show you why such a man ought not to be honored and entrusted with the office of chief magistrate. This I hope to do principally from Mr. Jefferson's own writings, and in such a manner, that neither he or any of his friends shall be able justly to charge me with the least misrepresentation.

Besides the publications acknowledged by a man, some dependence may be fairly placed upon his general character, and his conversation as related by men of intelligence and veracity. The world is seldom mistaken as to a man's talents and moral principles; and we safely rely upon respectable testimony. The avowal, therefore, of sentiments in conversation which shall be related, cannot be doubted, from the nature of the authority; and our belief will be strengthened when this is viewed in connection with the written evidence.

In the work of Mr. Jefferson, entitled "*Notes on the State of Virginia*," what he says on the subject of the deluge, is a clear proof of his disrespect for divine revelation. He opposes the opinion, that the shells found on the tops of high mountains ought to be considered as a proof of an universal deluge. He endeavours to show, that if the whole contents of the atmosphere were water, the lands could be overflowed to the height of 52 1/2 feet only, and that in Virginia this would be a very small proportion even of the Champaign country. He rejects a second opinion, that "the bed of the ocean, has, by some great convulsion of nature, been heaved to the heights at which we now find shells and other remains of marine animals." He rejects likewise a third solution suggested by Voltaire.—"There is a wonder," says Mr. Jefferson, "somewhere; is it greatest on this branch of the dilemma, on that which supposes existence of a power, of which we have no evidence in any other case; or on the first, which requires us to believe the creation of a body of water, and its subsequent annihilation? The three hypotheses are equally unsatisfactory, and we must be contented to acknowledge, that this great phenomenon is as yet unsolved. Ignorance is preferable to error; and he is less remote from the truth who believes nothing, than he who believes what is wrong."*

Let it be remarked here, that could Mr. Jefferson find, what he thought evidence, that the waters had ever covered the highest mountains, he would have admitted that solution as to the shells; but he attempts to show the improbability of such a quantity of water being produced, and consequently discredits the sacred history. The account given by the inspired writer, is, "All the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened, and the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upwards did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered."†

Moses mentions two causes of the deluge, *the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened*; but Mr. Jefferson does not so much as name this old philosopher, while he indirectly denies the facts, or, like other infidels, cannot still get water enough to cover the mountains. Even a miracle is not sufficient with him, or rather his faith is too weak to receive a miracle. *Requires us, says he, to believe the creation of a body of water and its subsequent annihilation.* He is at liberty to philosophize if he pleases, on the causes of the deluge; it is not my business at present (and I beg that it may be remembered) to refute his principles; but only to show their inconsistency with the Holy Scriptures. I am not called then to controvert his positions, that *ignorance is preferable to error, and that he is less remote from the truth who believes nothing, than he who believes what is wrong*; but I will be permitted to say, that it is safest for him to believe the Mosaic account of the deluge, though he should never find out a satisfactory solution; yea, though he should adopt a wrong one.

Again, upon the question, Whence the first inhabitants of America originated? Mr. Jefferson is of opini-

* Page 28, to p. 31.—The edition which I use is that printed in Philadelphia, 1778. Mr. Jefferson has published, so late as the present year, an appendix to this work; but it relates wholly to the murder of Logan's family. There is not a retraction of, or even an apology for any of his sentiments, though he knows they have been repeatedly censured.

† Genesis vii. 11, 12, 19, 20.
[See last Page.]