

From the NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.  
TO THE PEOPLE.

THE DEFENCE.—No. XIV.

Having seen the manner in which the financial, the war, and the navy departments have been conducted, we are brought to a view of the operations of the DEPARTMENT of STATE, more important, perhaps in their effects than all the others. It is these operations that try the talents of the government, not on the limited theatre of the United States, but on the extensive theatre of the world. It is to them that we are indebted for the wise treaties framed, for the impolitic treaties avoided, for the faithful execution of those that exist, for averting all just cause of complaint to foreign nations, and for the consequent preservation of peace and prosperity. In these operations, the President is understood to participate as well in detail as in the outline; and although many of the subordinate measures are frequently taken by the Secretary of the department without his advice, yet it is most consonant to the spirit of the government to consider him, equally with the head of the department, answerable for all its measures.

When Mr. Jefferson was elected President, he found the public opinion much divided on the extent to which prudence required the carrying out foreign relations. On the one hand, the commercial part of the community, with a view to their own aggrandisement, espoused their extension to a very great length. Viewing the vast ascendancy of men of their profession in England, from which country many of them had recently emigrated, and with which they were united by ties of interest, relationship and friendship, influenced by a blind spirit of imitation, they sought, in the conduct of that nation, models for the United States, without reflecting on the dissimilar situation of the two nations.

This class of men, though powerful from their wealth and numbers, would probably have but little influenced the national sentiment, had they not been joined by a body of citizens of no mean talents, who, from habit, prejudice or principle, were solicitous to draw the United States into a close imitation of Great Britain. This body was composed of men of advanced age, whose early associations and feelings had made them the strenuous advocates of the British system, and whose sentiments had become too confirmed, at the era of independence, to undergo any radical change, and of those, who, from principle or ambition, were desirous of gradually building up a system of government more energetic in the Executive than that of the United States.—This last description of men have generally denuded their attachment to monarchy; but there is not a doubt that their principles necessarily lead to this result.

On the other hand, the great agricultural and manufacturing interests were hostile to an extension of our foreign relations.—They believed that their own prosperity, and consequently that of the whole country, depended upon peace, and that peace depended upon our avoiding all necessary engagements with European nations.—Perceiving the inevitable connection between extensive warlike establishments and the restriction of liberty, they were anxious to insure the latter by avoiding the former.

According to the preponderance of these conflicting sentiments, the complexion of the government had from its commencement varied; until, at length parties were consolidated, and the federal side uniformly advocated, and the republican opposed the extension of our foreign relations. During the Presidency of General Washington there was but a small extension. It was during that of Mr. Adams that it became most alarming. Large appropriations were made for new embassies, and many indications exhibited of a settled plan to make the United States a party in the bloody scenes and ceaseless collisions of the old world.

It was the feeling, excited by these measures, that in a lively degree produced the intrusion of Mr. Adams from the government, and the introduction of Mr. Jefferson. The sentiments of both these men were well known. It was known that the one was as hostile, as the other was friend-

ly to extending our foreign relations. Whatever may have been the previous temper of the people, became unequivocally marked by the elections of 1800; and Mr. Jefferson entered into office, under an obligation, resulting no less from a clear indication of public opinion, than from a respect to his own sentiments, to avoid all unnecessary compact with foreign powers.

It would open a wide discussion to enquire whether these impressions are sound. It is believed however, if there be any political principle applicable to the United States, capable of demonstration, it is, that it becomes her to stand aloof from foreign connections.—Such was undoubtedly the solemn and deliberate decision of Washington, after administering the government for eight years. In his farewell address his conviction is expressed in an elevated tone of affection.

"The great rule of conduct for us," says he, "in regard to foreign nations, is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith.—Here let us stop."

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or in the ordinary combinations of her friendships or enmities.

"Our detachment and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off, when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality, we may at any time resolve upon, to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

"Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon a foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humour or caprice?"

"This our true policy is, to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world; so far, I mean, as we are now a liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronising ingratulity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it, therefore let these engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion, it is unnecessary, and would be unwise to extend them.

"Taking care to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

"Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; dissolving and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; establishing, with powers so disposed, in order to give trade a suitable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them, conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view, that 'tis folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another; that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character, that by such acceptance it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect, or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. 'Tis an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard."

Such is the emphatic advice of our departed friend; in correspondence with which the present chief Magistrate, on his induction into office, in enumerating what he considered the essential principles of our government, and such as ought to shape its administration, declares as one, "peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none."

This is the cardinal point of the present administration with regard to our foreign relations; and it ought to be the cardinal point of every administration that aspires to the honor of being denominated republican.

To prove this, it is only necessary to take a concise view of the state of our foreign relations when the present administration came into office, and to compare it with their present situation.

During the stormy period of Mr. Adams's Presidency, we were in a state bordering on war with the two most powerful nations of Europe, and through them, with many of the minor powers. This was in a great measure, the effect of the British Treaty, which while it failed to secure us the amity of Britain, drew upon us the resentment of France. In consequence of this embroiled state, the warlike measures of the government, during the four years of his administration cost the United States about eighteen millions of dollars. Near the expiration of his Presidency a treaty was formed adjusting our differences with France.

This treaty has been observed with good faith, as have also all our engagements with other powers. Under this treaty and the executed treaty with Great Britain, various objects of great importance remained to be settled which indeed, under the latter had been for some time entirely suspended. On the adjustment of these depended the recovery of large sums due to our citizens, and the assertion of rights which had accrued to us from the stipulations into which we had entered. To have failed in the attainment of these, would have been to have sacrificed the just claims of our citizens, and to have compromised the dignity of the government; by which the harmony between those nations and the United States would have been disturbed to probably a dangerous extent.

The administration has been charged with an extravagant friendship to France, and an inveterate hostility to Great Britain; with a settled purpose of courting the favor of the one, and of exciting the enmity of the other. Were this a fact, a golden opportunity presented for the gratification of this disposition when they came into power.—The recent treaty concluded with France might have been seized as the prelude of a renewal of old feuds, and we laid the foundation for a commercial treaty interweaving the interests of the two nations. The dark aspect of our affairs with Great Britain and the uncertain issue of depending negotiation, would have furnished a plausible pretext for an alliance with France, in order the more effectually to coerce Britain into the adoption of just measures towards us. While, on the other hand, the execution of the treaty by Britain might have been embraced as justifiable of a stern demand on our part, we addressed to her pride, would scarcely have failed to produce a reply favorable of all conciliation. The step, from this state of things, to war would have been easy and natural.

This course not having been pursued is irrefragable proof that the motives ascribed to the administration were false.

One of the first measures of the administration was the suspension of the embassies to Berlin and Lisbon. Whatever may have been the object of these appointments, their natural tendency was to engage the United States in the competition and quarrels to which Prussia and Portugal were exposed. With the former we had no commercial relations that justified the nomination of a minister, and the little consequence of the other nation in the scale of Europe rendered her the least worthy of preference. In addition to these considerations, many circumstances attending the formation and progress of these missions excited a well founded alarm that they were principally intended as a cover to political negotiations with other powers. This alarm, their abolition was sufficiently justified by their uselessness and experience has fully confirmed the measure, not the slightest injury having arisen from it.

It has been attempted by the opponents of the administration to make them answerable for the direction of the claims of our merchants on France for the spoliations committed on their property; but the facts attending this transaction prove that the whole merit or demerit of this act is ascribable to the preceding administration and its friends.

On the 15th of July 1797, Mr. Pickens, in the name of Mr. Adams issued instructions to the ministers appointed to negotiate an adjustment of our differences with France. In these instructions, after dwelling, at considerable length, on the claims of our citizens, he adds,

"All these just demands of our citizens will merit your attention. The best possible means of compensation must be attempted. These will depend on what you shall discover to be practicable in relation to the French finances. But an exception must be made in respect to debts due to our citizens by the contracts of the French government and its agents, if they are comprehended in any stipulations; and an option reserved to them jointly or individually, either to accept the means of payment which you shall stipulate, or to resort to the French government, directly, for the fulfilment of its contracts."

"Although the reparation for losses sustained by the citizens of the United

States, in consequence of irregular or illegal captures or condemnations, or for forcible seizures or detentions, is of very high importance, and is to be pressed with the greatest earnestness, yet it is not to be insisted on as an indispensable condition of the proposed treaty. You are not, however, to renounce these claims our citizens, or to stipulate that they be assumed by the United States as a loan to the French government."

The envoys repaired to France, and the mission, it is well known, proved abortive. On the 3d of April, 1798, the president communicated to the two houses of congress, a copy of his instructions given to the envoys and of their dispatches. This communication was read with closed doors. In the house of representatives a motion was made to publish it; but this was deemed so imprudent by that body that the motion received the votes of but a few members. The friends of the administration, as well as its enemies, concurred in the opinion, that while our differences remained unadjusted, it would be unwise to apprise our enemy of the extent to which, in order to insure an accommodation, our commissioners had been instructed to go. It would have been well if this caution had guided the deliberations of the senate. But that assembly, actuated by the sole motive of vindicating and justifying the measures of the executive; and of holding up to reprobation the conduct of France, to the surprise of the house and of their country, at the very moment when the house, impelled by more magnanimous sentiments, had determined to maintain the secrecy of the communication, ordered it to be printed. By this spirited act, said their apologists, we will shew our countrymen that the Rubicon is passed: the timid accents of conciliation shall no longer annoy us. With this temper, Mr. Tracy announced the policy of waging a war of extermination, in which every man, woman and child, in America, should be engaged against every man, woman and child in France; and, with a similar temper, the seditious act threatened with incarceration, and the Alien act with exile, the person of every man that dared to impugn the motives of the government.

Thus stood the affairs between the two nations until a wandering impulse of patriotism induced Mr. Adams to name another embassy to France. What were the instructions given on this occasion do not appear. We may, however, reasonably infer that they did not materially differ from those we have already quoted. With such instructions, what could our envoys do? Had they demanded a full reparation for spoliations, as a part of the treaty, would not the vengeance of the French government have confronted them with the previous declaration of Mr. Adams that it was "not to be insisted on as an indispensable condition of the proposed treaty"? The declaration, by the highest authority, must be considered as a virtual abandonment of the claims; for it admits the formation of a treaty of friendship with France without any recognition of the obligation of the French government to satisfy them; and leaves this adjustment entirely to the chances of futurity.

Thus trammelled, our envoys did their best. They negotiated a treaty, which they did all their instructions required. They did more. They not only secured clear of a renunciation of the claims, but also paved the way to their ultimate adjustment by their recognition in the following stipulations:

"Art. 2. The ministers plenipotentiary of the two parties not being able to agree at present respecting the treaty of alliance of 6th February, 1778, the treaty of amity and commerce of the same date, and the convention of the 14th November, 1778, nor upon the indemnities mutually due or claimed; the parties will negotiate further on these subjects at a convenient time, and until they may have agreed upon these points, the said treaties and convention shall have no operation, and the relations of the two countries shall be regulated as follows; &c."

"Art. 5th. The debts contracted by one of the two nations with individuals of the other, by the individuals of one with the individuals of the other, shall be paid, or the payment may be prosecuted in the same manner as if there had been no misunderstanding between the two states. But this clause shall not extend to indemnities claimed on account of captures or confiscations."

This treaty, containing these stipulations, was laid before the Senate by Mr. Adams in the winter of 1800.—That body, then decidedly federal, refused to advise the ratification of the treaty unless the second article was expunged.—To prove this beyond all question, we shall give the votes on that occasion.

Messrs. Armstrong, Bingham, Chapman, Dayton, D. Foster, Hillhouse, Hindman, Howard, Latimore, J. Mason, Morris, Paine, Read, Ross Schurman, Tracy and Wells voted for striking out the second article; and Messrs. Anderson, Baldwin, Bloodworth, Brown, Locke, T. Foxer, Franklin, Greene, Langdon, Livermore, Marshall, S. T. Mason, and Nicholas, voted against it.

The expunging this Article was equivalent to the abandonment of the claims of our merchants for spoliated property; it being well established that silence respecting any claim existing at the formation of a treaty amounts to a relinquish-

ment of it. Independently however of this construction of treaties, the 5th Article, which forms a part of the treaty as ratified, expressly declares that that clause "shall not extend to indemnities claimed on account of captures or confiscations."

In this sense the treaty was understood by the French Government, when received by them for ratification, as they declare in that very act; the expression is *bien entendu*—it being well understood that by the retrenchment of the second article the two nations renounced the respective pretensions that are the object of it. Returned to the senate, with this ratification on the part of the French government, that body decided that it ought to be considered as fully ratified. On this occasion all the federal members, excepting Messrs. Wells, Hillhouse, Chapman and D. Foster, voted in the affirmative. And their vote would seem, from the open avowal of their sentiments, to have arisen from an indisposition to any treaty whatever with France.

CURTIS.  
(Subject of foreign relations to be continued.)

NEW-YORK, November 12.

Yesterday arrived the brig *Rolla*, captain Hamfen, in 42 days from Bordeaux; by her papers are received to the 20th September inclusive, but they furnish no intelligence of importance. The verbal news brought by her is, however, highly interesting. She spoke the British ship *Bells*, captain Douglas, 10 days from Gage way, for Demerara, and was informed that war had been declared by England against Spain and letters of marque and reprisal issued. The Spanish ambassador, it is said, left London on the 26th of September. It was currently reported and believed at Bordeaux, that Russia had declared war against France. An engagement had taken place off Boulogne between a British squadron and the French gun boats, in which the latter lost nearly 4000 men. A British squadron of nine sail of the line and some frigates had arrived off Rochelle. Bonaparte, the Paris papers say, was at Mayence, where 12 or 15000 men had been collected to perform their military evolutions in his presence. Colonel Gerard, first aid de camp to general Bernadotte, had been the bearer, from the army of Hanover to his majesty, of a gold medal, (the gold from the mines of Harz,) intended as an acknowledgment from the army, and to enervate the gratitude of the inhabitants of Harz for the generous protection granted by his majesty. The colonel was also charged with the delivery of a similar medal to the empress Josephine. Comedians had gone from Paris to Mayence, for the purpose of playing before their majesties, from which it would seem, they were to reside for some time there.

By proclamation of the Mayor, all vessels arriving in this port from Spain, are declared to be subject to a quarantine. Also vessels arriving from Malaga and from any place in the Mediterranean.

We learn by the brig *Pinar* thropist from Nantz, that general Faurot, the imperial ambassador to America, has taken passage in the ship *Shepherdess*, captain Goodfellow, bound to New York; and would sail from thence in a few days after the *Pinar* thropist.

Captain Henry, of the *Nancy* from Liverpool, on Monday last about ten o'clock in the forenoon, saw the French frigates *Didon* and *La Cybelle*, 60 miles from Mont-g Point, standing S. S. E. with a fresh breeze.

PHILADELPHIA, November 13.

We are further told, that when captain Gibson of the *Pilgrim*, was ordered out and at the place of execution, a captain Smyth, of New York, resolutely stepped forward and remonstrated to the commanding officer; on which the black officer ordered one of his soldiers to run captain Smyth thro' with his bayonet, on which captain Smyth fled and the soldier pursued, but soon after returned and informed that captain S. had escaped; on which the officer sternly said, your head shall pay for it, the next time you obey my orders in that way.

Mr. Suckly, merchant of New York, has been some time confined in irons at Cape Francois for an attempt to carry off some French passengers.

By captain Gilder we are further informed, that the day before he sailed, two pilot boat schooners arrived from New York; one called the *Grey Hound*, in 16 days; the other commanded by captain Bowie, in 9 days; and that a schooner from Baltimore had arrived at Port de Paix. A proclamation was issued three days prior to the sailing of the fleet, interdicting any master or supercargo from retaining any part of their cargoes, and obliging them to sell the whole to the administration, or to one individual resident merchant. Another proclamation forbids the master of any vessel from secreting on board his vessel or attempting to carry off any of the Emperor's subjects, or French residents, under penalty of forfeiting vessel and cargo, and ten months imprisonment, to any person convicted thereof.

Notice.  
PROPOSALS will be received by Ebenezer Finley, for furnishing the Alma House of Baltimore county, with Beef for the ensuing year, any time previous to the 5th day of December next.  
November 14 24th 5th Dec