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# AN ADDRESS

TO THE  
GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES,  
ON THE  
*CESSION OF LOUISIANA*

TO THE FRENCH;

AND ON THE  
LATE BREACH OF TREATY BY THE SPANIARDS:

INCLUDING  
THE TRANSLATION OF A MEMORIAL, ON THE WAR OF ST. DOMINGO,  
AND CESSION OF THE MISSISSIPPI TO FRANCE,

DRAWN UP  
BY A FRENCH COUNSELLOR OF STATE.

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A NEW EDITION  
REVISED, CORRECTED AND IMPROVED.

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ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS.

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PUBLISHED

BY JOHN CONRAD, & CO. NO. 30, CHESNUT STREET, PHILADEL-  
PHIA; M. AND J. CONRAD, & CO. NO. 140, MARKET-STREET,  
BALTIMORE; AND RAPIN, CONRAD, & CO. WASHINGTON  
CITY.

H. MAXWELL, PRINTER.

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1803.



## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE reception which the first edition of this work has met with, has induced the publisher to issue a second impression, in a cheaper and more convenient form. The editor has retrenched nothing new from the memorial, but the passages respecting New Holland, which were thought to be no wise applicable to the present situation of our affairs.

The measures which have lately been taken by the government, are widely different from those which the editor, in common with a large part of the community, ventured to recommend. These measures are, in every point of view, of the utmost importance, and their true consequences, whether they be beneficial or not, deserve to be fully investigated and disclosed. Reflections on this subject, drawn up by the editor of this performance, will shortly appear, and it is hoped that they will not prove altogether unworthy of attention.

The editor withholds his name on this occasion, merely because no name can give a just title to that audience which his arguments may fail to obtain. Conscious of no sinister or factious views, he will cheerfully encounter, if necessary, all that the adverse zeal or clashing interests of others may suggest against him, and assumes no merit with those who approve, since he merely repeats what is to be heard in all public places, and urges considerations already familiar to the best part of his countrymen.

Feb. 18, 1803.





# AN ADDRESS

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ON THE

CESSION OF LOUISIANA, &c.

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IT may be deemed presumptuous, in an obscure citizen, to address the rulers of his country, on a theme of such importance as War or Peace; nor would the compiler of this address, have ventured to assume the office of a counsellor, were he not impelled by peculiar circumstances. He is not instigated by his own interest, for he and his affairs are far remote from the scene of action; and his prosperity is wholly disentangled from any effect, which the acquisition of the Mississippi, will produce on private conditions. He is not impelled by a vain conceit of his own abilities, for he means to draw his arguments from the mouth of an enemy, and, instead of relying on his own abilities, desires to exact attention and regard to nothing but these arguments themselves....In fine, he would not have thought of addressing his country thus, had he not just procured an extraordinary performance, in which the views of the French, relative to Louisiana, are unfolded, too plainly for the interest and safety of the United States.

This performance came into his hands by the friendship of a traveller at Paris. A few copies were published, without a name, while the negotiations were pending at Amiens, and circulated through a few hands. By a few persons it was well known to be the production of a counsellor of state, who thought, perhaps, that the goodness of his counsel would atone for his plain dealing; or that the

suppression of his name, would screen him from any personal inconvenience. In this paper are enumerated, all the disadvantages of the war of St. Domingo, and the benefits of the cession of Louisiana; and the conduct incumbent on a true friend to the interests and glory of France, is very forcibly displayed.

What the dictates of this interest and this glory are, it shall now be my business to explain; and for this purpose, I shall, without any further preliminary, but that of intreating the patience of the reader, proceed to detail the substance of this memorial.

The author addresses his reflections to the First Consul, and by skilful flattery, confounds the personal glory of that fortunate adventurer, with the enlargement of the empire. It is evident that the author is a military enthusiast, but a passion for arms does not blind him to the peaceable means of distinction; and his schemes of enlarging power, by the multiplication of people, and by territories won from the waste, are not unworthy of praise.

He begins by enlarging on the exploits of the Consul, by which France was rescued from intestine misery and foreign humiliation. He descants, in very glowing terms, on the grandeur and utility of those projects, which carried the French arms into Egypt and Syria; by which the most fertile portion of the globe was to be made a province of France, and a post of strength and safety from which the French might put in their claim for conquest and glory in the east. He artfully extenuates the failure of these projects, and considers them as merely postponed to a more convenient season. He insinuates that a small delay will open a safer and shorter road to the same object; that the ignorant and tottering councils of Turkey may be easily persuaded to give up that which they are unable singly to defend, and which, when the powerful succour of the English is withdrawn, they cannot wrest from the hands of their own slaves. After a short enumeration to this effect, and after conducting his readers to the prospect of a general peace, which was then in view, he proceeds in this manner.

“His warlike labours at an end and the world pacified, what will remain to occupy the genius of the First Consul? The object of these labours, hitherto, has been the welfare of France. Her internal tranquillity and harmony, the acquisition of rich provinces on the Rhine and Meuse, the reduction of the happy and hitherto impregnable Flanders,

which the whole power of the greatest of the French princes was exerted in vain to acquire in a former age: the subjugation of Holland, that opulent republic, which possesses the trade of the world; of Switzerland, the land of good laws and heroic manners, hitherto invincible; of Italy, the nursery of arts and the paradise of Europe, are the great things which are now accomplished. The energies which effected them will not be weakened by the peace. They will only be strengthened. A few years of industry and trade will renew those sources of wealth, which a long inaction has nearly drained. A few years of legal security will efface the ravages which foreign and intestine wars have made in the number of the people. The abolition of the feudal tyranny will give a new spring to the multiplying principle, and all the chasms, occasioned by the revolutionary cruelty, will disappear. The nation will speedily become the most numerous, enlightened and enterprising of the western world. The power of the head of the nation will experience a proportionable increase, and the mere impetus of numbers and wealth, skilfully directed, will carry us forward, in ten years, much further than the last ten years of military exploits.

“But what direction shall be given to this force, in order to produce the most beneficial effects? In the general tranquillity of nations, what avenues will open by which to exert this force beyond the circle of our own immediate territories, and different from the mere extension of trade and commerce? There is no necessity of letting entirely drop the sword, and though our neighbours are no longer our foes, there may be distant enemies to tame and territories to acquire.

“To questions like these the answer will be obvious, and the eye will immediately be turned to St. Domingo. Alas! what have been the miseries of that devoted colony! Beneath what an ignoble yoke does it now groan! and how lost are its inestimable treasures to the parent nation! And shall not our first efforts be directed to regain these treasures? to break the iron sceptre of the negroes; that has already nearly crushed all the fair fruits of European culture, and which in a few years, by a series of cruel wars and revolutions, will convert those beautiful plantations into an African wilderness?

“The riches of this island are familiar to every Frenchman. He is sensible that his daily and most delicious

food, is procured from it; that millions are supplied by it with wholesome luxuries, and thousands, by the indirect influence of its trade and commerce, with employment and subsistence. Shall all these be relinquished without a struggle? And to whom relinquished? To quondam slaves and naked banditti? Shall the arms of the First Consul, which have achieved such arduous and signal victories, against equals in numbers, arms and courage, be baffled or intimidated by a dastardly and raggamuffin host of cave-keeping robbers, and barbarian mountaineers?

“And how better can the legions be employed, whom the general peace will reduce to idleness? Some of them justice will demand to be dismissed to their homes and families. Some will return to the loom, the plough and the anvil, which have not wanted them till now, when the re-establishment of trade will set them going; but the larger number must remain at their post, and some of these, unnecessary for any purpose at home, will crave employment abroad. The honour and interests of France point out the road which they ought to take, and the labours to which they ought to be devoted. Not all the glories we have lately acquired would save us from contempt, should we suffer that noble island to remain in the hands of a servile and barbarous race.

“Against the dictates of such laudable pride will any one dare to whisper an objection? But, whatever be our courage, why should we be blind to unquestionable consequences? Of what advantage are observation and experience, if they do not apprise us of the obstacles which will oppose our designs; and what merit is there in that courage, which is sure to fail of success?

“Courage and enterprize, unaccompanied by caution and deliberation, are qualities of brutes, and not the virtues of men. What shall he deserve of his country, who throws away the lives of his brave soldiers on an impracticable scheme? Or on a scheme in which justice and humanity forbid him to engage? Or on one in which success may be gained without a military effort; by means less hazardous and less destructive to the conquerors and the conquered than war and blood-shed? Or, lastly, who expends the blood and treasure of the nation, in a project in every respect less beneficial, even though crowned with success, than a different project?

“The great mind, though formed “for dignity and high exploit:” though jealous of its country’s honour and rights, and prompt to vengeance for insults, will pause in its most indignant career at the voice of caution and experience. Methinks *this* is the momentous pause; and let me therefore take advantage of it to place in a true light, the war of St. Domingo, and to point out a *different path*, in which the energies of France may be directed to her infinite glory and advantage.

“Courage, the French courage, can do all things! and if courage be inadequate, can it fail when reinforced by numbers? And are not the numbers of our troops, when compared with the nature of this warfare, inexhaustible?

“Alas! there is something in the nature of *this* warfare, which makes courage and numbers avail nothing. It is not men with whom alone our troops must contend. These though numerous, ferocious and zealous, are insignificant, in this comparison. Our troops are destined to fight against nature; to contend with the elements. The atmosphere of this island, salutary to a native of the soil, and to men imported from congenial climates, breathes pestilence and death, upon the stranger from Europe. Inactivity, and the repose of the sword will afford to our unfortunate troops no security from pain and death. Destructive as the field, contended with such enemies will certainly be, the carnage will be infinitely greater and more deplorable in camps and garrisons. Courage will avail nothing in contention with the malignant operation of the air and with the pangs of disease. *That* is an indiscriminating evil; falls equally on the head and members, the officers and soldiers, the cowardly and brave, the ignorant and skillful.

“When I think upon the graves, the ignominious graves, that are now gaping, in the plains of St. Domingo, for the conquerors of Egypt and Italy; the inevitable fate, from the sword of banditti and slaves, or from the hovering pestilence, which awaits those veterans who have vied, in the usefulness and grandeur of their past exploits, with all that history or poetry has embalmed, I tremble with compassion:....and with fear....(why should I not rather say with hope?) that when apprized of these impending evils, they will refuse to go.

“Advantage may, indeed, be taken of their present ignorance; glittering and permanent rewards may be pro-

mitted to their valour; they may be inspired with contemptuous notions of the blacks whom they are going to subdue; and it may not be till successive armies, the flower of the French chivalry, are swallowed up and lost without advantage, in this insatiable gulf, that the government may be mortified by murmurs and mutiny. "Heaven shield us from this mortification" is my hopeless prayer, at one time, and at another, it is the wish of my heart, that if the government be deaf to the claims of these brave men, they may take upon themselves the assertion of them.... But how many evils would be prevented by declining this fruitless struggle with the elements? how many lives, glorious to themselves and useful to their country, might be saved by a wiser policy?

"Perhaps I may be charged with exaggerating the dangers to be dreaded from the climate. Why, it will be asked, has not this dreadful havock been experienced on former occasions? The island has always been garrisoned, and why did not some sagacious counsellor commend the desertion of it, on account of this hostility between the air and the soldier? Why dread these evils now which were never before felt?

"These evils have always been felt. It is well known, that in all the calculations of the servants of the monarchy, on colonial supplies, the destruction of two-thirds of the soldiery, by the climate, in a few months, was regularly taken into account. The whole number was small, because no enemy was at hand, and therefore the enormous waste was less perceptible. But now how different are our circumstances? Not only there will be no end to our detachments thither, but the life of ceaseless toil, in mountain marches and midnight skirmishes, with a lurking and marauding enemy, will give tenfold force to the unwholesome elements. Formerly a few hundreds were sufficient to guard the public peace, but now how many thousands, think you, will be requisite to dispossess an armed nation, fighting under a provident and valiant leader, for their soil, their liberty, their very being?

"Do we not all know what the revolution has done on both sides of the ocean? It has changed an half a million of helpless and timorous slaves, the mere tools of the farmer and the artizan, the sordid cattle of the field, into men, and citizens, and soldiers.

“What a fond mistake to imagine that these will be less formidable enemies, than the bands of Russia and Austria. There is not a circumstance in which they differ, that is not in favour of the blacks. The two scenes of war, are unlike, and in every dissimilar particular the superiority of danger is on the side of St. Domingo.

“The robust body and strenuous mind was never denied to the African; and, Frenchmen! will you be so unjust to your own cause, to that principle which has inspired your raw peasants, and ennobled your town-rabble; to the influence of your arts and discipline; and, above all, of your liberty, on this robust body and strenuous spirit? Can you forget their hardy training, their perfect knowledge of the rocks and valleys of their country, their simple diet?.... They draw health and vigour from the air, which will be poison to you. They have your arms and your discipline, and whatever generous consciousness raised you above the Austrian and Russian mercenary, will raise the blacks of St. Domingo above their invaders.

“It is the fashion to revile them by the name of robbers and banditti\*. What more silly, than to call a *nation*, that has trampled down all opposition, in a territory three times as large as Switzerland; that have numerous garrisons, and a regular army; treasures and arsenals; laws and trade; a wise and able prince at their head, by the same name with the wretched fugitives from servitude, trembling in their caves by day, and at night prowling for scanty fare round the cultivated fields. Soon will you detect your mistake, when landed on that shore. You will there find enemies, as well disciplined, as numerous, and far more implacable and obstinate in their defence, than any you have encountered at your own doors. The most arduous of your wars is still to come.

“The heart of humanity must bleed at the prospect of this war. The havock made among the most valuable children of France, the soldiers to be sent thither, is the chief, but not the only evil, to be deprecated. With their death, will be completed the destruction of the colony. Fire will devour all the vestiges of cultivation. The sword will sweep away the remaining proprietors of town and country, and the list of exiles will be swelled by those, whom timely foresight of the danger, shall enable to escape

\* Brigands.

to a land of strangers and poverty. It will soon be found, that to conquer, it will be necessary to exterminate. Having done this, if it can be done, (which I think impossible,) let us look around us and meditate the spectacle. The best blood of the nation has flowed. The flower of its military force has perished. We have completed the doom of death or of exile, on the last of our countrymen on that shore. The fields, which we have acquired, are reduced to a desert, and therefore of no more use to the end, for which we coveted possession, than the wilds of New Holland, which we may have without fighting for.

“What can equal our folly! we fight for fields which we value only as we till them. We cannot till them without cattle, and yet, in our rage to get them, we *kill* the cattle. We covet not the hills and valleys, but the coffee and sugar which they are able to afford us. Any other hills and valleys in the same climate, have the same natural capacities; but the house, the mill, the labouring hands, and the various utensils constitute the difference in the value: but these, half destroyed already, a tedious and exterminating war will annihilate. The golden prize, for which we face such perils, and inflict such miseries, will vanish in our grasp.

“In forbearing to molest this island, we gain every thing. The praise of clemency will be ours. We shall escape the infamy of resuming the gift of liberty, which we bestowed; of endeavouring to degrade men and citizens, to the servitude from which we have just raised them. We shall gain their gratitude, their friendship, and every benefit which one nation can confer upon another. The products of the island, the fruits of commerce, the luxury of millions, and the industry and subsistence of thousands of our countrymen, we shall gain. In the folly of conquest, and the cruelty of war, all these will be devoted. Those who will be most useful to us as allies, as friendly consumers of the products of our ingenuity and labour, will be no more; and their isle, when conquered, will be just as beneficial to France, as any other desert and unpeopled land.

“Cannot experience make us wise? Have we heard, without benefit, the lesson which the English in their treatment of their colonies have taught us? Is it worthy of us to afford a new, and even a more flagrant example of the desperate and execrable folly of that nation; who



drained the vitals of the people to support ridiculous claims of supremacy over a distant empire; who laboured to establish their own ruin; and who were finally compelled to accept as a voluntary gift from friends, those benefits, which they had in vain endeavoured to exact, as tribute from slaves!

“ O! that a vain chimera, a sanguinary dream had less power over nations than the plainest dictates of wisdom and policy; that the man whom I now address would rise as far above the rest of his race, in this, as he has already done, in other respects. I am jealous *for* him, and would fain see the glory of my hero as bright as heaven, and as lasting as the universe. I would fain see him imitate the divine beneficence, and do good without hoping or expecting a requital. Yet I counsel nothing which involves the sacrifice of personal glory, or national advantage. I do not persuade him to injure himself for the salvation of others. Pacific measures are equally conducive to his own, and the nation's glory and prosperity. Hostilities will be equally destructive to both, and if all considerations must yield to the honour of vanquishing rebellion, let us yet lay down our arms, since arms will never vanquish it. What triumph can we hope for but in exterminating, and he that dies in opposition is not subdued.

“ Forbearance, however, is a hard task. No eloquence that I can use, may shield from odious imputations the counsels I have now given. It remains for me, however, to shew that while I recommend peace and concession to revolted subjects, I am not the advocate of ignoble ease. To give up what has once belonged to us, the rabble will denominate mean, but I abhor the meanness as much as the rabble who condemns it. To contract our empire is not the end of my counsels. On the contrary, my heart beats high with the hope of adding to it, not an island, indeed, but a *world*.

“ The general who should aim at the acquisition of a wealthy province, whose boundaries are undefended; into the heart of which he can march without impediment or opposition; whose numerous people are prepared to meet him with joy and gratitude, and which will hasten to coalesce with its conquerers, is surely no timorous or sordid counsellor, even though, in order to effect this conquest, he should dissuade us from consuming innumerable lives and treasures in the siege of a fortified rock, whose defenders

may reasonably upbraid our injustice in attacking them, and whose last mound will be their dead bodies.

“ As little as such an one, do I merit the blame of a public enemy. The conquests I shall recommend, will reconcile objects so rarely allied as the power and glory of the nation, (even as the rabble of statesmen estimate these,) and the felicity of the whole race.

“ I come now to a theme on which I hardly know in what terms to begin. Its beauties and advantages fill my mind, in a bright confusion, and how to separate, and dispose my thoughts so as to convey light and conviction to others, with a force answerable to their truth, and worthy their importance, I scarcely know. I must begin, however, though conscious that my feeble powers will degrade, not enoble the subject....

“ In little more than an hundred years ago, North America was a wilderness. It was so thinly peopled as to merit this name. Such, particularly was the forlorn condition of that district which occupies the eastern coast, and which extends through the finest climates. This space corresponds in its favourable situation, and almost in extent, with Europe. *Then* it only exhibited a dreary variety of forest and morass. All its capacities of giving food, shelter and raiment to the human species, of pouring forth the boundless happiness of intellectual beings, were inert. It was the wild range of beasts and savages.

“ Let us *now* cast our eyes thither, and meditate the change that has taken place in so short a period. Morass and forest, a savage and naked race, have mostly disappeared. A christian and European nation has sprung up in their place. That side of the sea has become a counterpart to this. Towns and villages, language, institutions, arts and manners seem as if transferred by magic from one coast to the other. Distance and a stormy ocean, which had been for so many ages insuperable obstacles between them, and screened one region even from the knowledge of the other, have dwindled into nothing. Extremities have approached each other, have coalesced, have become one, and the effects which in former times contiguity alone produced, are now found by no means incompatible with the utmost distance. A numerous, civilized and powerful people are spread over this district, which in all respects will bear an honourable comparison with any nation of Europe.

“ And whence this wonderful change? From what beginnings has arisen an empire which casts contempt upon the miracles of fancy, and the metamorphoses of poetry? In tracing their original we see only poor fugitives from these shores, whom tyranny has cast out naked and helpless: who have roamed abroad, nearly unprovided, in search of new homes; whose quiet settlement was obstructed by the thousand evils of a pestilential climate, churlish soil, and faithless neighbours; whom distance and poverty could not remove beyond the reach of their former masters, whose tyranny as it originally drove them into exile, continued to vex and harass them; to counteract all the benefits, to aggravate all the evils of their new condition; to check their increase; to lessen their subsistence; to deprave their morals; to disturb their peace. We behold them, at one time, bending all their strength to maintain their post against the ancient possessors of the soil; at another engaged in a feeble and ruinous struggle with their European ancestors, who having endeavoured in vain to strangle the infant in his cradle, now poured their whole strength on his still undisciplined and immature manhood.

“ In spite of all these evils, in spite of that fatal policy, which has cut up a people of the same blood, manners, and laws, into a score of independent and unequal states, and thus laid the eternal foundation of wars and feuds....has a nation sprung up in an age, opulent and powerful, as those whose beginnings are beyond the reach of history.

“ These miracles were not wrought by the sword. It was not wars and victories that have added five millions of civilized men to the human race, and to the English name. These may rob millions of their happiness and independence; millions they may easily destroy; but they cannot call into existence; they cannot compel to change their language, manners, or religion.

“ All the solid glory, all the genuine benefits of extending their empire and augmenting their numbers, have been gained, (though without design and without merit) by the English. If there be any advantage in unity of power, that advantage they might still and forever have enjoyed: Their own unpardonable folly cast it away.

“ When an observer of mankind surveys the world from his closet....when he notices the worthless ends and the inadequate means which engage the ambition and industry of nations, he seems, in his own opinion, to have fallen

among a race of maniacs. The ends they propose are silly or wicked; the means they adopt counteract their designed purpose. Such, above all, is the lesson which the history of the English colonies affords; a series of purposes iniquitous and abortive: of means puerile and nugatory. The greatest good springing up without the wishes and against the efforts of the actors, and the cause of human happiness and of national prosperity insensibly advancing in defiance of human guilt and folly.

“And how happened it that the English rather than the French had the glory of peopling a new world? While the greatest of the French kings had near half a million of soldiers in his service; of men fed, clothed, housed and equipped, for the purpose of extending his empire, a few English fugitives were building up a mighty nation in America. Without provision or furniture, in hardships and poverty, they were busied in securing the rapid population of one fourth of the globe.

“All the schemes of the French king were defeated. His own people were impoverished and famished; his neighbours overwhelmed with the same evils; his territories narrowed and his pride subdued. Had some good genius inspired him with foresight, and could he have been persuaded to have begun the race of colonization, as early as the English, what a glorious privilege would the French nation have possessed.

“The folly of the English, for a long time after their discoveries, left the field open to this competition; but the spirit of adventure began to prevail among us when too late, and being actuated by the same motives, and conducted by the same principles, and blindly directed to the same portion of the world, they met the fate they merited.

“The gradual advancement of the English settlements, began at length to draw towards them the attention of Europe. The stupid rage of ambition, could see nothing desirable, but what our neighbours already possessed. The illimitable wilds of America were open to our enterprises; but no! lives without number, and treasures without end, must be lavished, fruitlessly lavished, to wrest provinces, already occupied, from their possessors.

“Had the minister Richlieu applied one years subsidy of Gustavus, or the treasures expended in one siege or one campaign in Flanders, in founding a settlement on the Delaware or Chesapeake; had a cheap asylum been provided

in the new world for the million of protestants which his bigotry condemned to exile, not only all that part of the world which is now English, would have been French, but its population and power would have as much exceeded its present state, as the beginnings thus made, would have been more ample and effectual than the early efforts of the English.

“The feeble and ill provided emigrations of the sixteenth century, have produced the spectacle we now see. Let us imagine then, that the thousands sent to perish under the walls of a German fortress, the arms, the ammunition, the tools, the various apparatus provided for such an expedition, had been sent to America. In fine, had the wisdom and power of our government been employed to people deserts with a hundredth part of the zeal and vigour with which they have been devoted to the annoyance of our neighbours, the whole of North America would, at this day, have been French, and its people three times as numerous as at present.

“What a theme of humiliation and despair is this to the friend of mankind; to the lover of his country! Such an opportunity lost! Improved by others without design or merit; lost by us through stupid inattention and misguided ambition. The seed most carelessly thrown, would have taken root, thrived, and produced innumerable fruits. An obscure adventurer, embarking from a French port, in the time of our Francis the first, would have given us the empire of America. Slothful and proud Spain would have been excluded from a scene, which she overspread with devastation and horror, at her first entrance upon it, and which she has since maintained in poverty and weakness, and the great and enlightened genius of the French would have wrought such wonders on the Plata and Maragnon, as the English have exhibited on the Chesapeake and Hudson.

“Amidst the painful regrets which these reflections produce, the mind naturally inquires....*Is it yet too late?* God forbid that it should ever be too late to advance the cause of national happiness. Why should we dream that it is too late? Are the last years of the world at hand? Is the nation sunk into decrepitude? Its towns dwindled, its villages depopulated, its rulers become barbarous? Are all the vacancies upon the globe, supplied with occupants and owners? And can no footing be gained on foreign shores, without encroaching upon formidable neighbours?

"It ought to be our pride to say, that none of these things have happened. Since the discovery of America, the nation has hourly become more compact, numerous, opulent, and enlightened. It has just emerged from anarchy and danger. A fortunate and glorious leader has raised it in a few years, to a dazzling elevation above its neighbours. It is about to receive all the blessings of peace, from the same hand that adorned its brows with the palms of victory. All the impediments, which hampered and repressed its naval and commercial enterprises, are soon to have an end. The art of navigation has been continually improving, and the ocean may be *ferried over* now with incredibly more safety, facility, and expedition than in former times. Instead, therefore, of an æra, too late for colonization, we touch the very period when it can be most effectually carried on. The view of the past, instead of sinking us into despondent inactivity, should fire us with emulation; we should disdain to incur the same charges from posterity, which our ancestors incur from us; charges heavier on us, and more justly merited, since our inducements and abilities are so much greater than theirs.

"But, it has been asked, is not the world already appropriated? Let us look abroad for an answer.\* Let us, once more, turn our eyes to America, and consider a little more distinctly, whether we are totally excluded from this field.

"By what can we be excluded? It would be the most flagrant folly to consider America as already occupied. Can that be occupied which has never been visited; which has never been seen: as to which there is no certainty whether it be land or sea, mountain or plain? There are vast regions in the North and the South; regions vaster than Europe or New-Holland, of which no European nation knows any thing; to which, therefore, it can urge no claim; or no claim, at least, that ought to be admitted; or which it would be difficult to set aside by either of the great national engines, negotiation, money, or arms.

"After all the reasonings of the sage and the patriot, we must fear that the *nearer* scene will occupy our chief attention. America has now grown familiar to our thoughts. The value of provinces beyond the main, the progress of population and power in a land newly settled, have been

\* The reveries, which follow, concerning New Holland, being of no immediate importance to American readers, are omitted. T.

realized only in the western hemisphere. With that only, will the imaginations of men most easily connect ideas of future progress.

“It was this foible of human nature which led the French to make their settlements in the isles of the West-Indies, and on the eastern coast of America. The English, however, had pre-occupied the best part of the field. The French were forced to content themselves with a barren region, in the north, and with some feeble attempts at settlement, on the Mississippi. We cherished the vain hope, that we should be able to wrest from our hereditary rivals, all their western colonies.

“What a deplorable instance of infatuation was this! Instead of turning our efforts towards the west, where delightful and immense plains stretched to the southern ocean; where our advances were obstructed by no enemy, and no jarring claims; from which the egress was safe and easy, into the Atlantic, by the Mississippi and St. Laurence, and into the South Sea by a thousand probable streams, we bent the whole force of our arms to reduce the English settlers to subjection, to establish over freemen the hated authority of conquerors, and to create a channel for our blood and treasure to flow uselessly away.

“Happily for us, we had to contend with prejudices equally strong, and failed in the contest. Superiority of numbers, and the chance of war, gave to the English the unprofitable victory. No reasonable Frenchman will regret *this* consequence, in respect to Canada; but all our wonder and sorrow must be alive, when we reflect upon the loss of the Mississippi. What consideration could prompt such a sacrifice? What equivalent could the worthless Spaniards afford, for relinquishing a footing in the very spot where the continent was most accessible, where that footing had already been made firm by numerous plantations, a populous town and a thriving trade?

“Forty years has the genius of the French nation slept. Under the influence of the old government, all our faculties were benumbed. St. Domingo, indeed, was permitted to advance. Our islands prospered under that wretched policy, which converted men into cattle, and grasped at present benefits at the hazard of all the evils, by which they have since been overwhelmed. But to a few Islands, and to a morass in the torrid zone, was our genius limited, while the English name spread itself abroad, with incredi-

ble rapidity, over all the eastern part of the continent: and the middle and western regions, were resigned to the torpor and desolation which are the natural effects of the Spanish policy.

“ It is time to awaken. Should this fatal sleep continue under the auspices of Buonaparte, fortune will have smiled in vain on that hero. Should the present opportunity of repossessing ourselves of the banks of the Mississippi, by a peaceable bargain with Spain, be suffered to escape, he will have gained his present pre-eminence in vain. Should he seize this opportunity, and improve it with diligence, we will pardon the destruction that impends over St. Domingo. The torrents of blood that are going to flow in that devoted colony, and the completion of its ruin will be petty consequences, when compared with the eternal benefits of beginning a fresh career in the continent of North America.

“ Let us consider the scene of this career; the situation of the country; the advantages of which we are already in possession; those which we shall speedily acquire; the obstacles to be dreaded from the jealousy of England, and the clashing interest of the United States; and our future progress, in defiance of the opposition of these States, of England, and of Spain.

“ Our nation had the vain honour of conferring a name on a portion of the globe, not exceeded by any other portion of it, in all the advantages of climate and soil. Before the war of 1757, it was an immense valley, watered by a deep and beneficent river. This river first acquires importance in the latitude of forty-five, north. It flows in a devious course about two thousand miles, and enters the bay of Mexico, by many mouths, in latitude 29. In these latitudes, is comprised the temperate zone; which has been always deemed most favourable to the perfection of the animal and vegetable nature. This advantage is not marred by the chilling and *sterilizing* influence of lofty mountains, the pestilential fumes of intractable bogs, or the dreary uniformity of sandy plains. Through the whole extent, there is not, probably, a snow-capt hill, a moving sand, or a volcanic eminence.

“ This valley is of different breadths. The ridge which bounds it on the east, is in some places near a thousand miles from the great middle stream. From this ridge, secondary rivers of great extent and magnificence flow towards the centre, and the intermediate regions are an uncultivated paradise. On the west, the valley is of similar



dimensions, the streams are equally large and useful, and the condition of the surface equally delightful.

“ Beyond the eastern ridge, and as far as the Atlantic, are the dwellings of the English, and the war which ensued the mutual approaches of the two nations, terminated in the expulsion of the French from the eastern slope of this valley.

“ On the west, the country is but little known. The south sea, which is its natural boundary on that side, is some thousands of miles distant. The coast of that sea has been claimed by the Spaniards, since their permanent settlement in Mexico, but the western limits of Louisiana were, nevertheless, sufficiently ample. The peace of 1763, left these limits undisturbed, and the validity of the transfer to Spain, of the western slope of this valley, and of either bank of the river, near its mouth, has never since been disputed. The English colonists have since become a sovereign people; but their emigrations have hitherto scarcely reached the river, and the Spanish dominion of the opposite bank has been recognized by solemn treaties. The settlements along the river, have chiefly been previous to the transfer of Spain; a town of no mean extent was then founded, and all the regular means of subsistence, to a numerous people, in cultivation and trade, had been regularly established.

“ We must first observe, that in gaining possession of this territory, we shall not enter on a desert, where the forest must be first removed, before a shelter can be built; whither we must carry the corn and the clothes necessary to present subsistence, and the seed, the tools and the cattle which are requisite to raise a future provision. We have no wars to wage nor treaties to form with the aboriginal possessors. The empire thus restored to us will not be over English or Spaniards, whose national antipathies would make them ever restless and refractory, but countrymen and friends; the children of France who are impatient of a foreign yoke, and who are anxious to return to the bosom of their long estranged ancestors. The ministers of the nation need not be an army, with their brandished bayonets, since there will be neither foreign foes to intercept our passage, nor intestine rebels to refuse us admission; peaceable agents and commissioners will be hailed with filial joy, and these will be sufficient to establish a wise code of commercial and internal policy on the ruins of

Spanish tyranny and folly. Under a wise government, the imagination can scarcely set limits to the progress of a colony; but the utmost caution may surely proceed as far in conjecture, as the experience of the neighbouring English will justify.

“Population has prodigiously advanced in the United States, since their settlement; but there is no reason to expect a smaller progress in the French. Our neighbours, indeed, are, at present, in that state, in which the doubling of their numbers is the adding of millions to millions, and a state in which the duplicate ratio will be equally productive, in Louisiana, is far distant. The circumstances, however, which will bring this state nearer, are not few or inconsiderable.

“There cannot, in the first place, be imagined a district more favourable to settlement. In addition to a genial climate and soil, there are the utmost facilities of communication and commerce. The whole district is the sloping side of a valley, through which run deep and navigable rivers, which begin their course in the remotest borders, and which all terminate in the central stream. This stream, one of the longest and widest in the world, is remarkably distinguished by its depth and freedom from natural impediments. It flows into a gulf, which contains a great number of populous islands. Among these islands are numerous passages into the ocean, which washes the shores of Europe. Thus, not only every part of the district is easily accessible by means of rivers, but the same channels, are ready to convey the products of every quarter to the markets most contiguous and most remote.

“The progress of a nation may be obstructed by bad laws, and by natural impediments. Men will not plant and reap for nothing. They will not leave their present homes without the prospect of bettering their condition. In the spot that chance may throw them, they will expend no labour in raising more than they can consume, unless they can exchange the surplus for something necessary or agreeable, the fruits of the labour of others. Subsistence must always be scanty and mean, and the great spring of population, must, of consequence, be languid and powerless, when supplied by our single ingenuity and labour. Many men must combine their various skill and diligence to make life a blessing to each, and inspire him with inclination to give life to others.

“ A barren soil may deny to our utmost efforts more than a scanty and precarious subsistence. If the soil be fertile, yet there may be no method of disposing of its surplus products. There may be no streams, which are the easiest conveyances to distant markets. The surface may be broken up into hills and rocks, whose summits and defiles are impassable, or passable only at such labour and expense, as are disproportioned to the gain. The rivers, if there be any, may be impeded by cataracts, or their mouths be barred against us by some hostile nation that may possess them. The interests of rival neighbours may deny us access to the most eligible marts, or all these obstacles may be absurdly supplied by an evil government, which may prohibit the cultivation or export of those products, which the condition of the soil or the prudence of the planter would naturally suggest.

“ Which of these obstacles will have place in this new colony? Will only one or a few of the means of opulence be enjoyed by it? The most opulent nations cannot boast the possession of every blessing. Either the rigours of the climate and soil are *redressed* by the wisdom of the government, as in Switzerland and Holland; or the mischiefs of misgovernment are somewhat compensated by the bounties of nature, as in Egypt and Sicily. But fancy in her happiest mood can not combine all the felicities of nature and society in a more absolute degree, than will be actually combined, when the valley of the Mississippi shall be placed under the auspices of France. Not one of the impediments to opulence will be found here. Not one of the advantages, the least of which have made other regions the envy and admiration of mankind, will here be wanting.

“ The Nile flows in a torrid climate through a long and narrow valley. The fertility which its annual inundations produce, extends only two or three leagues on either side of it. The benefits of this fertility are marred by the neighbourhood of scorching sands, over which the gales carry intolerable heat and incurable pestilence, and which harbour a race of savages, whose trade is war and pillage. Does this river bestow riches worthy of the greatest efforts of the nation to gain them, and shall the greater Nile of the Western hemisphere be neglected? A Nile whose inundations diffuse the fertility of Egypt twenty leagues from its shores, which occupies a valley wider than from the

Duna to the Rhine, which flows among the most beautiful dales, and under the benignest seasons, and which is skirted by a civilized and kindred nation, on one side, and on the other by extensive regions, over which the tide of growing population may spread itself without hindrance or danger?

“ But of what avail will be all these advantages, unless a market be provided for the produce of the soil? Now this market is already provided. For all that it can produce, France alone will supply *thirty millions* of consumers. The choicest luxuries of Europe are coffee, sugar, and tobacco. The most useful materials of clothing are cotton and silk. All these are either natives of the Mississippi valley, or remarkably congenial to it. The cultivation of these, and the carriage to market, are as obvious and easy as the most ardent politician can desire. The whole extent of the river will be our own, and in the lower and most fertile portion of its course, the banks on both sides will be our indisputable property.

“ Let us consider these advantages with a little more minuteness. Let us reflect on their complexity and extent. The more deeply we consider them, the more fervently shall we desire the possession of them, and the more distinctly shall we perceive how much the happiness and glory of France are concerned in the resolutions of the present moment.

“ Habit has familiarized to us, and reason has endeared to us the use of sugar. Our islands in the West Indies have hitherto chiefly supplied us with this article. That source, it is greatly to be dreaded, is now about to be dried up. Anarchy and misrule have already nearly ruined them. The final seal will be put to their doom, by any hostile attempts to wrest them from the blacks. Their independence, whether it be the prize of their valour or the gift of our benevoence or policy, will make them strangers or enemies, and to trade with them as equals, or with the English, will be an injury to us, inasmuch as it will be a benefit to those who may do us mischief, and as it will exclude us from the greater benefit of trading with our brothers and children. It must likewise be remembered that the utmost produce of these islands was always a meagre supply; that what we cannot ourselves consume, may, with great and manifest advantage to the nation, be distributed to the rest of Europe and of the world.

“ The friend of the health, longevity and useful pleasure of the human species, and of the opulence of France, could not devise a better scheme than one which should enable every inhabitant of Europe to consume half a pound of sugar a day, and assign to Frenchmen the growth, the carriage and the distribution of thus much.\* Now this scheme is no other than the possession of the American Nile. But this end may be too magnificent to be deemed credible. Let us then confine ourselves to the consumption of France; for this alone will be adequate to the employment and conducive to the wealth of a vast number of cultivators.

“ A much less beneficial luxury is coffee, but this our habits have equally endeared to us. We have hitherto drawn it from the same fountain which has supplied us with sugar: the trade in it must follow the same destiny, the same benefits will flow from increasing the supply, and from drawing this supply from the valley of the Mississippi.

“ I shall pass over, without mention, many other articles, such as tobacco, indigo, and the like, for which France and the rest of Europe will supply an unlimited consumption, and hasten to articles which are of more importance, and these are cotton and provisions.

“ The most beautiful production of nature is cotton. It was more than the caprice of fashion that went to the extremities of the east in search of this material, for there is none capable of a greater number of uses, of so many forms and such various colours. Its texture may constitute the lightest and most beautiful of ornaments, or the best defence against the intemperature of the air.

“ The nations of the east have used it immemorially, and from them has it gradually been brought to Europe. The use of it seems to have been limited by nothing but the power of procuring it. Like sugar, the use of it has increased since it has been naturalized to the soil of America. The consumption has, in like manner, been eager to outrun the supply.

“ The American states have of late become sensible of the value of the commerce in cotton, and their success supplies us with a new example, and a powerful inducement

\* 225,000,000 Cwt. the produce of an area, not exceeding that of Guienne, Normandy and Brittany, and not a twentieth part of the valley of the Mississippi.

to appropriate, in part, the territory of the Mississippi to the same culture.

“ In this, as in other articles, we have to struggle with competition, only in relation to foreign markets. The home market is inexhaustibly abundant, and may be all our own. All competition may be excluded *hence*, if not by salutary regulations, yet by the superior excellence and cheapness of the article, and the cotton that shall clothe thirty millions, will require numerous hands to grow and to manufacture it. Who shall count the number of these hands, or of those which shall be employed in supplying the *growers* of cotton with all the conveniences and luxuries of Europe? What limit shall we fix to the increase of wealth and numbers, which will thus be accumulated and multiplied on both sides of the ocean?

“ Sugar, coffee and tobacco are luxuries. Cotton will admit of an imperfect substitute in the homely productions, the flax and hemp, of our own soil, but the inestimable good which recommends this acquisition, is, that it affords a granary whence all deficiencies of the parent country can be supplied.

“ One of the benefits of extensive empire, consists in its lessening the danger of famine. This, however, is, in truth, one of the effects of extensive commerce, by which any occasional scarcity in one province, is immediately supplied by the superabundance of another. As the rigours of season are unequal in extent, this benefit is unequal on different occasions; but the commercial chain that binds together Europe and America, has supplied the surest antidote to this evil, which is compatible with the dimensions of this globe. The causes that modify the seasons and produce scarcity, may possibly extend from Sweden to Sicily, from Courland to Normandy, but they are not likely to operate, at the same time, in both hemispheres. The causes that are thus extensive, will equally affect the whole globe. This is one of the hitherto unmentioned benefits of the colonization of America. This benefit will be more extensively secured by the plantation of the Mississippi. The advantage of receiving this supply, and of imparting it will be secured to France, and the calamities of one part of the empire, will redound to the profit of another part; instead of enriching, as at present, strangers or enemies.

“ I will not pretend to explain, what are so generally understood, as the causes of population. The country

gives food to the town. The town repays the country in works of art. The number of townsmen increases with the surplus product of the country. The series being once begun, each acts, by turns, as a cause and effect. The town grows because the country grows. The country increases because the town increases. It matters not whether the town and country, connected by this mutual influence, be near or remote from each other, provided they can easily communicate. Thus the advancement of cultivation in America, adds numbers, by finding them employment, to Birmingham and Liverpool. Thus the Loire and Garonne will flow among more flourishing farms, numerous villages and crowded cities, in consequence of new men springing up, and new harvests waving on the Mississippi and Missouri. As the American colonies advance, France itself grows more rich and more populous. The products of her art and labour will purchase food from her colonists. The products of colonial tillage, will purchase her art and her labour. The perfection of navigation will create a bridge over the sea, and the chain of mutual dependence will bind them together, faster than a chain of fortresses.

“ In every civilized nation, there must be a certain proportion of wretchedness and poverty; of men whom the pressure of distress compels to great and anxious efforts to improve their condition. To favour these efforts is the end of all good governments; to promote *equality* without detriment to *order* is the great political secret. The obvious and most eligible means for effecting this is not by agrarian schemes subversive of established property, but by appropriating new ground, and distributing it among the needy. Nor ought this distribution to be by the direct and entire agency of government. To ascertain the limits of the new province; to divide it into convenient portions; to set, on each portion, a moderate price; to subject the tenure to easy conditions; thoroughly to apprise the world of this price and these conditions; to instruct those, whose inducements to emigrate are strongest, in the benefits of emigration; to facilitate their voyage and settlement; to defend them in their new possessions by wise laws and prudent treaties; are the only duties incumbent on the government, and such as are easily performed.

“ Let us reflect a moment on the consequence of these arrangements. The chasm, which emigration produces in a thriving country, is momentary. The emigration of the

poor by affording larger room for the remnant, conduces to the benefit equally of those who go and those who stay. The chasm indeed immediately closes, as the chasm has already closed, which the loss of two or three millions in the late revolution produced; which famine, earthquakes and pestilence produce; but the chasm produced by colonization is not by the *loss* of people, but by the transfer of them to a space, in which they will become happier in themselves, and more beneficial to the whole. The reservoir is not lessened by what *thus* flows from it. On the contrary, the reservoir becomes ultimately fuller as the streams that flow from it become more numerous and copious.

“The noblest and most extensive of such reservoirs is France. What a mighty emigration must that be which creates here even a momentary chasm? If wars and violence have swept away upwards of two millions of Frenchmen in the last ten years, and no vacuity is now visible, neither would their place have missed them, had they emigrated to America; and France, could thus, without detriment have created a nation beyond the Atlantic, as numerous as that of the American states at the close of their late war. If a single grain be sown, and twenty years growth be required to make the product double the seed, one grain will only produce, in twenty years, two grains; but this increase is equally certain, whether the seeds be few or many. The American states have been nearly two centuries growing to their present numbers. The careless spectator wonders at the greatness of the harvest, forgetful that, had not the seed been originally cast among sands and rocks; had the planter been less sparing of his store; had he fostered and protected its growth with half the zeal with which he has blighted and trampled it; the present harvest would have been greater in a tenfold proportion than it now is.

“But now comes the fearful and scrupulous head to dash these charming prospects. Obstacles to these great achievements multiply in his timorous fancy. He expatiates on the length of the way; the insalubrity of uncultivated lands; of a climate to which the constitution and habits of the colonists are uncongenial: of a soil, part of which, and that accessible and most valuable, lies under a torrid sun, and is annually inundated.



“ Now all these difficulties are imaginary. They are real in relation to a *first* settlement. They ought to be taken into strict account, if our projects extended to New Holland or to California. In all real cases, these difficulties have been great by reason of the avarice, injustice and folly of the colonizing nation; and the wisest plans could not totally exclude, though they would greatly lessen and easily surmount them. But Louisiana is not a *new* settlement. It is one of the oldest in North America. All the labours of discovering and of setting the first foot on a desert shore, were suffered and accomplished long ago. The task allotted to us now, is not to kindle the first spark, but to add fuel to a flame already kindled. The progress that cultivation has already made, will disarm the climate of the lower Mississippi of half its rigours to future emigrants, and the climate itself in the upper regions of the valley, is prolific of life and health. It vies with the finest districts of France in this respect; and the emigrant instead of finding strange or unfriendly seasons, will meet with nothing but the excellencies of his native air, free from its defects. To the truth of this picture the inhabitants of the eastern part of the valley, bear witness. The emigrations hither from the sea coast, are great and incessant. New towns and new states are continually forming, and the human species multiplies beyond all former example.

“ As to the length or difficulties of the passage, the art of navigation has nearly reduced these to nothing. How many thousand persons are continually crossing the ocean? How many thousands with the cumbrous furniture of war, have been sent to America, and maintained for years while there, by France and England, during the last century, not indeed to cultivate the ground and rear children, but to destroy and be destroyed? Nobody will dare affirm that the end, either proposed or accomplished by these armed emigrations, will as fully justify the trouble and expense laid out upon them, as the emigration of artizans and husbandmen;...which yet requires not the tenth part of the expense, nor incurs the hundredth part of the hazard, which a military expedition of equal numbers requires and incurs.

“ But, exclaims the objector, what does all this display of argument effect, but the destruction of the very end for which it was produced? If such are the benefits to flow from the possession of the Mississippi to France; if its wealth and its power are to gain such magnificent access-

sions from this scheme, will the neighbouring nations passively look on the while? Will Spain resign to us a colony, which though of little value to her, while in her possession, will be of infinite detriment to her when possessed by an active and enterprizing people? Will she thus open the door to her most formidable enemy, and expose her valuable mines and provinces to easy and unavoidable invasion? The Spanish possessions lie on the west and south. The road to them is easy and direct. They are wholly defenceless. The frontier has neither forts, allies nor subjects. To march over them is to conquer. A detachment of a few thousands would find faithful guides, practicable roads, and no opposition between the banks of the Mississippi and the gates of Mexico. The unhappy race whom Spain has enslaved, are without arms and without spirit; or their spirit would prompt them to befriend the invader. They would hail the French as deliverers, and persecute the ministers of Spain as tyrants.

“The Spaniards must be thoroughly aware that their power in Mexico and Peru, exists by the weakness and division of their vassals, and by the remoteness and competition of their European enemies. Unwise and imbecile as that nation has generally appeared in latter times, the admission of the French to a post from whence their dominions may be so easily annoyed at present, and from which their future expulsion is inevitable, is a folly too egregious even for them to commit, and of which the most infatuated of their counsels has not hitherto given an example.

“If Spain should refuse the cession, there is an end to our golden views. Our empire in the new world is strangled in its cradle; or, at least, the prosecution of our scheme must wait for a more propitious season. But should the fortune of our great leader continue her smiles; should our neighbour be trepanned or intimidated into this concession, there is removed, indeed, one obstacle, of itself insuperable; but only to give way to another, at least, equally hard to subdue; and that is, the opposition of England.

“That nation justly regards us as the most formidable enemy to her greatness. Of late, if her pride would confess the truth, she would acknowledge that not her greatness only, but her very being was endangered, either by the influence of our arms or the contagion of our example.

She was assailed in her vitals, as the confusions of Ireland will testify. She was attacked in her extremities, as the expedition to Egypt, a mere prelude to the conquest of Hindoostan, will prove. Her efforts to repel both these attacks, were suitable to their importance, and evince the magnitude of her fears. The possession of the vantage-ground enabled her to crush the Irish. Her naval superiority and the caprice of the winds enabled her to check our victorious career in the east. But has she, indeed, defeated our attempts? No. The seeds of rebellion are far from being extirpated in Ireland, since they were planted by the injustice and oppression of the English, and the issue of the late commotions has rather tightened than slackened the reins of a tyrannical government, and since our means of fanning the flame, will rather be augmented than diminished by the expected peace. The road to India is far from being shut against us. Our next attempts will be more successful as we shall have gathered wisdom from experience, and shall lay our plans with more caution. The English will, perhaps, have rescued themselves from present destruction, by their naval successes, and have put their evil day further off by cutting off our succours to Ireland; but they have not been able to hinder the exaltation of France. Their enemy is far more powerful, and themselves more feeble than at the beginning of the contest. We have given them new reasons for suspicion and jealousy, and what more likely to exasperate these passions and raise their resistance, than the project of this colony?

“Will they suffer France to possess herself of the most effectual means of prosecuting future wars to a different issue? Their navy and their commerce, are, at present, all their trust. France may add Italy and Germany to her dominions with less detriment to England, than would follow from her acquisition of a navy, and the extension of her trade. Whatever gives colonies to France, supplies her with ships and sailors; manufacturers and husbandmen. Victories by land can only give her mutinous *subjects*; who, instead of augmenting the national force, by their riches or numbers, contribute only to disperse and enfeeble that force; but the growth of colonies supplies her with zealous *citizens*, and the increase of real wealth and effective numbers is the certain consequence.

“What could Germany, Italy, Spain and France, combining their strength, perform against England? They might assemble in millions on the shores of the channel, but *there* would be the limit of their enmity. Without ships to carry them over; without experienced mariners to navigate these ships, England would only deride the pompous preparation. The moment we leave the shore her fleets are ready to pounce upon us; to disperse and destroy our ineffectual armaments. *There* lies *their* security: in their insular situation, and their navy, consists their impregnable defence. Their navy is in every respect the offspring of their trade. To rob them of that, therefore, is to beat down their last wall and fill up their last moat. To gain it to ourselves, is to enable us to take advantage of their deserted and defenceless borders, and to complete the humiliation of our only remaining competitor.

“The trade which enriches England, lies chiefly in the products of foreign climates. But her Indian territories produce nothing which the Mississippi could not as easily produce. The Ganges fertilizes a valley less extensive. Its *Deltas*, as well as those of the Nile, are in the same latitudes, and these rivers generate the same exuberant soil, only in smaller space and in less quantities than the great western Nile: but the Mississippi comprehends, in its bosom, the regions of the temperate zone as well as the tropical climates and products. The Arctic circle in America, will be equally accessible to us and to the English. Our ancient possessions in Canada, will in due season return to us of their own accord; and, meanwhile, a double portion of anxiety, and double provision of forts and garrisons, will fall to the lot of the usurping English. The progress of the French will expose their islands, first to be excluded from the markets of Europe, and next to be swallowed up by military power. At present, the protector and the enemy are at an equal distance, but then there will only be a narrow frith between the Mississippi and the isles, between the invaders and the objects they covet, while the defenders would be, as now, afar off; neither apprized of our designs nor able to defeat them.

“This nation could not bury itself in a more inaccessible fortress, than this valley. The mouths of this river, as to all attacks by sea, are better than the bastions of Malta. All around the entrance is impassable to men and horses,

and the great channel is already barred by forts, easily extended and improved. A wise policy would teach the English to divert our attention from this quarter, by the sacrifice of Valletta or Gibraltar!

“Can we imagine the English, so vigilant, so prudent in all affairs connected with their maritime empire; so quick in their suspicions; so prompt in their precautions, can be blind to the dangers with which this cession will menace them? No defeats or humiliations, short of the conquest of their island, will make them acquiesce in such arrangements.

“It is contrary to all probability that either Spain or England will be tractable on this occasion; but if the danger by being distant is invisible to them; or if the present evils, arising to England from continuance of the war, or to Spain from the resentment of the French government, should outweigh, in their apprehensions, all future evils, and prevail on one to grant and on the other to connive at the grant, by what arguments, by what promises, by what threats, by what hostile efforts, shall we extort the consent of the American states? How shall we prevail on them to alienate the most valuable portion of their territory; to *admit into their vitals a formidable and active people, whose interests are incompatible, in every point, with their own; whose enterprises will inevitably interfere and jar with theirs; whose neighbourhood will cramp all their movements; circumscribe their future progress to narrow and ignominious bounds; and make incessant inroads on their harmony and independence?*

“Of Spain they have no reason to entertain any fears or suspicions. She is a harmless and an useful neighbour. The colony that owns her sway must forever stand still. All is imbecility and torpor, where her influence is felt. The western regions are at present an empty house, of which the states, whenever it is perfectly convenient, may take quiet possession. Meanwhile the rights of the present crazy old lord are very serviceable to the future claimants, since they exclude those nations of Europe who are ardent with youth and ambition; who would be inclined to take effectual possession, and would prove restless and dangerous neighbours.

“The states acquiesce in the title of Spain, only on those politic principles. They tolerate her claims only as far as their convenience has dictated. All the eastern part

of this great valley they have already taken to themselves, and are proceeding, with incredible rapidity, to cover it with farms and villages. Such is the extent of this region, however, that some years must elapse before it can be fully appropriated. Meanwhile it is no ones interest to cross the river. The opposite dales may be resigned for a time to the reign of nature, to the helpless savages, who will sell it, when wanted, for blankets and rum, or, what is better, to the nominal authority of Spain; for this authority will never stand in their way when they chuse to pass or descend the river, and will, meanwhile, divert to other channels, the ambition and the enterprise of France, England and Holland.

“ The tenants of this valley find already the passage of the river indispensable to their existence. Their surplus produce cannot be consumed at home, and this is the only outlet to the ocean, by which it can be sent abroad, and exchanged for something which they *can* consume. The Spaniards are stationed at the mouth, and govern the passage of the river, but they must not dare to intercept this passage. They must grant free ingress and egress to the ships of the states; and as the vessels that bring down the produce of the country, are unfit for the broad sea, they must allow their town of New-Orleans, to be a warehouse, to which the *river-boats* may bring and deposite their cargo, and whence the *sea-boats*, from the Atlantic states, may carry it away at their leisure. And this communication must be free from all restraints; all impediments; all customs; unless a scanty rent for the quays, at which the vessels unload, may deserve that name.

“ On these conditions will they suffer Spain to domineer on this river. Their present wants require no more than a thorough-fare, to their eastern harbours; to the islands; and to Europe; but *this* they must have. When more is wanted than the privilege of passing up and down the stream, Spain must grant more or lose all. For Spain, in this quarter of the world, is powerless. She exists here by the sanctity of treaties, and the contempt and convenience of her neighbours. *Should she dare to obstruct the river, or to levy tribute on the passengers, her empire would vanish like smoke.\* The hardy warriors of the upper*

\* Alas! The event has not conformed to the prophecy; unless it was meant that they would obey, with alacrity, the orders of government to this effect.

*country would fall down upon her like lightning, and her feeble garrisons, unsupported by her subjects, (for these are aliens to Spain) would be swept away by the first torrent.*

“The American states are fully apprized of all this. They know the advantage of the neighbour they have, and can they be unacquainted with the spirit of Frenchmen? Can they already have forgotten the panic and dangers which encompassed them, when the enterprising genius of France pressed upon them in former times, from this very quarter and from Canada? Their own force was unable to defend them. Numerous succours from England were requisite to drive the invaders beyond the mountains which separate the Mississippi valley, and the Atlantic colonies. They are no strangers to the progress of the French, since that period, in numbers and arts; to the energy with which the power of the nation is now wielded by a single hand; to the force with which it will overflow, when only one outlet is afforded....And this will be the only outlet!

“If the benefits to France be such, from colonizing these regions; if the access be so easy to the Mexican provinces, will the states be insensible to these benefits, which we cannot appropriate to ourselves without bereaving them? Benefits, somewhat problematical, perhaps, in our case, but most certain and most obvious in theirs. The foundations of future empire, which we are to lay, by slow and painful emigrations, they have already laid. Their colonies have already made considerable progress in this great valley. Emigration from the coast to the western waters is constant and vast. Twenty years ago, there were known to have passed the mountains twenty thousand emigrants in one year. One of the new formed states of this valley, could now supply thirty thousand hardy warriors for any great enterprise. Even should they permit our entrance, can we hold our footing against such powerful neighbours? We shall have no option but to destroy or be destroyed. Either our colonies must be absorbed in theirs, or we must be engaged in incessant war. With such inequality of forces and advantages the issue cannot be adverse to them. Success will be hopeless to us.”....

“These are plausible arguments, and have, I know, been industriously whispered in the ear of him, whose

word will on this occasion be the law of France, England, and Spain; but these arguments are nugatory. Plausible they are when first heard, but when closely examined, they disclose their own confutation: for to what purpose do they tend? What do *they* mean who urge them? To discourage the attempt? Spain will not listen, it seems, to such demands. What then? Their conduct, when the demand *is* made, will best decide the question. If they will *not* listen, they *will* not. It is surely worth the trouble of making the demand, even if their concurrence be extremely improbable.

“But, in truth, all these difficulties exist only in the dreams of the timorous. Who, that is not utterly a stranger to the present state of Spain, does not see that she dare not say *no* to much more important requisitions. If such be the consular will, Spain will hasten to say....“Let it be done”....Woe be to her, should she hesitate!

“But there is no fear of hesitation on her part. Have we not the reins of peace and war in our own hands? In adjusting the terms of the impending treaty, may we not pay what regard we please to the interests of Spain? And cannot we proportion this regard to the kindness which she shews us? And will she not readily give, what will be a blessing to her to bestow? Will she not, to oblige her great ally, yield that which has been only a burden and incumbrance to her? Great as will be the advantage of this province to *us*, it is only a devouring plague to *her*. It has only hitherto defrauded the Spanish treasury of a yearly million of dollars. All they have hitherto enjoyed is the trouble and expense of governing. We *know* the nation. Their absurd and flagitious policy, which has trampled on every privilege and happiness of their colonies, which aims, not at multiplying men and ships, but at the accumulation of gold and silver, has ruled only to weaken and destroy. To import cargoes of the precious metals into Spain is the end of all her labours in the new world. Whatever lessens this import is an evil she is anxious to shake off. By the destruction of commerce, in this colony; of that commerce by which the pecuniary income of the ruling state is increased; by foregoing all tribute from the trade which the American States prosecute before her eyes; by a profuse establishment, civil and ecclesiastical, this province has only been a source of enormous expense. It is plain that she cannot lessen this expense by impositions and restrictions



on the American trade. The States would not bear this, though a natural consequence of territorial property, and Spain is too feeble to resist them.

“As to the possible evils to be dreaded for their Peruvian and Mexican empires, they must place their trust as others do in the sanctity of treaties. And since the exclusion of the French, will only be the admission of the Anglo-Americans, their safety will not be enhanced by this exclusion. On the contrary, the cession will most probably prolong the date of their power. The French will have a different interest from each of their neighbours. The interests and hostilities of the American and European English, will engage part of their attention. If Spanish America must, ultimately, be a prey to its encroaching neighbours, it will longer escape violence when there are several assailants, who are jealous of each other's success, than when there is but one.

“Long ago would the lesser princes of Italy and Germany have disappeared, if Sweden, France, Prussia and Austria had not stood ready to snatch the spoil from each other. Long ago would the Turkish robbers have been driven back to their native deserts, if any single nation of Europe had been suffered by the rest to execute that easy task....But the Spaniards know that Spain and America must one day fall asunder. Why then should they decline a present benefit, in order to preclude one means of an event, which yet by other means, if not by these, will inevitably happen?

“As to England, all the disadvantages with which this event is said to menace them, are real. All the consequences just predicted, to her colonies, to her trade, to her navy, to her ultimate existence, will indisputably follow. *The scheme is eligible to us chiefly on this account*, and these consequences, if they rouse the English to a sturdier opposition, ought likewise to stimulate the French to more strenuous perseverance.

“But, in truth, every Frenchman must laugh with scorn at the thought of British opposition. What would the Spaniards say were they told by the English....You must not give away this colony. Though a great incumbrance to you, and a great benefit to those whom it is your interest and duty to oblige, you must by no means part with it... What patience, either in France or Spain, would tolerate an interference thus haughty, from an enemy to both?

But when is this opposition to be made? This is not a subject of debate between the agents of England and France. It falls not under their discussion. It cannot therefore be the occasion of their interviews. There is no room for opposition to what comes not under our notice. The cession must be made without their knowledge. It is only to be published by its execution, and when the French are safely lodged in the Mississippi, the gainsayings of the English will be too late.

“Will they go to war in order to wrest it from us? Against that event be it our future business to provide. The First Consul will not be wanting to such an exigence. A fleet and army will find a safe lodgement in the Mississippi, and though it might be possible for England to hinder the passage of the ocean or the entrance of the river, they may be securely defied when the ocean *is* passed, and the harbour *is* gained. The vantage-ground will then be ours. We shall have reached a fortress, which an hostile fleet cannot starve; which need not rely for its subsistence on an open sea, between America and France; which will enjoy, within itself, and in the neighbouring states the means of recruiting all its forces and magazines.

“But great as the evils are which England may dread from this cession, the vigour of that nation can no longer supply its resentment with arms. The continuance of the war, or the speedy renewal of it, are equally beyond their power. The terms we shall afford them, will be convenient to us, but indispensable to them. They may touch the sceptre we hold out if they will, provided they allow Flanders and Holland, Italy and Switzerland, Portugal and Spain, to bow to our supremacy; provided we may purchase South America from its present owners; provided they molest us not in prescribing the future destiny of Greece, Asia and Egypt....if they will *not* accept the proffered olive upon these conditions, they may take the consequence, and incur new wounds in the vain endeavour to avoid death.

“But there is a nearer, and, it must be owned, a more formidable nation to gain. If there be any truth in the picture heretofore drawn of the value of this province to France, it must be, in a still greater proportion, of value to the American States. If the powers of this rising nation were intrusted to the hands of one wise man;....if the *founder* of the nation was still its *supreme magistrate* and

he had no wills to consult but his *own*, the French most probably would never be allowed to set their foot on that shore; but the truth, the desirable truth, is, that opposition is the least to be dreaded from those who have most reason to oppose us. They whose interests are most manifest may be most easily deceived; whose danger is most imminent may most easily be lulled into security. They whose vicinity to the scene of action puts it most in their power to enact their own safety; whose military force might be most easily assembled and directed to this end, we shall have the least trouble, in dividing, intimidating, and disarming.

“ I come now to the last difficulty which the most scrupulous objector has discovered; and this difficulty will be dissipated with more ease than the rest. On what foundation does it repose but the visionary notion, that the conduct of nations is governed by enlightened views, to their own interest? The rulers of nations have views of their own, and they are gained by the gratification of these private views. The more individuals there are that govern, and the more various their conditions and their character, the more dissimilar are their interests and the more repugnant these interests to those of each other and the interests of the whole.

“ Was there ever a people who exhibited so motley a character; who have vested a more limited and precarious authority, in their rulers; who have multiplied so much the numbers of those that govern; who have dispersed themselves over so wide a space; and have been led by this local dispersion, to create so many clashing jurisdictions and jarring interests, as the States of America?

“ They call themselves *free*, yet a fifth of their number are slaves. That proportion of the whole people are ground by a yoke more dreadful and debasing than the predial servitude of Poland and Russia. They call themselves *one*, yet all languages are native to their citizens. All countries have contributed their outcasts and refuse to make them a people. Even the race of Africa, a race not above, or only just above the beasts, are scattered every where among them, and in some of the districts of their empire are nearly a moiety of the whole. Already there are near twenty states, each of which is governed by a law of its own; which have formed a common union, on voluntary and mutable principles; and a general constitution, whose end is to se-

cure their utmost efficacy to popular passions, and to prevent the scattered members from coalescing into one symmetrical and useful body.\* They are a people of yesterday. Their institutions have just received birth. Hence their characters and views are void of all stability. Their prejudices are all discordant. Their government is destitute of that veneration which an ancient date, and of that distinctness and certainty in its operations and departments which long experience, confers. Their people are the slaves of hostile interests; blown in all directions by froward passions; divided by inveterate factions, and the dupes and partizans of all the elder nations by turns.

“Such is the people whom we, it seems, are to fear, because their *true interest* would make them our enemies; with whom *we* are to contend in negotiation, or, if need be, in arms! WE, who are as much a proverb for our skill in diplomatics as in war: who have all the unity in counsels; the celerity in execution; the harmony of interests; the wisdom of experience; and the force of compactness, of which this patchwork republic is notoriously destitute. Their numbers! *That*, when the parts are discordant, is only fuel more easily kindled, and producing a more extensive and unquenchable flame. Five millions of jarring and factional citizens are far less formidable than a disciplined and veteran legion of as many thousands.

“But their opposition, like that of England, *whatever efficacy it might have, when seasonably exerted, will come too late*. This session will be known to America, as it will be to Europe, only by its execution. They, whom it would be easy, perhaps, to exclude, by shutting the door against them, it will be impossible, when they are once in the house, to turn out. To gain possession, we must get leave of door-keeper Spain, and that being obtained, the English on this side of the ocean, and their spurious progeny beyond it, may rail and bustle as much as they please.

“Will the states go to war? And have we any reason to dread their hostilities? Can they not be easily diverted or intimidated from open violence? Or should pacifying measures fail of success, are they not susceptible of *deeper wounds* than they are able to inflict?

“Let us consider the matter a little more distinctly, and all apprehensions on their account will completely subside.

\* A different picture could not be expected from the court of the First Consul. T.

Let us be just to ourselves, and let us form our judgment of them, by the unerring test of experience. Let us predict their future conduct from their past.

“ This is a nation of pedlars and shop-keepers. Money engrosses all their passions and pursuits. For this they will brave all the dangers of land and water; they will scour the remotest seas, and penetrate the rudest nations. Their ruling passion being money, no sense of personal or national dignity must stand in the way of its gratification. These are an easy sacrifice to the lust of gain, and the insults and oppressions of foreigners are cheerfully borne, provided there is a recompense of a pecuniary nature. Insults and injuries that affect not the purse, affect no sense that they possess; and such is the seemingly inconsistent influence of the mercenary passion, that the pillage of their property, while it produces infinite discontent and clamour, urges them to no revenge. The dictates of a generous nature, which prefers honour to riches, and will hazard property and life itself, in the assertion of its own or its country's wrongs, are strangers to their breasts. When the counsel is war, they prudently reckon the expense, and determine rather to keep what is left them, than to risk it in endeavouring to regain that of which they have been robbed.

“ Such is their history since they have grown to sufficient size to attract historical attention. In a former age, when attacked at their own doors, by assailants who were obliged to cross the ocean to reach them, they were panic struck and helpless, and would have fallen an easy prey to their invaders, had not succour been offered them by the fleets and armies of England.

“ Afterwards, when England sought a revenue from them, by way of compensation for past and future expenses, and ventured, for this purpose, to tax a ridiculous luxury called tea, the nation instantly flew....*to complaints*. England proceeded to coercion, and the colonies to summon their citizens to arms; but what an ignominious series ensued of ineffectual calls! of unskillful arrangements in the fiscal and military departments! of successive defeats! These defeats did not prove fatal to their liberty, merely because their country was too wide to be garrisoned; because the adverse generals forbore to push them to their ruin; but chiefly, because their ancient enemy deigned to clothe their beggarly troops, to fill their empty magazines, and to send his veterans to fight their battles. By his aid

they extorted from their British masters, the acknowledgment of independence. Since this period they have grown in wealth and numbers, and have been busily employed; and how have they been busy? In bringing their disjointed members into some sort of combination; in building up and pulling down their separate constitutions; in quelling tumults excited by attempts to levy taxes on a liquid poison called Whiskey; in supplicating France and England, that they would be good enough to repay the value of the plunder committed by these nations on their commerce, and Spain, that she would be pleased to let them pass up and down the Mississippi; and in the most furious and disgraceful animosities of party, fomented by the two great rivals in Europe, and convertible at will into more successful engines of conquest than armies and fleets. Instead of providing for their own defence, against foreign and domestic foes, by armed ships and disciplined troops, they have relied, on the power of inactivity, and on a rabble of militia. Instead of asserting their natural claim to the continent of North America, they have left all their southern districts, and the mouth of their most useful river in the hands of a nation, despicable and defenceless; whose claims are groundless and ridiculous, asserted by themselves, but formidable and fatal when transferred to others.

“What topics, likely to produce conviction, can be urged by the advocates of hostile measures? The future occupation of the western world, by a race congenial to themselves; the extension of their name and language over so large a part of the earth; the future acquisition of the wealth of Mexico; are splendid images which might seduce the sage in his closet, or the despotic prince, whose private will is the law of his people, and whose private ease would not be impaired by the incidents of war, but are idle and ineffectual dreams in the view of the farmer, trader and artizan. These classes must provide immediate bread for their children, and comfort and respect for their old age. Chimerical and distant goods would hardly extort from them a petty contribution to the public; or tempt them to march a hundred miles from home with a musket on their shoulder; or to risque the rotting of the corn in their granaries for want of a market; the loss of customers to their shop for want of an assortment; and the inaction of their ships for want of freights. The rulers of America are either farmers or merchants themselves,

or they hold their powers at the caprice of ploughmen and helmsmen. Among such there is rarely an understanding to conceive, much less any disposition to deny themselves their customary pleasures, for the sake of *national glory*, or the benefit of distant generations.

“As for the prospect of future settlements on new lands, they must have keen optics indeed, who can look beyond the Mississippi. Ages must pass away before the Miami and Ohio will acquire equal wealth and population with the Rhine and Danube. The emigrant tide must flow westward for many propitious years, before their great North-western territory will be occupied even by such slender numbers as are at present found on their sea coast.

“We may, as long as we please, avoid encroaching on their borders, or even disturbing them in the pursuit of their own advantage. They have solemnly acknowledged the rights of Spain to the western slope of the great valley, and to the mouths of the river. These rights will be transferred entire to us. We shall not create unnecessary difficulties by exerting *too soon* our rights over the passage of the river. This is all that they have hitherto demanded. This is all that their convenience will, for some time, demand, and this we shall readily concede to them.

“*The prosperity of our colony will indeed demand the exclusive possession of the river.* This possession our station at the mouth of it, will give us the right and the power to assume, whenever we please, but a short time may be allowed to elapse before we claim it. We must first make sure our footing: and yet it would be strange if ten thousand veterans in a colony that is still French, did not make sure this footing, after one day’s military occupation of the province.

“Should we bar up this passage immediately, or levy custom on the passengers, what will be the consequence? They will send ambassadors to France to explain their rights, to solicit redress for the wrong. Etiquette will make a thousand delays. The common forms of diplomatic discussion, will create a thousand more. New terms may be given to the controversy; new ambassadors and new powers will follow the old, and the distance of the parties will put to as great a distance the appeal to arms;....and the worst that can ensue, will be the necessity of warring with an undisciplined and faithless rabble.

"A careless observer may imagine that in a contest between the American States and France, the disadvantage must be wholly on our side; but this is a strange opinion; for in the first place the States are vulnerable in every way and at every point. They have extensive commerce, which is undefended by a navy. They have a long line of sea coast, on which all their great towns are situated, and which hostile armaments will find every where accessible. The greater part of their national revenue flows from their foreign commerce. To molest or despoil *that*, therefore, is to aim at the sources of their whole strength. To pilage or destroy their great towns, is to inflict wounds equally mortal. Their inland frontier is a waste, destitute of all defence against invasion, and unfitted for the maintenance or march of armies into a hostile territory.

"But the great weakness of these States arises from their form of government, and the condition and habits of the people. Their form of government, and the state of the country, is an hot bed for faction and sedition. The utmost force of all the wisdom they possess, is exerted in keeping the hostile parts together. These parts are unlike each other, and each one has the individualizing prejudices of a separate state; all the puerile jealousies of the greatness of others; all the petty animosities which make neighbours quarrel with each other without cause. How slight an additional infusion is requisite to set this heterogeneous mass into commotion? to make the different parts incline different ways, on the great question of war?

"The master of the Mississippi will be placed so as to controul, in the most effectual manner, these internal waves. It is acknowledged that he holds in his hands the *bread* of all the settlements, westward of the hills. He may dispense, or withhold at his pleasure. See we not the mighty influence that this power will give us over the councils of the states?

"Nature has divided this nation, by the hills that turn the great waters opposite ways. The interests of those who shall occupy the two slopes of the great valley are the same. Mountains separate mankind; rivers draw them together. The maritime and the *fluvial* states are combined by accident. The constant tendency is to part, while the tendency is no less strong in the states divided by the river, to coalesce. These different tendencies is the easy province of



France, in her new colony, to manage so as to make their enmity or rivalry harmless to us.

“The peculiar colour of their factions is, also, extremely favourable to the designs of a powerful and artful neighbour. They quarrel about forms of government. These forms are not subtle threads, and scarcely visible, drawn from the bowels of their own invention, but are the gross and clumsy models taken from European examples. The rivalry between France and England has extended to the speculations of this people, and by natural consequence, a prejudice is thus created, which makes one faction friendly to France and the other to England.

“One party is extremely sensible to all the encroachments of the English. Here their vigilance is all alive. They have great facility at discovering harm, when it comes from this quarter. They are prone to every thing which may give offence to the nation they bitterly hate. They rejoice in its distresses. They mourn at its triumphs. On the contrary, they are governed by a bias equally strong in favour of France. Their hearts are ours, even when their heads would disapprove. They conceal or palliate our crimes; they pity our calamities; they connive at injuries and insults from us. Suspicious, vengeful and irascible to England, their “charity thinks no wrong, endures much, and is easy of entreaty” to Frenchmen.

“What obvious and convenient tools will these prove in any critical affairs? How easy to enforce this natural bias, by arguments addressed to their selfish passions, and personal interests. We have learned to set its true price on republican virtue and national spirit. The same glaring illusions that brought Holland, Switzerland, and Genoa into our snares, will, with as much facility, entrap republics that will lie more at our mercy, and of which the members are more dissonant and motley.

“This party, always formidable in its spirit and numbers, has lately gotten the mastery. The majority of the people, and their present rulers, are pliant clay fittest for our use. From these we may exact neutrality to all our schemes. *They will take pains to shut their eyes against future evils. They will be remarkably quick-sighted to the danger of a rupture with us. Their scruples against the violation of treaties and against offensive war, will be wonderfully strong.\** They will eagerly swallow the opiates

\* Predictions already fulfilled. T.

that we shall provide for them, and thank us for any potion that annihilates their own fears or enables them to lull those of the people.

“ And not without strong reason may they deprecate a quarrel with France, whom its new position on their borders, will render a useful friend, but a fatal enemy. When *war* becomes the topic of discourse, this people will turn their eyes to the calamities of St. Domingo, and then to their own provinces, where the same intestine plague exists in a degree equally formidable, and where their utmost care is requisite to prevent the struggling mischief from bursting its bonds.

“ Devoted to the worst miseries, is the nation which harbours in its bosom a foreign race, brought, by fraud and rapine, from their native land; a race bereaved of all the blessings of humanity; whom a cruel servitude inspires with all the vices of brutes and all the passions of demons; whose injuries have been so great that the law of self-preservation obliges the state to deny to the citizen the power of making his slave free; whose indelible distinctions of form, colour, and perhaps of organization, will forever prevent them from blending with their tyrants, into one people; who foster an eternal resentment at oppression, and whose sweetest hour would be that which buried them and their lords in a common and immeasurable ruin.

“ With what prudence can this nation attack a neighbour, who can fan at pleasure, the discontents of this intestine enemy; who can give union, design, and arms to its destructive efforts at revenge? Who can raise, at any moment, a Spartacus or L'Ouverture to distract the counsels, and employ the force which might otherwise annoy himself; whose own sad experience has informed him of the power of this weapon against the public peace; whom the maxims of war will justify in turning this weapon against his enemy; and whose local situation enables him to raise this weapon with most facility, and direct it with most force?

“ This nation is not insensible to all these dangers. An example is before their eyes of the consequences of a *servile war*. Their country is full of exiles from the scene of such a warfare. Their travellers, their daily papers supply them with the picture, in all its circumstantial horrors. They are shaken by panics on this very account already,

and no consideration would have a stronger influence on their conduct than this.

“ There is still another rein, however, by which the fury of the States may be held in at pleasure....by an enemy placed on their western frontiers. The only aliens and enemies within their borders, are not the blacks. They indeed are the most inveterate in their enmity; but the INDIANS are, in many respects, more dangerous inmates. Their savage ignorance, their undisciplined passions, their restless and warlike habits, their notions of ancient right, make them the fittest tools imaginable for disturbing the states. In the territory adjacent to the Ohio, Mississippi and Missouri, there are more than *thirty thousand men*, whose trade is hunting and whose delight is war. These men lie at the mercy of any civilized nation who live near them. Such a neighbour can gain their friendship or provoke their enmity with equal ease. He can make them inactive, or he can rouse them to fury: He can direct their movement in any way he pleases, and make it mischievous or harmless by supplying their fury with arms and with leaders, or by withholding that supply.

“ The English colonies have been miserably harassed, in all the stages of their progress, by these savage tribes. At an early period, they suffered terrible disasters from that quarter, and were sometimes nearly driven from the country. As the colonies advanced the Indians declined, but while the enlargement of the circle of settlements gave safety to the centre, the borders of the circle were infested as before.

“ There was some egregious defect in the colonial policy, which exposed them, at all times, to these evils: but in the two American wars, it was no wonder that the sword and fire of the Indians committed such multiplied mischiefs, as they were guided by the French at one time, and by the British at another. Since their revolution, when these powerful agents have been withdrawn, the hostility of these tribes has cost them much treasure and a great many lives, and their neutrality is purchased by large and constant subsidies.

“ The pliant and addressful spirit of the French has always given them an absolute controul over these savages. The office, which the laziness or the insolence of the British found impracticable, was easily performed by us;....

and will be still easier hereafter, since we shall enter on the scene with more advantages than formerly.

“ We shall detach thither a sufficient force to maintain possession against all the efforts of the States, should they, contrary to all their interests, proceed to war *with* or *without* provocation. We shall find, in the Indian tribes, an army permanently cantoned in the most convenient stations; endowed with skill and temper best adapted to the nature and the scene of war, and armed and impelled with far less trouble and expense than an equal number of our own troops. We shall find a terrible militia, infinitely more destructive, while scattered through the hostile settlements, and along an open frontier, than an equal force of our own. We shall find, in the bowels of the States, a mischief that only wants the touch of a well-directed spark to involve in its explosion, the utter ruin of half their nation. *Such will be the powers we shall derive from a military station and a growing colony on the Mississippi.* These will be certain and immediate effects, whatever distance or doubt there may be in the remoter benefits to France, on which I have so warmly expatiated. As a curb on a nation whose future conduct, in peace and war, will be of great importance to us, this province will be cheaply purchased at ten times the cost to which it will subject us.”....

I have now gone through the reveries of this Frenchman. I was unwilling to stop, or to omit any of his topics, though some of them may be thought fanciful, and his style, notwithstanding my pruning knife, may be charged with redundancy. It cannot but be useful for us to know the notions of the French, on a subject which late transactions have rendered of so much moment to us. To be fully aware of the hopes and views of this restless government could not fail to profit us at any time, but now that an unexpected incident, has put into our hands the means of preventing every real, as well as possible evil, to be dreaded from the entrance of the French into America; it seems in the highest degree desirable to know the full extent of these real and possible evils.

This writer has given such a portrait of us as was most suitable to his views. Our national pride will induce us to deny, perhaps, the truth of the picture; and surely we are not *quite* so fluctuating and distracted in our counsels;

so irreconcilable in our interests; so inveterate in our factions as he thinks proper to paint us. With all our faults, are we, indeed, incapable of vengeance for unmerited wrong? Is our country, its rights, its honour, its prosperity, no dearer to us than any foreign land? Do the people of the coast regard as aliens and enemies, those beyond the mountains? Do those of the northern states, however distant in place and dissimilar in manners, regard with no brotherly emotions, the happiness or misery of their southern countrymen? Is our government a tottering fabric which the breath of foreign emissaries can blow down at their pleasure? Has corruption made such strides among us, that the purse-holders of France can purchase our forbearance, when our nearest interests, our most manifest honour are assailed?

No. The American war supplies us with an eternal confutation of the slander. It was then evident that the ploughman and mechanic at either end of the continent, could recognize a common interest with each other; could sacrifice their ease, their fortunes, their lives, to secure a remote and general benefit; that the passion for gain could not deter us from repelling encroachments on our *liberty*, at the cost of every personal advantage; that all the biasses in favour of the nation we sprung from; the sense of internal weakness; the want of forts, armies, and arms of unity of government and counsels, slackened not the zeal of our resistance, against a nation that *abounded* in all that we *wanted*. Mutinous slaves in the heart of our country; hostile garrisons and fortresses on one side; numerous and tumultuous savages around us; the ocean scoured by the fleets of our enemy; our sea ports open to their inroads; a revenue to create out of paper; the force of an established government....all these affrighted not the men of that day from the pursuit of an end most abstracted from personal ends; from the vulgar objects of gain; an end which only a generous spirit, a mind that makes the good of posterity and distant neighbours its own, that prefers liberty and all its hardships to servitude, that hugs her chain in pomp;.... could have loved with ardour, and pursued with perseverance.

And what change has twenty years made, that should make us doubt the display of equal spirit on the same occasion? Has this period added nothing to our numbers and wealth? Has the enjoyment of independence only

weakened our affection for it? Is it easier to fetter the full grown man, than to keep the child from bursting his bonds? Has a national government, and twelve years of its benign influence, done *nothing* towards the union and coherence of the states? Surely the force of the nation; the power of directing it to common ends; the wisdom and foresight of its rulers; the jealousy of foreigners are not *lessened* by the progress of time; the *increase* of wealth, numbers and harmony, and the contemplation of European scenes. The French, in possession of the Mississippi, and incroaching on our rights or our territory, would surely find no irresolute or despicable enemies. Their garrisons could hardly be so strong, or their settlements so rapid, as to repel the whole force of the states. The French cannot occupy the river but to our exclusion. They will not fail to use their own ground, and to exclude others from the use of it. This will drive the parties to a war. This consequence is unavoidable. And what force from Europe can stand in competition with *our* force, exerted on our own ground? The ultimate event of such contentions is too plain to be missed by the blindest archer. Provocation could not fail to be given by one party; resentment to be manifested by the other; and the contest to terminate in the deliverance of America from every foreign intruder.

But let us not indulge a prejudice as far beyond the truth as that of the Frenchman falls short of it. Let us not overrate our own force, or underrate that of France. It cannot be denied that our intestine disputes, though no more than are incident to *human nature*, under popular forms of government, and though less unruly and ferocious than the popular commotions of other states, have led to national preferences, too favourable to the arts of intriguers. It is plain that our division into numerous states, tends to the production of hostile sentiments, and promotes the success of those who wish to conquer by disarming, to resist by dividing us; the blacks are a bane in our vitals, the most deadly that ever nation was infested with. They are indeed a train of powder, so situated as to make it not impossible for the French in Louisiana, to set fire to it. The Indians have ever been destructive neighbours whom it has been extremely difficult *for us* to manage, but by some peculiarity in the formation of Frenchmen, always easily controuled by them. A war in these half peopled wilds, even against savages, has always

been vexatious and expensive. Our new neighbours will make a considerable preparation for war, at all times necessary, and an actual war against them, will only be less doubtful in its issue, less tedious in its progress, and less destructive of life and revenue, than the war of the revolution. It would be vain to deny these truths.

No man can look upon these evils with indifference. Yet no wise man will think a renewal of all the devastations of our last war, too great a price to give for the expulsion of foreigners from this land; for securing to our own posterity, the possession of this continent.

We have a *right* to the possession. The interests of the human race demand from us the exertion of this right. These interests demand that the reign of peace and concord should be diffused as widely, and prolonged as much as possible. By unity of manners, laws and government, is concord preserved, and this unity will be maintained, with as little danger of interruption, as the nature of human affairs will permit, by the gradual extension of our own settlements, by erecting new communities as fast as the increase of these settlements requires it, and by sheltering them all under the pacific wing of a federal government.

To introduce a foreign nation, all on fire to extend their own power; fresh from pernicious conquests; equipped with all the engines of war and violence; measuring their own success by the ruin of their neighbours; eager to divert into channels of their own, the trade and revenue which have hitherto been ours; raising an insuperable mound to our future progress; spreading among us, with fatal diligence, the seeds of faction and rebellion:....What more terrible evil can befall us? What more fatal wound to the future population, happiness and concord of this new world? The friend of his country and of mankind, must regard it with the deepest horror.

It will cost some anxiety, some treasure, some lives, to drive this formidable neighbour from his post; but such are the fatal consequences of allowing his possession, that the whole force of the States ought to be instantly directed to this quarter. Our whole zeal; all our passions ought to be engaged in its success....For the dullest apprehension cannot fail to perceive, that every new moment adds strength to the enemy; and multiplies the evils we have to fear.

But why all these efforts to inspire courage? The enemy is not at hand. The French have not yet entered the river. We need not put ourselves in warlike array against ten or fifteen thousand veterans; and bring up ships and cannon to *dislodge* them from their strong hold. The course of events is as if modelled by some tutelary angel of America. Instead of gaining the first knowledge of the design, by the execution of it, the execution is delayed long after the design is formed and known. Abundant leisure is afforded to deliberate and resolve, and the means suddenly and unexpectedly thrown into our hands of preventing all these evils, without hazard or expense; without incurring or inflicting any of the miseries of war.

The cession of this province to France has never been formally avowed. This official publication was unnecessary. For the reasons stated by this memorialist, which are evidently just reasons, it would have been injurious. It would only have created cavils and obstacles on both sides of the ocean. Such an important event, however, could not fail to be suspected, and all difficulties were to be precluded by its rapid execution. Measures for this end were taken with that dispatch which distinguishes all the conduct of the present ruler of France.

Our good genius, however, seems to have been active in befriending us on this occasion, and made of no avail the wisdom of his counsellors. The pride of a conqueror would not brook a partnership with the negro chief of St. Domingo. His vanity could not question, for a moment, the success of his arms against a nation of quondam slaves. As to the havoc of such a war, of all conquerors Bonaparte has been the most prodigal of human life, and the general peace has made the murder of half his soldiers, not at all to be regretted: Nay, it has been no undesirable consequence. As to the danger of delays, he has said....“My designs on the Mississippi will never be officially announced, till they are executed. Meanwhile the world if it pleases, may fear and suspect, but nobody will be wise enough to go to war to prevent them. I shall trust to the folly of England and America, to let me go my own way in my own time.”\*

Events have happened which pride would not foresee. All the preparations of the French were immediately

\* Words said to have been repeated by Talleyrand, as those of Bonaparte.



engrossed by their island war. Instead of a prompt submission from the blacks, a delay of a few days to settle the government, and a speedy prosecution of the voyage to Louisiana, an arduous conflict commenced, and, agreeably to the prediction of the memorialist, the flower of the Italian and Egyptian armies has fallen before the sword and the pestilence. The island is further from conquest than ever, but such are the illusions of vulgar glory, that their resolution to conquer it is only strengthened by past misfortunes. Extermination is now the word, and the *point of honour* will not allow them to recede.

Meanwhile the fate of the Mississippi is suspended. The colonists look forward with despair to the threatened invasion. They are weary of the intolerable yoke of Spain. Their birth on the soil, and the long separation of their government from France, have annihilated all the ties which once connected them with their parent country. They remember when that parent country made them over as a worthless chattel to their present rulers. They recal the bloody acts with which the new tyranny commenced. They feel that their birth and situation have made them interests of their own, separate from those of European powers; and uniting them with the neighbouring states, whose mild and equitable policy seeks to make, not slaves, but citizens; not to impose a foreign and military yoke, and the burden of maintaining a numerous army, but to raise them to the dignity of ruling themselves and to secure to them the benefits of union and peace. This picture their forboding fancy contrasts with the new restrictions, the arbitrary levies on their property and persons, and the insolence of foreign troops which will inevitably ensue the arrival of the French agents. Many of them, though Spaniards by name, are emigrants from these States, or from the British islands. To such, an alliance with us is the subject of their passionate longings: the approach of the myrmidons of Bonaparte, the object of their deepest dread.

But their only portion, till lately, has been despair. They have looked in vain towards the states for any movement in their favour. These states have implicitly acknowledged the rights of Spain. They have exacted nothing but the freedom of the river; and as long as Spain faithfully performs this condition, the States are bound,

by their solemn stipulations, to refrain from new encroachments.

The transfer to France, indeed, is a virtual infraction of the treaty. It is now wholly at an end. The new possessors will hold themselves free from all former obligations. The States will be placed in a new relation. There is no compact between America and France relative to this river. To transfer the country, without our leave or knowledge, to another, when our dearest interests forbid this transfer, is a manifest breach of his engagements in the present lord. To *drive him out*, therefore, without delay, is a just proceeding. *At least*, to forbid the transfer, and to prevent its execution, by forcible means, if need be, is indisputably just.

But this, alas! (exclaims the colonist,) though unspeakably desirable to us, whose interests, surely, are of greatest moment in the question, if reason, and not prejudice, were umpire in the fray;...though essential to the interests of the States, who will thereby escape a thousand calamities, and secure to themselves and their posterity, a million of benefits, will never occur to their governors. Timorous and pacific is their policy, and they will never be aroused to arms, till the new possessors reject all their overtures to friendship; till they cut off the subsistence of the western people, by shutting up the river. *Then* the magnitude of the evil may drive them reluctantly to arms, and they will fight under the infinite disadvantages from which seasonable and precautionary measures would be free.

Such is the melancholy strain which the conduct of the States has hitherto but too well justified. We have looked on with stupid apathy, while European powers toss about among themselves the property which God and Nature have made *ours*.

Far be it from me to sanctify the claim of conquest. America is *ours*, not only as the interest of the greater number and of future generations, is the paramount and present interest; and therefore Louisiana is ours, even if to make it so, we should be obliged to treat its present inhabitants as vassals: but it is ours, because the interests of that people and of ourselves are common: not only because the peace and happiness of these States assign it to us, but because *their* welfare *claims* our alliance and protection.

To these pleas, however, our rulers have been hitherto deaf; and fortune, as if to put our discretion to the hardest test, as if to take away from our conduct, every possible excuse, has, at last, thrown the golden apple at our feet. It now lies before us, and we need only to stoop to take it up.

I need not dwell minutely on recent events. We all know the terms of our treaty with Spain. We know that they were plain and unequivocal; that not only the river was to be free to us, but that a ware-house was to be provided on the river, where the inland and foreign trade might conveniently meet and exchange their cargoes.... Each of these conditions have been broken. New-Orleans is shut against us. No other depository is provided for us. A disgraceful and exorbitant tribute is levied on the commerce of the river.

Shall we try to explain this conduct in the intendant of the province? Is he not a native of the soil? Has he not large possessions in the country? Has he not the *Creole* jealousy of Spain; the national antipathy to France? Does he not call the province his country; and does he not desire the promotion of his own importance, and his country's true interests, by the only measure likely to rouse the States into action? Were the heads of our government endowed with the French subtlety, we should incline to suspect a concert on this great occasion between them and the Spanish officers.... Or is this breach of treaty committed in pursuance of the mandate of Bonaparte, who disdains to take the gift, clogged with any troublesome or disagreeable conditions? Or is it the blunder of a well-meaning man, *dressed in a little brief authority*, who interprets the treaty in this manner?

None of these suppositions are improbable, except the last. But the true clue to the riddle is undoubtedly this. Spain, however loath, could not refuse this province when imperiously demanded by France; but her cunning suggested an expedient, by which the French might be prevented from obtaining possession, without exposing herself to any blame. *Secret orders, orders not to be avowed*, were dispatched, that, on the arrival of official information of a general peace, the treaty between Spain and the States should be broken by the shutting up of the port. They hoped that this flagrant provocation would instantly rouse the States to arms; that their troops would, without delay, fall down the river, and the province be thus transferred

to a nation, whose pacific policy and fidelity to their engagements make them far more eligible neighbours to new and old Mexico, than the restless, ambitious and warlike French. No one that reflects upon this event, can fail to explain it in this manner; for all resistance to an army from the States is chimerical. No one in Louisiana dreams that resistance will be made, or is intended. The conquest will not cost a single drop of blood.

No matter, however, for the cause. We are only concerned for the event, and its effects. By whomsoever it was performed, it was undoubtedly dictated by the good genius of America, since by this means only could our true interests be made manifest to every eye. By this means only could every heart be engaged in the cause. By this means only could an effectual impulse be given to the people of the Western country. This impulse *is now* given. The nature of this injury is perfectly intelligible to men of every profession and rank. The merchant, the artizan, the planter, comprehend with equal clearness, in what manner, and to what extent the obstruction of the river will affect their private interest. They are eager to act in this cause, for the same reasons which would prompt them to act against the midnight robber. They lay their hands already on their musquets, and look with one accord, to the general government for orders to march.

They hesitate, they wait for orders, only because they are sure that the desired leave will be given. The flimsy cobweb of law will not restrain them. They profess the most obsequious readiness to do what the government will please to enjoin; but this obsequiousness is built on nothing but the firm belief that they will be enjoined to do what they are already resolved to do.

They cannot conceive any motive in the government for hesitation. There is no formidable preparation to make; no mercenary army to levy; no floating batteries to build and to equip. The boats that carry down the trader and his goods, are ready and willing to carry soldiers. In this cause, the crews are eager to add muskets to their oars. There are less than two thousand wretched soldiers dispersed throughout the province, in posts fit only to surrender to the first shot or the first summons. The inclinations of the people are our allies; and if hindered for a moment, from affording us active succour, would aid us by all the means that unarmed citizens possess.

The government will not hesitate for fear of France; for the fear of France must stimulate to expedition. France is to be dreaded only or chiefly on the Mississippi. The deadliest blows from that nation must come from that quarter. To prevent their entrance, therefore, is the most urgent measure of defence. Assailable we may be, and exposed to annoyance from other quarters, but here their assaults will inflict inexpressibly greater mischiefs than elsewhere. If they have made no such bargain as we dread with Spain, or will never carry the sale into effect, our conduct can neither injure nor provoke them. If the bargain is made, we are not officially informed of it. We resent the conduct of *Spain*. We attack a *Spanish* province. If the French resent the attack as made upon themselves, or demand the restitution, *let* them resent and demand. We shall not, surely, buy their friendship by putting a poniard in their hand, and opening our bosom to the stroke. We shall not value their resentment, since it is incurred by an act of self-defence, and since the admission of their troops, or the restitution of the province, will be a deeper injury to us, than their most implacable resentment can inflict.

The government will not hesitate, because pacific means ought first to be employed. They will not dare to send their messengers across the ocean, with memorials and remonstrances under one arm, and books of the law of nations under the other. They will not make the rights of their country, in this respect, the subject of tedious and impertinent discussions. With the means of reparation in their own hands, will they have the execrable folly to forbear effectuating their claims, and doing justice to themselves? Will they argue by means of envoys, with a despot, three thousand miles off, when assertions and replies must travel to and fro for months at a time, while the honest citizen stands ready, at a moment's notice to open the door to liberty and commerce, but is not suffered to move a step? It is for us to redress the wrong by our own power, and *then* to give a candid hearing to those whom our conduct has offended. It is for us to be besieged with petitions and remonstrances, and give an audience to those who may properly demand it at our own doors.

The government *must not* hesitate. The western people will not be trifled with. They will not bear that injuries to their dearest rights should excite no emotion in that government whose claim to their regard is founded on the

*equality and efficacy* of its protection. There never was a time when this government might gain the hearts of that important portion of its citizens more effectually than now. To let the opportunity pass unimproved, will be a deadly wound to its popularity. It will probably be followed by some immediate act of rebellion. The loss of the affections of the western states will be the certain consequence. And what inexpiable evils will ensue, should the French be enabled, by this delay, to take possession?

Their warlike bands, far different from the wretched militia of Spain, in spirit as in numbers, will instantly disperse themselves over the province. Every station favourable to defence, will be marked by their skilful eyes, fortified with diligence, supplied with artillery, and magazines, and manned with their veteran soldiers. Their chief town, besides a little army in its walls, will be compassed by forts and bulwarks. The banks of the river will be lined with trenches and cannon, and the empire of the Mississippi, unless regained by some great, sudden, and strenuous effort, will be lost to us forever.

It is impossible to say but at this crisis, a single hour may decide our destiny. Yet not hours only, but weeks and months have been suffered to pass idly away. Perhaps the government may not be without excuse for deliberating hitherto, and a legislative co-operation may have been thought requisite on so important an occasion. This concurrence may now be had, since all the branches of the government are now assembled. On them, therefore, are the eyes of every citizen now turned, with impatience and anxiety.

FROM YOU, assembled Representatives, do we demand that you would seize the happy moment for securing the possession of America to our posterity: for ensuring the harmony and union of these States: for removing all obstacles to the future progress of our settlements: for excluding from our vitals the most active and dangerous enemy that ever before threatened us: for gaining the affections of your western citizens by enforcing their rights: by rescuing their property from ruin. Give us not room to question your courage in a case where courage is truly a virtue; to doubt your wisdom, when the motives to decide your conduct are so obvious and forcible. *The iron is now hot; command us to rise as one man, and STRIKE!*

THE END.

















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