

Barlow's Letter.

From the CONNECTICUT COURANT.

Messrs. HUDSON & GOODWIN,

THE enclosed pamphlet was printed at Matthew Lyon's press in Fairhaven. He entitles it "Copy of a Letter from an American Diplomatic Character in France to a member of Congress in Philadelphia." Some of the most offensive parts of this letter were recited in the indictment of Lyon, the publishing of which (i. e. the reading the whole letter to large collections of people in a great many towns in his district, drawn together for the purpose) was the subject of the second count, and the "printing" it of the third count in the indictment. [The subject of the first count was a letter from Lyon to Mr. Spooner, the printer of the Windsor paper.]

Lyon told the court that the first knowledge he had of it was hearing general Mason, a senator from Virginia, read it to a number of gentlemen in Philadelphia last summer; that he applied to Mr. Baldwin, to whom it was addressed, for liberty to take a copy, to which he consented, upon condition that Lyon should show it to his friends in Vermont, particularly governor Robinson and general Bradley, but not to suffer any copies of it to be taken, nor to have it printed, to which Lyon said he solemnly agreed.—How he came to print it in fact, however, in violation of his "solemn agreement," he did not inform the court.

Several gentlemen who have seen it, and who are acquainted with Mr. Barlow, have expressed their decided opinions that he never wrote it. The public may rest assured, however, that the thing, infamous as it is, was really written by Joel Barlow, and sent by the hand of a Mr. Lee to Abraham Baldwin. The most indisputable testimony of the fact can be laid before the public if necessary.—Those who recollect what Mr. Barlow once was—those who once respected and loved him for his amiable dispositions, his talents, and his supposed piety, will exclaim "Oh how fallen!" They will discover new evidence, if possible, of the accursed demoralizing powers of that modern French philosophy which has made of Europe a charnel house, and which Mr. Barlow has been long known to have embraced with enthusiastic ardor. But who could have expected from him such displays of hatred to his native country!

Who could expect that Joel Barlow would have become the slanderer of WASHINGTON and ADAMS! The true lover of his country will mourn that so many of her children are become her most unnatural foes, and aim with pernicious arm, the fatal dagger at her breast. I supply the names, "Lee," "Jefferson," "Georgia," on the authority of the gentleman who enables me to assert the genuineness of the letter—they were left blanks in the pamphlet.

THE PAMPHLET.

COPY of a LETTER from an AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC CHARACTER in France to a MEMBER of CONGRESS in Philadelphia 1st March, 1798.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IT is now a long time, even many years, since I have indulged myself in communicating to you my political opinions, because I have generally thought it useless, and at some moments dangerous to trust them to the ordinary modes of conveyance, but the opportunity of sending this letter into your own hands, and the very serious aspect our affairs have assumed in this country, induce me to throw off restraint, and to speak to you with freedom, though far from the hope that any public benefit will arise from the communication.

The misunderstanding between the two Governments has become extremely alarming.—Confidence is completely destroyed.—Mistrust, jealousy, and a disposition to a wrong attribution of motives are so apparent, as to require the utmost caution in every word and action that are to come from your Executive: I mean if your object is to avoid hostilities. Had this truth been understood with you before the recal of Monroe, before the coming and second coming of Pinckney; had it guided the pens that wrote the bullying speech of your President, and stupid answer of your Senate, at the opening of Congress in November last, I should probably have had no occasion to address you this letter.

To point out a remedy for the evil at its present height, if indeed a remedy can be found, it is necessary to call to mind the causes that have produced it; for these causes are many; and some of the operative ones are generally overlooked by the most attentive observers on your side the water—that act of submission to the British government, commonly called Jay's treaty, is usually considered, both by its friends and enemies as the sole cause, or at least the great cause of the present hostile disposition of the French republic towards the United States. This opinion is erroneous, other causes, and those of less public discussion, have had a much more decided effect. It is true that considering the circumstances under which the treaty was made, when England was flying, and the coalition crumbling before the armies of France, it served to humble us in the eyes of all Europe. It is true that the manner in which it was thrust down the throats of the people of America, by the man whose monstrous influence formed an inexplicable contrast with the weakness of his political talent, has effectually humbled us in our own eyes, and has taught our citizens to pride themselves in a renunciation of national dignity; it is likewise true, that as this treaty affected France, it was a serious and undisturbed attack upon her interests; it was giving the lie to all our professions of friendship and sympathy with her, in her distressed situation; it was narrowing the freedom of commerce, multiplying the articles of embargo, and throwing every advantage

we could throw, into the hands of her enemies; in all these and many other respects the treaty with England has not yet been, nor never will be censured as much as it deserves; it was a measure substantially hostile, and ostentatiously irritating to our best friends. But it often happens, in public as well as in private affairs, that the greatest injuries are forgiven or excused, while slighter ones, such as border on contempt, excite the most ungovernable resentment, and lead to the greatest acts of vengeance; a striking example of this has fallen under my observation in the conduct of these two republics: at the moment when the old government of France was shaken to its foundation, the new government of the United States was consolidated and was beginning its operations under the most favorable auspices. A great revolution in America had completed its work, it convinced the world of the solidity of its principles, and held up to view an unexampled prospect of public happiness. A much greater revolution in France was opening its career. Its authors and conductors, though frightened at the immensity of the undertaking, from the task of solving the frightful problem of representative democracy, they contemplated that problem as already solved by us; our energy was praised, our wisdom exaggerated, our example quoted by them on all occasions. GEORGE WASHINGTON, a name at that time dear to liberty, was placed at the head of our administration, and his election was known to be unanimous; the French therefore saw in WASHINGTON, the people of the United States; they counted on his friendship, they drew consolation from his supposed sympathy, while their principles were calumniated and the nation threatened with war by all the cabinets of Europe. They grew strong from a sense of danger, and they were proud of the reproaches of princes, because they were confident of the approbation of the American people, the elders of liberty.

It is difficult for you to conceive to what a degree their sensibility was carried on this subject, at the beginning of the revolution; it was clear that a sensibility of such force, must be the foundation of the most extravagant affection; if properly nourished, it would have begot a confidence without bounds; if slighted, or answered with indifference, it must end in jealousy, uncontrolled by the rules of justice, and blind to the light of truth. And what was the conduct of your President? Thomas Jefferson was your Ambassador in France, where his superior talents, and republican principles, had rendered him exceeding dear to all friends of liberty. It was well known here, that his intention was to remain at this place during the revolution. They wished it exceedingly, because both he and they were sensible that he would be able to render the most essential services to both countries, by remaining in Paris during a crisis of such momentous expectations; no one will deny, that the occasion and the place, called for the first diplomatic talents, and the purest republican virtue that the United States could afford. Jefferson went from Paris on a short leave of absence, with a fixed determination to return as soon as possible, but the President ordered it otherwise, and the French believed it was from a disapprobation of Jefferson's attachment to the cause of liberty in France.

This opinion may be hastily formed, but they were confirmed in it by the President's naming to the same place, Gouverneur Morris, who for two winters past, had filled Paris with invectives against every principle of liberty, who was previously detested by all the leaders of the revolution; who was known to be the broker, protector, and correspondent of the most obnoxious emigrants. It is possible, that Washington, in suffering Jefferson to return, might have acted from other motives than those of enmity to the French revolution, though no other motives appear; but his naming Morris, was an insult that admits of no palliative; it is in vain to say he was ignorant of the character that this man bore in Paris: he was a wide-mouth bawler, and had been for two years the exaggerating echo of all the abuse in all Burke's pamphlets, and the worst papers in London.

This scene was continued here, to the astonishment of all Europe for three years, his business was to mislead the President, with respect to what was going on in France, to insult the French nation and as far as possible to betray them, for it was universally believed, and I have no doubt of the fact, that after the English and Austrian ambassadors retired from Paris, Morris acted as secret agent and spy for those two cabinets. A haughty word or action coming from an ambassador, though malicious in itself, is not always interpreted to be the language of the government that sent him; but a series of ostentatious abuse continued for three years, becomes unequivocal. All Europe leagued against liberty, considered America already in the coalition; and France would at that time have grouped you among her enemies, had it not been for several circumstances wholly adventitious or foreign to the conduct of your cabinet.

1. Some Americans in Paris, of character far more respectable than that of Morris, endeavored, and with a momentary success, to convince the leaders here, that his conduct when known in America, must be disapproved.

2. France was in want of the trade and provisions of the United States, both for her colonies and herself, it would therefore be inconvenient at that time to have them for enemies.

3. The conduct of C. Genet, a subject of so much triumph to your cabinet and that of St. James's, was one of the causes that saved you from a war at that time. Genet had been sent by Brissot; Brissot was now fallen, it was for this reason that the conduct of Genet was disapproved, and that of the American government passed over in silence, though a silence marked with resentment and contempt.

When after every remonstrance, and a formal demand from this government your

executive was pleased to remove Morris from his ostensible situation in Paris, he emigrated, that is, he went and joined the emigrants in Germany, and has been ever since among the enemies of France. But this is not all, a letter from Washington to Morris, dated in the latter end of the year 1795, intercepted, and now in the hands of the directory, gives him a commission as a secret agent to the cabinet of London, to transact business so apparently hostile to the interest of France, that I am assured this letter has sharpened the edge of resentment here, more than the whole of Jay's treaty. This and other circumstances have given full credit to the opinion here, that a journey which Morris took from London to Berlin, in the year 1796, was a mission on the part of the British government to engage the king of Prussia to rejoin the coalition against France. Another fact, though of less consequence, could not escape the animadversion of the French government. John Parish, American consul at Hamburg, was employed by the English government as their agent for transmuting the subsidies and loans, to the Emperor, and the King of Prussia, for the war against France; and to freight and fit out vessels for the transporting troops to the West-Indies. It may be said that the American government were not answerable for a thing of this sort, of which they could have no knowledge; but this has not prevented the fact from being recognized among the proofs of an unfriendly disposition on your side, and certainly great allowances ought to be made for the jealousy of a nation goaded by all Europe, tormented by her own traitors, and standing alone, in a cause in which she expected, at least a friendly countenance from us, if not an active support. She looked upon the cause of liberty as our cause; and though she did not require us to take arms, she considered herself as fighting our battles in her own.

Much has been said on the subject of national gratitude, and to ascertain how much, or whether any was due from us to France, for the part she took in the American war. I will not add to the observations that have been made on this head, but it is clearly my opinion, that she has rendered us more solid service by establishing the principle of representative government in Europe, than by aiding us in America.

I shall say very little on the mission of Monroe, because I take it for granted, from what I have heard, that he has already told his own story in print. I will only say that in the midst of all difficulties created by the madness of his predecessor, the continued folly of your Executive, the unfortunate conclusion and ratification of the English treaty, he conducted himself in such a manner as to form by his single character a counterpoise to all the weight of resentment from this government; nobody doubts here, but that he would have continued to do so to the end of the war, if your cabinet had let him alone, and confined their blunders to their own continent. What must then have been the astonishment of all our friends, and the exultation of the court of London, to see him recalled in the most abrupt and censorious manner.

For the equal qualities of Gen. Pinckney, because they had little or nothing to do with his being refused here, as the successor of Monroe, I will excuse him for writing weak and idle letters, but I will not excuse your executive for printing them. Being rejected as ambassador, he went to spend the winter in Holland; and all the world knows how many carriage wheels it cost him, to make these journeys through this frightful republican territory; notwithstanding all these evils, both real and imaginary, there still remained one more—to the patience of his very impatient government, they knew that Washington was in the dotage of his natural life, and near the close of his political career; they indulged the hope that when he should be out of office, the American people would come to their senses, or, at least, they saw that the character of the new President would be a criterion by which the decided friendship or enmity of the United States would be clearly seen. The candidates were Adams and Jefferson; the one a reputed Royalist, and enemy to France; the other an eminent Republican, and a friend to the cause of liberty in all countries. The sentiments of these two men were not yet known here; those of the people were not yet known, because it was supposed that the general idolatry for Washington had prevented them from being freely uttered; these were the reasons why the Directory determined to take no decided step in consequence of Monroe's recal, until the public voice should decide between these two candidates. This accounts for the interest which the French seemed to take in the event of that election. Their wishing you to elect JEFFERSON, proves that they did not want to quarrel with you, and that they still hoped that the people of America were friends to liberty. The government have waited the event. This was an awful pause in the American affairs in Europe; and it is astonishing to me how you could fail to view it in that light in America, and to take the measure which the most moderate share of common sense, and the most palpable self interest, pointed out.

When the election of Adams was announced here, it produced the order of the 2d of March, which was meant to be little short of a declaration of war; but it was so far short of it as to leave room on your side to come forward with an additional project of negotiation, if you wished to avoid that calamity.

\* We have never before heard of any such letter, and believe none such ever existed; it is unquestionably one of the million of Jacobin lies invented with design to make our beloved WASHINGTON odious to his countrymen.

† We trust our Executive will try to get along without the great Mr. Barlow's excuse.

‡ We had the unbroken spirit of Independent Americans, and dared to act in conformity to it, the "diplomatic skill" of France notwithstanding.

The enmity of the old President towards France, was now considered as nationalized in America, and the government here was determined to fleece you of your property, to a sufficient degree to bring you to your feelings in the only nerve in which it was presumed your sensibility lay, which was your pecuniary interest.

This uncomplying disposition of the Directory induced Mr. Adams to call an extraordinary meeting of Congress, and consequently to make a speech.

To a man who had the least pretensions to prudence, there were but two courses to be taken; one was to declare war if he wished to ruin his country; the other was, if he wished to save it, to offer to negotiate by sending some man or men that he knew would be agreeable to France; or, at least, not to play the bully, by forcing a man back, who had just been driven out of Paris. The true policy would have been, to retrieve the mistake of Washington, by sending back Monroe. You cannot imagine the effect produced here by the name only of a known friend to liberty in America. A report prevailed here for a few days, that Madison was named to this mission—it almost disarmed the government of all resentment. Had the news proved true, and Madison arrived, the business would have been settled in 24 hours.

But Adams to attain his object, whatever it might be, found out a third course, which discovers more invention than I supposed him to possess: he formed a commission of three to make the people of the United States believe that a negotiation was offered on their part, and then filled it up with names from which there could not be the least expectation of success. The first was a man who had just been refused, and could not be offered again without an insult: sending him back, was undoubtedly intended as an insult, and it was so received: the second was a man whose effigy had been burnt in Virginia, for his violent defence of the British treaty—at least it was so reported and believed here: the third was a little make-weight man, appointed with the intention that he should have no influence:—and yet, to prove to you the facility of this government, after all that had passed, I am able to assure you, from the best authority, that if Gerry had been sent alone, and not shackled with the other two, the directory would have negotiated with him, without any difficulty; at present, the three have been here five months, without being received or rejected; and a new law is made, by which an additional number of neutral vessels will fall into the hands of the French.

I shall hardly gain credit with you were I to state on how small a pivot the fate of nations turns in Paris at this moment.

The speech of John Adams, at the opening of Congress in November, was waited for here with as much expectation as if peace or war depended upon it. It was hoped that after he had sent his commissioners, he would at least avoid the use of insulting language against the nation with whom he was pretending to treat. But when we found him borrowing the language of Edmund Burke, and telling the world that, although he should succeed in treating with the French, there was no dependence to be placed on any of their engagements; that their religion and morality were at an end; that they had turned pirates and plunderers, and it would be necessary to be perpetually armed against them, though you were at peace;—we wondered that the answer of both houses had not been an order to send him to a madhouse. Instead of this, the Senate have echoed the speech with more fervency than ever George the third experienced from either house of Parliament. Read over the paragraph that speaks of France; his bringing in of the word Europe, under pretence of generalizing it, is so flimsy a cover for his attack on this nation, that it only adds to the abuse, by attempting to impose on the understanding; he certainly could not mean the English, for he brags in the next paragraph how well they keep their treaty. He could certainly mean nobody but the French, for no other nation have overturned religion. Had this speech borne a friendly aspect, or had the paragraph in question been similar to the one inserted in the speech of governor Miffin, on the same subject, it would have facilitated the negotiation, and probably saved millions to the United States.

In enumerating the causes which have brought the two republics to the brink of war, several memorable speeches in your house of representatives, must not be forgotten. One of your orators calls the French government a five headed monster—another says, Barras, when he pronounced his farewell speech to Monroe, must have been drunk or mad. These gentlemen forget that Barras reads their speeches; and that the five headed monster, when it shall have devoured the fry of Europe, may possibly shank them in their turn.

Another subject of complaint, and that not the least, is the furrility of many of your newspapers, against the republic: among the most abusive is the

GAZETTE OF THE UNITED STATES, which is considered here as an official paper, or printed under the eye and patronage of the government. The office of foreign affairs receives these papers regularly; and you cannot suppose that any of these insults pass unnoticed. It is remarked here, and with great truth, that there is more dirty calumny against the French in American than in the London papers.

But it is in vain to amuse ourselves in describing the nature of the disease, unless there be a remedy within our reach. In my opinion there is one, but I have scarcely any hope that your wise men will stumble upon it. Acknowledge your error in sending Pinckney and Marshall to this country;—recall them, and perhaps Gerry with them;—name and send Madison or Monroe to take their place, and let the President in his message to the Senate acknowledging the nomination, utter sentiments full of friendship to the French nation, government, and cause—let him acknowledge that the principles of liberty are equally dear to the two countries;

—and deprecate the idea of gratifying the tyrants of the world, by exhibiting the two great republics, whose existence they strove in vain to prevent, now tearing out each others vitals.

I perceive that much stress is laid by your President, and your other leaders, on the conduct of this Government, in refusing to receive your ambassador Pinckney. I wish those gentlemen could come how or otherwise made acquainted with the following history. I hope you will not suppose, by inserting it here, my intention is to justify the French government: No, my object will be truly to serve my country, and to vindicate the honor of all the ardent spirits among you, if they should neglect this opportunity of going to war for the three broken wheels of Gen. Pinckney's carriage.

In the year 1796, the Swedish ambassador here, the Baron de Stahl, obtained leave of absence, and presented his secretary as charge d'affaires, who had the king's commission for that purpose. This man was refused, on which de Stahl presented a note to the minister of foreign relations, desiring him to assign the reasons, that the king might know in what he had offended the republic, since he had been the first in Europe to acknowledge it, and the most ardent to deliver its friendship. The answer to this note was, an order to the new charge d'affaires to quit the republic, and a recall of the French ambassador from Stockholm. As soon as counsellers could pass to Sweden and back, the matter was accommodated, by the King's renewing the Baron de Stahl, who was agreeable to the French.

About the same time the Ambassador of Tuscany, while in peaceable exercise of his functions, was ordered by the government to quit Paris in 24 hours, and the republic in 8 days, without any reasons assigned. He obeyed, and the Grand Duke very complaisantly sent another.

The ambassadors of Portugal and Rome, who were in full credence and activity a few weeks ago, are now in prison in Paris. It is true that this was in consequence of a rupture between this government and each of theirs. But the fate of agents in such cases, used to be, to be sent away, and not to be imprisoned.

The king of Spain lately sent a new ambassador here, in great pomp, who is refused, and ordered to quit the country, without reasons publicly assigned.

You will remark, that in this light the Spanish and Swedish are cafes in point, for your Pinckney. But their poor Kings had not learned the etiquette of John Adams, to name and send back the same man who had been refused. Kings, at this day, have no notion of a rupture with France.

Another event has lately happened to the Baron de Stahl, which makes the Swedish cafe, taken altogether, different from the American. (God grant that the American may never come to it, as long as you have loving couples to fend on these missions.) The wife of Baron Stahl is just sent out of the republic on a suspicion of conspiracy; while the husband occupies his post. What would the Columbian blood say to this? I can assure you, that this order was solicited by the husband; no such reason is assigned. Indeed, had the Baron obtained the order, he ought to have obtained leave to clamor against it afterwards; decency seemed to require it, and yet he has not done it. Had it been an American ambassador, and had the American been me, I should have tried hard to get my cafe inserted in a speech of John Adams, or a letter of Timothy Pickering. I repeat to you, that I am not undertaking the hopeless and useless task of vindicating all the measures that the violent convulsions of the revolution have induced this people to adopt. But when Mr. Adams shall hear of the sending away of his ambassador, I would advise him, and all those who are concerned in his wounded honor, to club that commodity with the kings, princes, and states above mentioned, and to try to bear their part with a patience becoming a government that has merited this sort of chastisement more than all their fellow sufferers put together.

Your three commissioners will doubtless seize this occasion, by Mr. Lee, to forward their dispatches. These will probably be of a nature to induce the President to take some decisive step; and I am in trembling expectation of seeing him give another desperate leap into the regions of madness. Without knowing precisely the face that the commissioners will put to the business, I will venture to affirm, that the answer proper will contribute more than its due share to the coloring. A manly and independent style of writing appears not to belong to their character.

Were I to write their letters to the executive, it should not be in language like this.—"The French have many reasons for being offended with the American government; these reasons are exaggerated by their jealousy, and other other strong passions inseparable from the revolution. This is an unfavorable moment, and we are improper persons, to attempt to explain away the imaginary wrongs on which a great part of their resentment is founded. We advise you to recall us three, and at the same time to replace us with one or more persons whose characters are well known and approved by the French; such as Madison or Monroe. If you wish to terminate these disputes by negotiation, you must be prepared for considerable sacrifice; such as a loan of money similar to what this nation made to you last war; such as a modification of the British treaty, or at least a new treaty with France, giving her more advantages than that treaty gives to England. It is possible that on conditions of this kind, you may obtain some indemnification for the spoils on your commerce; somewhat in the manner provided for with the English in Mr. Jay's treaty."

It is scarcely necessary for us to observe that your commission, considering the distance between the two countries, must not be frustrated in its powers, as in this affair so much depends on the manner. The Pres-