

suspension throughout the country, and that the Treasury itself in the midst of its nominal abundance, must be practically bankrupt.

In such a state of things the first consideration is how to escape from it—how to provide at the earliest practicable moment to change a condition which should not be tolerated beyond the necessity which commanded it. The old associations, the extensive connections, the established credit, the large capital of the Bank United States, reader it the natural rallying point of the country for the resumption of specie payments. It seemed wiser therefore not to waste its strength in a struggle which might be doubtful while the Executive persevered in its present policy, but to husband all its resources so as to profit by the first favorable moment to take the lead in the early resumption of specie payments. Accordingly the Bank of the United States assumes that position. From this moment its efforts will be to keep itself strong, and to make itself stronger—always prepared and always anxious to assist in recalling the currency and the exchanges of the country to the point from which they have fallen. It will co-operate cordially and zealously with the Government, with the Government Banks, with all the other Banks, and with any other influences which can aid in that object.

In the meantime, two great duties devolve on the Banks and the country. The first regards foreign nations—the second our own. We owe a debt to foreigners, by no means large for our resources, but disproportionately to our present means of payment. We must take care that this late measure shall not seem to be an effort to avoid the payment of our honest debts to them. We have worn, and eaten and drunk the produce of their industry—too much of all perhaps, but that is our fault, not theirs. We may take less hereafter, but the country is dishonoured unless we discharge that debt to the uttermost farthing.

The second duty is to ourselves. We should bear constantly in mind that the step which has been taken is excusable only on the ground of an overruling necessity. We must not make the remedy itself a disease. It must not be the pretext of extravagant loans or issues. These are already sufficiently inflated, and if we have voluntarily removed the most familiar and established check upon all issues—their immediate convertibility into coin—it is our duty to substitute some effectual restraints which may enable us to restore the currency without delay or difficulty to a safe and wholesome condition. The result of the whole is, that a great disaster has befallen the country. Its existence thus far is only a misfortune,—its continuance will be a reproach, from which all true men must rally to save her. We must try to render it as short as possible, waiting patiently and calmly for the action of the Government, and in the mean time diminishing its dangers by great prudence and forbearance. For myself, you know how zealously I have labored to avert this misfortune. With not less anxiety I shall now strive to repair it.

With great respect & regard, yours
N. BIDDLE.

Hon. J. Q. ADAMS, Quincy, Mass.
FROM THE EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENT
OF THE NEW YORK DAILY EXPRESS.

O. P. Q.—No. 51.
THE SOCIAL CONDITION OF FRANCE.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATION.—No 1.
To the Editors of the New York Daily Express.
Paris, March 20th, 1837.

GENTLEMEN:—From the establishment of Christianity to the last century, societies, and the governments which are the representatives, and the safeguards of societies—whether these societies be communes, provinces, or kingdoms, have only existed on one condition—and that has been, to prevent, or to annihilate, or to render even useful, as they arose, the material evils which afflicted those societies, and which were their bane and source of sorrow. Thus in the first ages of the French monarchy, when the populations were decimated by famine, by the plague, and by those epidemic disorders which afflicted the human frame, establishments were founded to give bread to the poor, assistance to the sick, and an asylum to the infirm. Thence arose hospitals, sick houses, and leprosy houses, which were then built in all parts of the country.

When in process of time the cruades became, for all those who had not some trade or employment in the cities, a pretext for evil disposed persons going up and down the country and seizing individuals in order to obtain the price of their ransoms—what were called "Hostleries" or leashing houses were built at the gates of towns, where every traveller wearing a cape and a sword, was lodged and fed for 24 hours—and never was he sent away until supplied with provisions for at least some days.

The misery of the people at last became so great, that in the time of St. Louis, prostitution was so common and so extensive, that the king deemed it necessary to put a stop to it by providing those unfortunate beings with another source of existence than their persons and their passions afforded them, and he actually granted pensions

to a large number of them of 4000 francs per annum, in order to induce them to abandon their nefarious traffic.

After the wars of the League, and later in French history after those of the Fronde, France was inundated by a description of soldiers called "passe-volants," who having no longer any pay, nor the advantage of being able legally to pillage and kill, demanded alms with swords in their hands, and kept the industrious portion of the people in constant bodily fear. Then it was that Henry IV. opened to the *passe-volants* the Charity House of the Rue de l'Oursine. Louis XIII. lodged and fed them at Vincennes, and Louis XIV. built for the victims of, or sufferers by war, the "Hotel des Invalides."

From the time when feudalism was destroyed by the emancipation of the serfs of the feudal lords, *misericordia* became the great curse of French society; and at the end of each commotion, the towns were crammed by the population of the surrounding country. The number of beggars in Paris alone, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, is said to have amounted to forty thousand, or one fifth of the population. It then became necessary to meet this evil; and in 1656 the *Cour des Miracles*, so beautifully described by Victor Hugo, in his *Notre Dame de Paris*, was created of its mendicants, its thieves, its debaucheries, and of all its ignorance and immoralities, by the opening of the Hospitals of the Salpêtrière, the Pitié, Bicêtre, and St. Joseph. Thus misery found a home—and vice was punished or repressed.

The population continuing to augment, and the number of poor and unmarried persons having likewise increased—the noble Institution of the *Enfants Trouvés*, or French Foundling Hospital, was established. Abandoned and left without assistance of any sort by the avarice, negligence, or thoughtlessness of the feudal lords, who from the first periods of the monarchy had been charged with the support of the foundlings; and finally left wholly destitute when feudalism itself passed away; the wretched infants of wretched parents were strangled at the moment of their birth, or left on the high roads to wait the compassion of the passer by; till the voice of *Saint Vincent de Paul* was heard, and he rescued the little victims from the hands of mothers who were without hearts, and from fathers whose crimes and libertinism prevented them from being able to maintain their illegitimate offspring. The Institution of the *Enfants Trouvés* was founded—and innocence was saved from starvation and a charnel house.

The artisans and workmen of France, found in the *Corporations and Trade Societies* which were established, another sort of asylum for themselves, and bread and work were supplied to the honest laborer who would labor—assistance was given in times of sickness, and when no work could be got, and the laborer would otherwise have starved, these corporations, notwithstanding all their faults, and they were many, furnished the needy with at least the means of existence.

Thus you see, in the rapid sketch which I have made of French society from the first ages down to the last century; persons afflicted with the plague, travellers—infirm persons—beggars—vagabonds—mutilated soldiers—children abandoned by their parents—workmen—and even prostitutes—in one word, all who by suffering, nudity, want of work and misery, were driven to make war against society—found in society itself, the assistance of bread to eat, raiments to put on, a dwelling place, and even a workshop. Thus charity became a social law—and was founded on the law of the Gospels or of Christ. "The poor are always with you. Feed any lambs."

This is a specimen of what was done for misery by those who have been denominated by the apostles and disciples of *Voluntarian felicity*, the barbarians of former times. I am no lover of those times myself. I am no apostologist, you may well believe, of feudalism or of chivalry—of the crusades, or of the ancient lords of this vast territory now called France—but at least this must be admitted, that if the men who then ruled, were not as profound politicians, as able manufacturers and merchants, as great artists, as learned philosophers, as extraordinary orators or public writers, as the ministers and "great men" of the day in which we live—(which I deny)—at any rate they were men, who understood much better than the Guizots, Thiers and Dupins of our days, the vast questions of morals and of society.

Since the end of the reign of Louis XV all social questions have been put aside by political questions—after having been supplanted 2 centuries by religious disputes. Some isolated efforts have been made, to induce society in France to occupy itself again with these social questions—but the Governments of France have refused to take them up. Political, and not social questions have always taken the lead in France, since the epoch to which I have referred—and the Governments have fallen the one after the other, principally from this very reason.

The revolution of 1789 was a revolution against overtaxation, and a voluptuous and extravagant court. It was social. The revolution against the Empire was a revolution brought about by the inattention of the Empire to great social questions. The people

would not consent to have their fields any longer cultivated by old men—and to have their armies of youths decimated in foreign climes. The revolution of 1830 was to a certain extent likewise a social revolution—for the clergy had become pampered—the nobles were pensioned—and Charles X. was stupid enough to attack tens of thousands of the laboring classes who depended for support on the printing establishments of the country, by putting down the liberty of the press.

The people have over and over again endeavored to make their Governments understand, from the end of the reign of Louis XV. downwards—that the end of all politics should be the amelioration of the social condition of the millions, and that as new evils arose, and new wants presented themselves, that new remedies should be supplied, and new palliatives be invented.

This essential condition of the existence of all governments has been greatly neglected in France. It is a deplorable fact—but a fact, cannot be disputed, that the men who charge themselves, or who are charged, with the government of France, are deplorably indifferent to her social state; and hence nine-tenths of the evils which now exist.

You may well suppose, that I am not about examining in one letter, this vast, this universal question. I am not about to pretend to condense such a subject as this into a few lines or a few pages. The social condition of France is an immense subject, which can only be understood after suitable developments. I have begun the enquiry to-day, simply because I have something to say with reference to the system of public and of private education established in this country. This question is now being partially examined in the Chamber of Deputies, on the discussion of the law introduced by the government, for providing for what is called the *secondary instruction* of the youth of France. The bill has been brought in, in compliance with the promises of the charta. Seven years have nearly elapsed since those promises were made. They have not yet been realized. The measure now before the Chamber, is partial and inefficient; it meets not the evils which exist. It is not like those large and general measures which we have been looking to, and which were adopted in the earlier periods of the French monarchy, when diseases, sorrow and poverty required relief. It partakes of the character of the times in which we live. It is a makeshift—an apology for something which ought to be done—a sharking of the question—a postponement—a miserable and drivelling excuse.

A great social evil exists. What is it? Why, the youth of France are ignorant, lawless, disobedient, rebellious, fond of noise, tumult, agitation, political strife, given to riot and revelling, fond of display, finery—conceited, pragmatical—averse to control, dissatisfied with their condition in life, over ambitious, not content to work their way up by industry and application, to fame and to fortune, without good faith or honor, sly and tricking—lying, dishonest, immoral, vain, indecorous, indecent, blasphemous, atheistical, or deistical, irreligious, and impious. This is not a political, this is a social evil—an *immense social evil*. How is it to be met? By such a bill as M. Guizot, the Doctrinaire Minister of public Instruction, has introduced to the chamber of Deputies, and which he tells us very candidly he does not even profess to pass this year? No; no; you may as well attempt to arrest the rapids of the Niagara by a rope of sand, or to stop the avalanche by the interposition of a pebble.

"The youth of France are the hope of France!" Well then, France can have no hope! She can have no right to hope for glory, honor or happiness from her present rising generation. She has no right either to expect to make bricks without straw, or to gather grapes from off a common of briars, fern, and broom. If this social evil be not met, France is lost—lost forever.

But as it is at all times easy to find fault, when it is not equally so to remedy, I would point out the evils in the present system of education in France, at the same time indicating the means of obviating or at least diminishing the evils complained of.

In France there exists an University. Its head quarters are at Paris. A board of public instruction composed of individuals named by the Government, also sitting at Paris. The minister of Public Instruction has the charge of superintendence of all schools in the kingdom. It is a sort of monopoly of education. The revolution of 1830, amongst other objects it proposed, was to destroy this monopoly. Seven years have nearly passed away, and the monopoly still exists. Still on the Banks of the Rhone, and the Garonne, still on the frontiers of Savoy, in the mountains of the Pyrenees, and on the coasts of the Mediterranean, and the Gulf of Gascony, still however distant and however obscure may be the town or village in which a schoolmaster may desire to open a school, he cannot do so until first licensed to teach by the University of Paris, and by this Board of Public Instruction, stationed some hundred of leagues or miles from the scene of his labors. This system of centralization still ex-

ists, and it is only proposed very partially to attack it.

The schools of France are either public, or private, or Seminars for the education of youths set apart to the Sacerdotal office. The colleges are either royal or otherwise. The royal college have some pecuniary advantages over the others; but all the scholars of all schools, except of the Seminars for young priests, pay an enormous annual sum to the Government as a tax to the Paris University. This sum is so enormous as to augment the education of the youths of France at least one fourth. The masters of schools, the professors at schools, even private schools, must all be examined by the great monopoly of the Paris University and the Paris Board, so that from even the cradle, the Government exercises surveillance over, and has a pecuniary interest in each child, since whether in the primary or infant schools, or in the secondary or youth schools, or in the colleges or otherwise, something has to be derived in the shape of money from all these dear children.

The consequence of this system of centralization is, that the mode of education, and the character of education, given all over France, to the children of all sorts of population, is the same.

Whether the children be children of a manufacturing, or agricultural, or commercial, or fishing population, they must all learn the *Latin Grammar*, and *Homor* and *Virgil*. Poor little blockheads, after some years hard work, they just learn how to parse, and then what becomes of them? Why, the son of the rich proprietor goes on with Latin and literature, but the sons of the merchant, the broker, the farmer, the shop-owner, must go to the counting-house, the exchange, the fields, or to sea, and then of what use do they find their Greek Grammar and Latin Prosody? But this is not all. The children of the poor, who are destined by providence to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow, must plod on at the same Latin grammar, and Greek nouns, ignorant of French, ignorant of Geography, history, the trade and business they are destined to follow—and are as ignorant for all the practical purposes of life, when they leave school, as when they entered it. You will hardly believe that what I am now writing is strictly true. You will scarcely believe it possible that so stupid so useless, and so absurd a system can be in operation. And yet this is really the case. And when the members of the opposition in the chamber of Deputies require the destruction of this monstrous system of folly, and injustice—for it is unjust to waste several years of a child's life in making him learn that which can never be of use to him, they are accused of being "barbarians" because they are opposed to this general universal system of classical education for all the boys of France.

This system of education is most injurious to the youths of France. It gives them false notions of themselves and their prospects.

O. P. Q.
TREASURY REGULATIONS.
OFFICIAL.

Circular to Collectors of the Customs and Receivers of Public Moneys.

Treasury Department, May, 1837.

Sir: You will receive enclosed the blank form in which the Treasurer of the United States will, hereafter, issue his drafts in convenient sums for payments to the creditors of the Government, and for advances made, in pursuance of law, to disbursing officers, with the signature of the Treasurer and Register, written on its face for information as to their handwriting.

The warrants on which these drafts may be issued, will be retained in the possession of the Treasurer, and the drafts will be directed for payment, either to a cashier of a bank, a collector of the customs, or a receiver of public moneys, as the convenience of the service may require. For greater safety, notice will be given by the Treasurer to the bank, collector, or receiver on whom they shall be drawn, stating the date, number and amount of each draft drawn on them respectively, and also the name of the person or persons in whose favor they issue.

If the drafts on the banks be not seasonably discharged on presentation, the collectors and receivers are requested to redeem them by receiving in payment for duties public lands; provided that, before they shall be received by any such collector or receiver, a certificate that they have been properly presented to the bank and not paid shall be furnished. This certificate will be given on the back of them by the cashier of the bank on which they are drawn; or on his failure to give such certificate, or his signature not being known or verified to the collector and receiver, the Treasurer of the United States, on a return of the checks to him, and his being convinced by any evidence that the bank declines to pay them in a manner satisfactory to the holder, will himself make a certificate thereon, which will justify the above named officers in taking them up in the manner before described.

The drafts so received by you will immediately be canceled by a cross with ink on their face, and a whole cut through the centre of them. Retaining a schedule of the numbers and amount of each, you will then transmit

them weakly, to the Treasurer of the United States; and the officers by whom they were taken up will, on their receipt by the Treasurer, obtain credits in their accounts with the United States, for the amount of such as are correct. You will also return to him, weekly, a statement of the gross amount of checks taken up, and as the gross amount of money on hand.

The banks on which these checks are drawn, if paying them, will be expected to act in a similar manner as to cancelling and returning them weekly to the Treasurer.

LEVI WOODBURY,
Secretary of the Treasury.

CIRCULAR

From the Solicitor of the Treasury, to the United States Attorneys.

Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury,
May 15, 1837.

Sir: You will perceive, by the letter of the Secretary of the Treasury to the collector of the port of New York, under date of the 8th inst. that the Treasury Department, desiring in concurrence with the views of the President to give all the relief to the mercantile community under its present state of general embarrassment, which is authorized by law, and permitted by official obligation, has determined, in certain cases, to suspend for a short time the collection of duty bonds.

The fifth section of the act of May 29, 1830, entitled "An act to provide for the appointment of a Solicitor of the Treasury," gives power to that officer "to instruct district attorneys in all matters and proceedings appertaining to suits in which the United States is a party, or interested." This power has often, on application to this office, in cases of great hardship, embarrassment, or insolvency, been exercised, to give them for payment after the institution of suit on condition of further security being furnished to the satisfaction of the district attorney. A temporary indulgence, on this or other conditions, has frequently made ultimate payment secure, when a rigorous enforcement of the law would have resulted in the ruin of the debtor, and loss of the debt. But the indulgence has never heretofore, except on occasion of the great fire in New York, when Congress was in session, and had the subject of relief under consideration, been extended before suit commenced, though, under the opinion of this office, with the sanction of the Attorney General, the collector of New York has been informed by the Secretary of the Treasury that the power exists to grant delay before suit, and will now be extended in appropriate cases.

The present general embarrassment of the money concerns of the commercial cities has also been deemed by the President and Secretary of the Treasury a suitable occasion for an extraordinary exercise of the power of instruction to district attorneys, vested in this office by the act of congress above mentioned, by giving it beforehand, and leaving its special application to them, on the general terms and principles laid down by this office. I have, therefore, as the applications for relief will probably be numerous, thought proper to point out for your government the terms and condition on which, in the exercise of a sound discretion, after obtaining in each case all the information in your power, you may postpone the institution of suit.

1st. You will require that the assent of sureties, in writing, to the indulgence desired, be filed in your office.

2d. The 65th section of the general collection law of the 2d March, 1793, entitled "An act to regulate the collection of duties on imports and tonnage," provides that "on all bonds upon which suits shall be commenced, an interest shall be allowed at the rate of six per cent. per annum, from the time when said bonds become due until the payment thereof." You will require, therefore, the agreement of all the parties to bonds on which suits shall be postponed, to pay the same interest as if suit were instituted.

3d. You will, in no case, without further orders, grant a suspension of suit beyond the 1st day of October next, before which period Congress will have an opportunity of making such provisions as they may think proper.

4th. You will in all cases request additional security. If this can be given, you will require a judgment by confession as a condition of such stay of execution as you may deem expedient and proper, not to extend beyond the time above allowed for the suspension of suit.

5th. It must be a condition in all cases, that a forfeiture of all the benefits of the indulgence granted, shall be incurred, whenever any one of the terms of that indulgence shall not have been complied with.

It is not intended by the third regulation that the postponement of suit should in all cases be made until the 1st of October next. On the contrary you will take care that, in the exercise of the discretion respecting postponement of payment and suit, conferred on you by this letter, no indulgence be granted where the parties in your judgment are able to pay without serious sacrifices. It is moreover highly desirable, when the parties have it in their power to make it, to obtain payment in part, and to stipulate for the residue in instalments of thirty, sixty, or ninety days—or, if no part can be obtained in cash, then the whole amount

to be paid in instalments of thirty, sixty, and ninety days. More especially should this be required when no additional security is given.

It is desirable, for the convenience of parties applying for indulgence, that they should, in proper cases, obtain it without the delay, trouble, and expense of applying to this office. It is moreover obvious that the Solicitor of the Treasury, acting through the District Attorneys, who reside in the same place with the applicants, who have a personal acquaintance with them, and have a knowledge of their character and circumstances, may exercise the power for their relief, incident to his office, more judiciously than in person at Washington. The requisite authority, and general regulations for its exercise, are therefore given you by this letter of instructions. But, although it is highly desirable and expedient that cases of relief should be acted on and decided at once in the places where they originate, yet important cases, not coming within those regulations, or the circumstances of which, from their peculiarity, shall, in your judgment, require it, may be referred to this office, with a detailed report of all the facts and information affecting them possessed by you, or which you can collect.

You will, as heretofore, make a regular report of bonds transmitted to you by the collectors of the customs for suit, as prescribed in the first regulation for the observance of District Attorneys, in my Circular of the 24th July, 1830; and under the head of remarks, if a suspension of suit be granted, you will state the circumstances and conditions of the suspension, and the nature and amounts of the security given, the evidences of which you will retain in your possession.

In case of application for indulgence being made before the bonds become due, you may make use of the same forms of return as in case of suit, having such heads blank as are not applicable, and making the report immediately after the suspension of suit is granted. Should any of the conditions, on which indulgence has been granted, not be fulfilled, you will immediately, without further instructions, institute such legal proceedings as the case may call for, and make report thereof to this office.

I am, very respectfully, sir, your most obedient servant.

V. MAXCY,

Solicitor of the Treasury.

To _____, Esq.,

U. S. Attorney for the District of _____

From the Baltimore Chronicle.

To the honorable Wm. J. DEAN, formerly Secretary of the Treasury.

Sir—Your successor will pardon me for premitting my attention to him for a single day, that I may offer to you the homage of my sincere respect and admiration. If a good man could rejoice in the fulfilment of his own prophecies, when they are, at the same time, the misfortunes of his country, you would have ample cause for rejoicing at the scenes around you. Foreseeing the inevitable consequences of the measure which you were required, by a tyrannical Executive, to undertake, in defiance of your better judgment, you nobly chose to forfeit place, power, influence, all the changes of promotion, all the hopeful contingencies of party fealty, rather than swerve from your duty to your country and your conscience. Sir, the whole country now honors and applauds you. Your prophecies have been fulfilled, whilst those of him whose underhand practices superseded you in your office, have, by their falsification, covered him with confusion. Sir, I shall not be suspected of designing to flatter, when I say that you are now justly regarded as one of the most honored citizens of the Republic. I turn with pleasure—with a feeling of relief—from the contemplation of the severity of your successor to that of your own high souled and magnanimous independence. I doubt not that the man to whom you surrendered your seat at the Cabinet Council of your country would gladly exchange the office he now holds, with all its splendor and emoluments, for the peace of mind with which you can look back upon your past career. For him, I fear, a retrospect can have few attractions. If he look around him, now, he can discover nothing but ruin and desolation spread by his own hand. If he look forward, he can see nothing but the horrors of prostrate commerce, ruined credit and disordered finance—the work of his own hand. You, Sir, refused to be the agent in this work of destruction. You declined to do the bidding of an imbecile and despotic tyrant. In considering the conduct of him who stooped to the task which you reject with disdain, I came naturally to contrast your respective merits, and I could not refrain from pausing to offer you this sincere tribute of respect for your superior wisdom, patriotism and honor.

TEXAS.—The *Yelaso Herald* of May 11th has been received at New Orleans. The Texan Congress was in session, and many important questions were expected to come before it. The *Herald* adds—"There is a rumor that Santa Anna has been restored to power in Mexico, and that the Independence of Texas has been acknowledged by that Government." We attach no credit to this rumor.