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[The Revolution of America, it was very early predicted, would have a great influence upon the publick affairs of the European World—but the most sanguine advocate for the Liberties of Mankind, could not have anticipated those surprising Events, which have already transpired to distinguish the annals of the present age.—Our generous, and magnanimous Allies, the French nation, in their publications upon laws, government, and Freedom, discover a noble ardour in the best of causes—and the following communication will shew, that under the Auspices of the best of Kings, they are on the eve of establishing a new, and a free Constitution.]

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

LONDON, DEC. 20.

POLITICAL STATE OF FRANCE.

[TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.]

THE warmth and zeal with which some provinces have of late reclaimed their ancient privileges, though hostile to the general welfare of the kingdom, has reached the municipalities, and even a great number of individuals, who have been considerably alarmed; but all at once, and at a most unexpected period, the eyes of all the good citizens have been turned with affection and complacency towards the Dauphinians, who by means of a noble and steady conduct have obtained from the government whatever they have solicited; their neighbours, the States of Bearn, filled with admiration, and willing to follow their steps, tho't proper to consult them on this momentous subject; but the new States of Dauphine, not having as yet met, and their Syndics not being elected, a Committee appointed for that purpose was ordered to send them the following truly patriotic answer, which has been much applauded throughout the kingdom, and has been read by all ranks of people.

“ ANSWER from the STATES of DAUPHINE to the SYNDICS of the STATES of BEARN.

“ GRENOBLE, 26th Sept. 1788.

GENTLEMEN,

“ We take on ourselves to answer your letter, though addressed to our Syndics who have not as yet been chosen, as our new States are not entirely organized. The three orders of this province presented some time ago to his Majesty, a new provincial Constitution, free from the many errors of the obsolete one, which has since received his most gracious approbation and sanction.

“ You ask us, gentlemen, what were the motives which formerly determined the inhabitants of this province to send deputies to the States General; as you seem to fear lest the right of granting subsidies in our provincial assemblies, which you hold in common with us, should be infringed.

“ The people of Dauphine represented in their provincial states, it is true, have the right of withholding or granting subsidies to the monarch; it is equally true that we might find in our ancient charters some plausible pretence for not sending deputies to the States General, and perhaps for exempting ourselves from paying our share of such general taxes as are imposed by the majority of national deputies; but fortunately the inhabitants of this province have never thought it would be advantageous not to assist the nation with their councils, whenever she is deliberating on her most important concerns. Whether the ancient States of Dauphine have ever recorded their reasons for so doing, is more than we can say, the States having never been called since the year 1628, and though this period is not very distant, yet we have observed nothing in their proceedings relating to those deputies; but we find in those of the States General, held in 1484, 1588 and 1614 manifest proofs that we were then represented. Those who think they held a separate meeting as deputies from an independent State, entertain a most palpable error; they voted with those of the other provinces in 1384, as well as in the three last ones.

“ Dauphine is not the only province, which tho' it enjoyed the rights of granting or withholding subsidies in its particular States, yet submitted to the national deliberations; Provence, Languedoc, Bretagne, Normandy, &c. have formerly given the same example.

What advantage could this province reap from not sending deputies to the States General? Could its inhabitants flatter themselves with the idea of possessing more wisdom and pursuing the steps of a sounder policy, than the whole nation assembled? Are we not obliged to contribute our share of the expenses necessary to the preservation of order and publick tranquillity, as well as to the safety of the kingdom? Become independent, could we find among ourselves a greater degree of strength, with which to oppose the snares of intrigues, and repel the encroachment of authority?

“ Whilst an individual may hold up his char-

ters, and sometimes oppose them successfully to the rapacity of power, can he at the same time dispense with attending national assemblies, met to deliberate on the remedies required by the calamities and general distresses of the nation?

“ Until now, gentlemen, France has not had a positive, nor a fixed Constitution, sufficiently defined to guarantee the respective rights of the sovereign and of the subjects; hitherto the provinces, the different orders, nay the very individuals have been too widely separated; no bond of real union has ever existed between the parts of this vast whole. Each, circumscribed within the narrow circle of their own private concerns, have not reflected how much their division led them to inability and weakness, and how much their exclusive attention to their particular privileges, made them neglect national and individual liberty, as well as the rights of private property; hence the strong tide of power has progressively swallowed up every thing.

“ Provinces ought never to have separate interests but when they form federal republics, each possessing a sovereign power: In a monarchy, we never can be free, unless impelled by the same views and closely united, in order to maintain in its full vigour, the general Constitution.

“ Let us forget what we have been, in order to think more attentively on what we wish to be; Frenchmen enjoying under a King a proper share of freedom; when the Representatives of this great nation are met to deliberate on the best means of healing her wounds, on those of preserving to the throne, that necessary share of splendour and dignity; on those of paying the debts of the state; on those in short of leading France towards that summit of power and glory to which nature has called her; we are well assured, gentlemen, that then both the Bearnois and Dauphinians, will not be the last to appear and offer their honest tribute of counsels and personal services.

“ We are of opinion, gentlemen, that you ought not to consider as an indefeasible privilege that of granting in your particular States the necessary subsidies. There is no province in the kingdom, nay no town or borough, but what at some time or other has enjoyed the same rights, the welfare of the great community to which we belong, and the necessity of rendering the holding the States General frequent and indispensable, must henceforth become our great and leading principle. The only privilege which provincial States ought to enjoy, is the laying and collecting such taxes as may be granted by the great national assembly, inspecting their own publick works. How could those inferior provincial assemblies know the real wants of the state? How could they obtain sufficient knowledge of the national finances? How could they oppose sufficient barriers to unjust pretensions? If the Bearnois and the Dauphinians, really and sincerely mean to become free, let all France become free also, then the freedom of each province will be under the safeguard and guarantee of the whole. We must despair of ever obtaining a complete system of national rights and privileges, if we mean to retain any of our old ones, but those which may not be incompatible with the general welfare, and not detrimental to the rest of our fellow citizens; henceforth this extensive kingdom must be our country; the more wisely governed we shall be, the dearer it will become to us. Let us therefore lay aside those obsolete ideas; let us give up what was merely partial and local, and form but one wide extended family.—Bearnois, Dauphinians, Bretons, Normands, Picards, Lorrains, let us all glory in becoming truly Frenchmen, let us feel and fulfill the duties which that name imposes on us, and fly without delay to the assistance and relief of our dear country.

Directed by the three orders of Dauphine, to be written.
To the Syndics of the States of Bearn.

SPEECHES of the KING, and the KEEPER of the SEALS, at the opening of the Assembly of Notables, held at Versailles, the 6th of Nov. 1788.

HIS MAJESTY'S SPEECH.

GENTLEMEN,

“ THE manifold proofs I have lately had of your knowledge and abilities, as well as of your zeal and publick spirit have determined me to meet you again.

“ I have appointed the beginning of the following year for holding the States General of my kingdom, and you may rest assured that my heart impatiently waits for the moment, when surrounded by the representatives of my faithful subjects, I shall have it in my power to devise and consult with them on the best means of healing the wounds of the State, and without weakening the authority which I have received from my people's future happiness; as long as I live, such will be the prin-

cipal aim of all my actions, and of my best wishes.

“ But before the Convocation of those States is to take place, I wish to consult you, gentlemen, on the most eligible mode of rendering that important meeting as useful to my kingdom as possible. For that purpose, I have ordered, that every information, and papers which may tend to elucidate the principle object of your meeting, should be laid before you. I am confident that your zeal, the celerity of your debates and deliberations, will hasten the completion of this important task, for which I have called you together, and that your labours will deserve all my confidence, and answer the expectations of the publick.”

SPEECH of the KEEPER of the SEALS.

GENTLEMEN,

“ THE Notables of the kingdom have never been called but on the most urgent occurrences, and in consequence of the most important circumstances, it is in those momentous ones, that a monarch, whose first wish is the publick good, loves to meet the wise counsels of his people, and to surround himself with the light of their knowledge.

“ Such has been the conduct of those of our sovereigns whose names have been handed down, and are exhibited to their successors, as patterns of good kings; such was the conduct of that magnanimous one, whose memory becomes dearer every day, as we trace his virtues in the heir of his throne.

“ The convocation of the States General will become one of the most memorable events of his reign; what greater boon could the nation expect from his goodness and justice? But the tender solicitude of his Majesty is not limited to the mere calling of this great assembly; he wishes also to remove every obstacle, to smooth every difficulty which can possibly be foreseen. He wants to know which is the most perfect mode of calling them, and that which may become the most useful to the people. Instead of trusting to his own wisdom, or applying to the advice of his council for the investigation of this question, rendered still more momentous by the great number of years elapsed since the meeting of the last assembly, as well as by the increase which the kingdom has received since, his Majesty requires that you should let him know which are the surest means of accomplishing the most arduous measure of his administration, and at the same time the one most interesting, as having for its object the publick felicity.

“ The King comes in the midst of you gentlemen to hear the voice of the nation, henceforth to be the basis of publick opinion, to derive from your collective wisdom, information and sentiments, some part of his power and peculiar happiness; the successful trial he has already made of it, encourages and justifies his confidence.

“ That you may be enabled at one glance, to perceive the whole extent of the busines which you have to run over, and adopt some precise ideas concerning the various points of disquisition which will be proposed, his Majesty has ordered his Minister of the Finances to lay before you a series of questions to which he expects the most explicit answers. This measure, as plain as it is natural, will greatly facilitate your labours and by circumscribing them within proper bounds, will enable you without delay to meet the just impatience of the monarch to know your opinions.

“ It will be a glorious task, gentlemen, thus to have prepared the way for the convening this great and solemn assembly, which will be truly constitutional—an assembly from whose wisdom, and salutary determinations, the people of this kingdom expect to derive a degree of energy, strength and lustre hitherto unknown.

“ Hasten therefore to undertake and fulfil those honourable functions:—The eyes of the whole nation are already turned towards you, while she collects with gratitude the proofs you gave in the year 1787, of your zeal and of your sincere affection to the true interests of the state.

“ Ye ministers of the altar, whose virtue and learning France has long since respected and admired, you will distinguish yourselves no doubt, by that aptitude to business which is due to your studious habits, by that spirit of love and conciliation which springs from the holy religion you teach.

“ And you, generous nobility, whose hereditary honours and military services have been so useful to the monarch, as well as to the monarchy, shew by the wisdom of your councils, that you are as fit to watch over the internal regulations of the publick weal, as to defend it by your valour and your courage.

“ First magistrates of the kingdom, you who preside over those venerable and ancient corps, learned expositors and respectable depositaries of our laws, what may not the nation expect from your consummate experience, your well known zeal, and your attachment to those maxims on