



AND

NORTH-CAROLINA GAZETTE.

"Ours are the plans of fair, delightful Peace,
"Unwarp'd by party rage, to live like Brothers."

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SOUTH AMERICA.

DOCUMENTS

Referred to in the President's Message.

(Mr. Rodney's Letter continued.)

This Congress is comprised of deputies from the different provinces. It actually consists of twenty-six members. But as a representative is allowed for every fifteen thousand citizens, it would be numerous, if all the provinces had sent delegates in that ratio of population.

With some exceptions, and particularly of that palladium of our rights, which is unknown to the civil law, the trial by jury, the provisional constitution will be found, on an attentive perusal, to contain a distinct recognition of many of the vital principles of free government. A church establishment also, that of the catholic faith, is contrary to our ideas of religious freedom; though a measure adopted from necessity, perhaps, by them.

It declares, that all power, legislative, judicial, and executive, resides in the nation. The congress are to be chosen by electors, who are to be voted for by the people in the primary assemblies. The cabildos, or municipalities, are to be elected immediately by the citizens. It recognizes the independence of the judiciary, and declares the tenure of office, with respect to the superior judges, to be during good behavior. It provides for the election of a chief magistrate by congress, renewable when they choose to appoint a successor, and responsible for the execution of the duties of his office, which are defined and limited. In the act of office, he is sworn to preserve the integrity and independence of the country.

The three great departments of state, of the treasury, and of war, are distinctly marked out, and their respective powers and duties assigned.

On some subjects it enters more into detail than is usual with us, particularly in those of the army, navy, and militia. But this, perhaps, in their situation, was necessary.

It provides, that no citizen shall accept a title of nobility, without forfeiting the character of citizenship.

It provides, also, against general warrants, and the arrest of individuals, unless on probable proof of guilt.

It contains a salutary provision that a judge, having original jurisdiction, before taking cognizance of the cause, shall use all possible means of reconciling the parties. This constitution is but temporary. The Congress are engaged in the task of forming a permanent one. In the mean time, no alteration can be made in the present, unless with the consent of two thirds of the members. In this manner some alterations have been adopted.

The subject of a permanent constitution was before a committee of sixteen members of Congress. There was a difference of opinion prevailing among them, on the point of a confederated or a consolidated government. If they should adopt the former, they will frame the constitution, in all probability, nearly after the model of that of the United States. Should they decide on the latter, it is highly probable they will incorporate the leading features of our system into their form of government. They seem to concur in the proposition to have a chief magistrate elected for a term of years, and a representative legislature, to consist of two branches. A Senate, to constitute the most permanent body, and a House of Representatives, whose term of service shall be of short duration.

Perhaps it would be better for them to delay the completion of this all important task, after the example of the United States, until a period of peace. Their present provisional statute is an improvement on those which preceded it; and we may expect their proposed constitution will be still more perfect, as they advance in the knowledge of those principles on which republican governments are constituted.

But, however free in theory this provisional statute may be, it is undoubtedly true, that, unless administered according to its letter and spirit, it will afford security to the citizen. Whether any infractions have occurred since the date of its existence, I cannot pretend to determine, but believe in full possession of the facts.

When we recollect that they have

the benefit of our example, it may reasonably be expected that they will, in general, adhere to their written constitution. They have also the fatal result of the French revolution, warning them of the dangers of its excesses, of which they appear to be sensible.

The productions and the manufactures of the different provinces, will be found in Appendix D; but I was unable to procure any satisfactory estimates of the probable value or amount in each province. There is however, a considerable internal trade carried on in the interchange of various articles between the several provinces: cattle, horses, and mules, furnish a considerable source of barter; with the latter, Peru is usually supplied: the Paraguay tea is a great article of trade throughout the country. The brandy, wine, raisins, and figs of Mendoza and San Juan, are becoming important: the hides of oxen, the skins of the vaccina and granaco, with a number of fine furs, afford valuable articles of exchange. These, with the foreign goods transported in every direction from Buenos Ayres, very readily, by oxen and mules, which also furnish the means of carrying their native productions to their sea ports, form a branch of trade of great magnitude, considering the population of the country.

Their exports are calculated, with some degree of accuracy, at ten millions of dollars. These consist, principally, of ox hides, jerk beef, and tallow, the present great staples of the country. A variety of furs and peltries, some grain, copper, mostly bro't from Chili, with gold and silver in bullion and in coin, chiefly from the mines of Potosi.

The imports are computed to be about equal to their exports. British manufactures form the principal mass, & they are to had in great abundance. They consist of woolen and cotton goods of every description, some of them wrought to imitate the manufactures of the country; ironmongery, cutlery, hardware, saddlery, hats, porter, ale, and cheese, are among the remaining articles.

From the United States they receive lumber of all kinds, and furniture of every description: coaches and carriages of all sorts, codfish, mackerel, shad, and herring, leather, boots, and shoes, powder, and munitions of war, and naval stores, ships, and vessels, particularly those calculated for their navy, or for privateers.

From Brazil they receive sugar, coffee, cotton, and rum.

From the north of Europe they receive steel and iron; and from France a number of articles of its manufacture.

Their foreign commerce is principally carried on by British capitalists, though there are some Americans, a few French and other foreign merchants, also settled at Buenos Ayres: they are all placed, I believe on the same footing of equality.

The revenue of the state may be estimated at about three millions of dollars annually; but their system of finance is very imperfect, and although their debt is small, their credit is low. They have hitherto avoided the issuing of paper money, and they have established no bank; but they have sometimes anticipated their revenue by giving due bills receivable in payment for duties, or goods imported, or articles exported: the impost furnishes the principal part of the revenue. A copy of their tariff, as at first established, was some time since transmitted. I believe, to the Department of State: in this the duties were generally specific and high. I understand they have been lately reduced, as their exorbitancy had occasioned much smuggling.

Voluntary contributions from those friendly to the revolution, and forced loans from the old Spaniards, have constituted another portion of their funds. To show the public capital adequate to all exigencies, their different civil, military, and naval establishments have been taken into view, and are comprised in the estimate furnished, a thing unusual with us; but they have omitted their public lands, which, if a prudent use be made of them, must, at no distant day, become a very productive source of revenue to the state.

The mines of Potosi, which in all probability, will very soon fall into their hands again, may furnish them

with a considerable supply of the precious metals. It is stated, on respectable authority, that so late as the year 1790, the amount of gold and silver coined at Potosi in that year, was calculated to have been \$299,846 in gold, and \$2,988,176 in silver. The state of their army, and the condition of their navy, will be seen by a reference to the original return presented. (Appendix F *)

Their army is composed of regular troops, Ciocos, and militia. In one or other of these classes, they are educated to the military art, and, far as I had an opportunity, and was capable of judging, they appeared to be well acquainted with the elements of their profession. Their forces, according to the paper furnished, are estimated at nearly thirty thousand men. They are composed of 1,296 artillery, 13,693 infantry, and 14,718 cavalry: of which 12,143 are troops of the line, 7,041 are Ciocos, and 10,573 militia. These form the different armies of the centre of Peru, of the Andes, of Cordova, and the auxiliary forces in the Entre Rios. This statement, however, only includes the militia of the province of Buenos Ayres itself. Their supply of arms and munitions of war is ample, as will be seen by the statement annexed, on that subject.

Their navy is small, and some of their vessels are laid up in ordinary. A list of them, as well as of their privateers, will be found in Appendix F. Their private armed vessels are subjected to very strict regulations, agreeably to their prize code, which is among the original papers presented & herewith delivered. It may be proper in this place, to introduce the subject of the irregular conduct of the privateers under the patriot flag, against which the commissioners were directed to remonstrate. Having taken an opportunity of explaining to Mr. Tagle, the Secretary of State, the proceedings of our government relative to Amelia Island and Galvezton, agreeably to their instructions, the commissioners embraced a suitable occasion to urge the just cause of complaint, which the malpractices of private armed vessels, wearing the patriot colors, had furnished our government; on both topics, they had long and interesting conversation. With the conduct of the government respecting Amelia Island and Galvezton, Mr. Tagle expressed himself perfectly satisfied, and he disclaimed for his government any privity or participation in the judgments made at those places, by persons acting in the name of the patriots of South-America. In reference to the acts of cruisers under the patriot flags, he said he was sensible that great irregularities had occurred, though his government had done every thing in their power to prevent them, and were willing, if any instance of aggression were pointed out, to direct an inquiry into the case, and, if the facts were established, to punish those concerned and redress the injured individuals. He professed his readiness to adopt any measures that would more effectually prevent a recurrence of such acts, in which he expressed his belief that the privateers of Buenos Ayres had rarely participated, though the character of the government had suffered from the conduct of others. He stated that they had, on one occasion, sent out some of their public vessels to examine all cruisers wearing the Buenos Ayrean flag, to see that they were lawfully commissioned, & to ascertain whether they had violated their instructions.

Amongst the causes of dissatisfaction, to which I have alluded, the preponderance of the capital has been mentioned. Its great weight in the scale of national affairs is to be ascribed to its greater exertions in the national cause. These are owing to its comparative wealth, and to its active, intelligent, and enterprising population. The armies that have been raised in this city and the neighboring country, with the supplies in money and munitions of war drawn from these sources, have been truly extraordinary.

It would be a difficult task to make an exact calculation, or to form even a probable estimate, but all seemed to conclude the superior merit claimed on account of their exertions, when compared with their wealth and population: and it is not unlikely that Buenos Ayres has, in consequence, assumed a higher tone, and acquired a controlling influence, which she has sometimes abused.

Another source of discontent is the unfortunate dispute between the Banda Oriental and Buenos Ayres, which had also an influence on the proceeding of the latter towards the Portuguese.

The original cause of division may be traced to a jealousy, long subsisting between the rival cities of Monte Video and Buenos Ayres. This has become habitual, and has extended to the country. Private interests and personal views have also increased their dissensions.

Gen. Artigas (who bears the character of chief of the Orientals, as has been already stated, and has also assumed that of the Protector of the Entre Rios and Santa Fee) was originally, in the royal service, a captain in a provincial corps. In this he continued for some time after the revolution had commenced at Buenos Ayres. But, in the year 1811, taking offence, as it is said, at some conduct of the Spanish commandant of Colonia, he abandoned the royal cause, and entered into the service of the patriots. So early as the year 1813, when acting against Monte Video, he became dissatisfied with Sarateca the commander in chief from Buenos Ayres. On his removal from the head of the army, he quarrelled with Gen. Rondeau, who, it was supposed, would have been acceptable to him, and finally withdrew, before the siege of Monte Video was finished under Gen. Alvear. For this conduct, Posadas, when he succeeded to the government, treated him as a deserter from their service. By a proclamation, he offered a reward for his apprehension, and set a price upon his head: an act which Gen. Artigas never forgot or forgave.

During the subsequent directorship of Alvear, he induced the Cabildo of Buenos Ayres to issue a similar proclamation against Gen. Artigas. When Alvear was dismissed, the people of Buenos Ayres endeavored to atone for their conduct by burning, with every mark of ignominy, the degrading proclamation. They also addressed a conciliatory letter to the general, and received from him a corresponding answer. These were preliminary to a fruitless attempt at reconciliation, made by the director ad interim, Col. Alvarez, who succeeded Alvear. The correspondence on this occasion is annexed. (Appendix H.) Other endeavors to reconcile him have failed, notwithstanding the changes in the office of director at Buenos Ayres. On one occasion, the proposition was made that the Banda Oriental should remain independent of Buenos Ayres, and merely send deputies to the general congress, to correct measures against the common enemy. On another—when the Portuguese army was approaching the frontiers of the Banda Oriental, an effort was made by Pueyrredon to reconcile him, and to unite him in the common defence. Ample supplies of arms and munitions of war, were offered, and some furnished;—but this attempt also failed.

In order that a fuller view of this subject may be had, I have subjoined a translated copy of an animated letter from Gen. Artigas to Mr. Pueyrredon. (Appendix I.) It is but justice to add, that Gen. Artigas is thought, by persons entitled to credit, to be a firm friend to the independence of the country. To express a decided opinion on this delicate question would scarcely be expected of me, as my position did not command a view of the whole ground. I had not the satisfaction to be derived from a personal interview with Gen. Artigas, who is, unquestionably, a man of rare and singular talents. But if I were to hazard a conjecture, I think it not improbable, that in this, as in most family disputes, there have been faults on both sides. It is to be lamented that they are in open hostility. The war has been prosecuted with great animosity; and, in two late engagements, the troops of Buenos Ayres have been defeated with great loss. By some it was said that the inhabitants of the eastern shore were anxious that a reconciliation would take place, whilst the people in the country preferred their present state.

I must not omit to take a glance at the situation of Paraguay. This province presents a singular spectacle. It stands aloof from the rest. The people, with the aid of the few remaining royal troops, repulsed an army, sent to compel them to join the common standard. Very soon afterwards they expelled the royalists, and set up for themselves. Since this period, they appear to have adopted a partial non-intercourse system. But Buenos Ayres, on one occasion, succeeded in obtaining an understanding with them. Some suspect that they are secretly inimical to the existing order of things, and wish to keep themselves within their shell, that, in case of a change, they may profit by future events: others calculate with some confidence on their ultimate union with Buenos Ayres, with which at present, they indulge a limited, and reluctant intercourse. Paraguay is under the immediate control of a person named Francia, who styles himself director of Paraguay.

From the domestic concerns of the provinces, we naturally turn to their foreign relations. On this subject the commissioners were informed that they had nothing more than a friendly understanding with any foreign nation. With the Portuguese government they concluded an arrangement in 1812, under the mediation, it is said, of the British, with the respect to the Banda Oriental. They have since had a correspondence with them on the subject of their entrance into that province, and the forcible occupation by a Portuguese army of the city of Monte Video, of which a copy is annexed. (Appendix I.) This will present the state of affairs between Buenos Ayres and the Brazils, which has been the theme of much discussion. The superior naval force of the Portuguese, stationed in the river La Plata, could have effectually blockaded all the ports of Buenos Ayres.—By this means they would have prevented supplies of arms and munitions of war, and entirely destroyed the great source of revenue to the state, the duties on imports and tonnage, at a season when money was much wanted. For about this period Buenos Ayres had a powerful army, to contend with on the side of Peru, and had taken the burthen of the renewed contest of Chili with Spain. Under such circumstances, they were in some measure obliged to adopt a cautious and moderate policy. Their conduct in this respect seems to have been coerced. Their unhappy state with the Orientals had also an influence on their measures: they alledged that the restless conduct of Artigas had furnished the Portuguese a pretext for the invasion; but, it is probable that they will ultimately break with the government of Brazils.

The British government has, thro' their official agents, entered into commercial stipulations with Gen. Artigas, as the chief of the Orientals, on the subject of their trade with the eastern shore. A copy of this instrument will be found in Appendix K.

The government of Buenos Ayres have a confidential person in Europe, soliciting from England, and other powers, it is said, assistance of every kind, and a recognition of their independence. England has a consul, who, with her naval commander on that station, appeared to conduct the confidential affairs of the British cabinet with the government of Buenos Ayres.

Mr. Rodney's report to be continued.

PUBLIC SALE.

I INTEND to sell at auction on a credit of twelve months, upon bond and approved security given, all the perishable property of the late David Stone, Esq. in the counties of Wake and Bertie; consisting of the Crops of Corn, Fodder, &c.; the stock of Horses, Cattle, fatted and other Hogs, &c.; Plantation Utensils and Implements; House and Kitchen Furniture; a valuable Law and general Library; a Carriage and many other articles.

The Sales will commence, at the late residence of the deceased in Wake county, on Monday the 28th inst.—At his mansion in Bertie called Hope, on Friday the 8th of January next—and at his Corner Plantation on Roanoke, on the Monday following.

The negroes will be hired out, at the Wake Plantation, on the 31st of this month; and at Hope, the 13th of January.

The Library will be sold on the first day of the sale in Wake.

Should the weather prove too unfavourable to commence the sales at the times appointed, it will be postponed from day to day, until the weather becomes favourable.

H. POTTER, Adm'r.

Raleigh, Dec. 7, 1818.

*The document referred to is not sent.