

Gazette of the United States.

No. III.

From SATURDAY, APRIL 18, to WEDNESDAY APRIL 22, 1789.

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EUROPEAN ARTICLES.

FRANCE.

THE French nation prosecuting with ardour their plans of reformation in Legislation and Jurisprudence.—The Commons resolute for their rights—the Nobility jealous of the consequences—the patriot King balancing the contending interests, by raising a depressed Democracy.

SPAIN.

The people of this fertile and delightful region, have long laboured under the fatal influence of bigotry and blind zeal.—The effects have been answerable.—They are now emerging from darkness. By recent accounts, the arts begin to assume a respectable position among them—and as the rays of knowledge beam upon their minds, they will avail themselves of the advantages with which they are favoured by nature.—Charles the III^d. who lately deceased, has been succeeded by his Son, Charles the IVth. from whose administration the nation have very agreeable anticipations.

It is said, that the new King has introduced his Queen into his councils, and that she assists at the opening of all the dispatches. *The Spanish nation has long been celebrated for its gallantry*—It seems the new King is determined not to depreciate the national character.

UNITED NETHERLANDS.

Our allies, the Dutch, according to some late accounts, appear to be in an uneasy situation. The Prince of Orange, aided by the King of Prussia, has however, so effected his design, that the Province have very little left, but the power of complaining.

PRUSSIA.

The Monarch of this warlike Kingdom, like his predecessor, is active and enterprising—as his late movements, with respect to the Dutch, and more recently in regard to the Poles, sufficiently testify—and it appears from the publick documents, that Poland will find her interest in conceding to his demands, in not complying with the requisitions of the Empress of Russia.

GERMANY.

This Empire appears to be tired of the projecting spirit of its Sovereign.—The Emperor after a tedious, and by most accounts, vexatious, and not very glorious campaign, against the Turks, is returned to his capital—and if the latest accounts are true, the Musselmans appear to have no disposition to abate of their ardour in prosecuting their advantages. The capture of Choczin, by the Empress, is the only event, which renders it probable that a peace may be speedily restored.—The Emperors dominions in the Netherlands, are yet in a fervent.

HUMANITY.

Emancipated Africans have been complained of as defeating the benevolent designs of their friends, by unworthy conduct in a state of freedom: Admitting the fact, in some instances, the following is an attempt to assign the cause.

TO the enquiry upon the subject of the Africans, principally with respect to the behaviour of those who have been emancipated:—

It may be observed, that all circumstances considered, their conduct is as irreproachable, as could reasonably be expected—and notwithstanding what has been asserted, but few instances have occurred, of flagrantly bad characters: It is however granted, that many having obtained their freedom, become idle, vicious, and poor, and so a burthen to society; but all this is to be accounted for, from their former situation in life.

It is a general opinion among those who keep Slaves, that *ignorance* is the best security for obedience—hence these children of misfortune, are brought up in an alienation from all instruction and knowledge—and at an age, when the human mind is found incapable of imbibing ideas, or receiving instruction, have been sent adrift, as it were without oars, sails, rudder, or compass to assist their progress in the voyage of life—or with little more to distinguish them from irrational animals, than their shape. I say they are turned out to get their living, in an inhospitable world, entirely destitute of that knowledge, which is absolutely necessary to enable them to stand a common chance for a livelihood.—Not only destitute of this knowledge, but arrived to that advanced period of life, when experience testifies it is too late to learn.

This incapacity is not a circumstance peculiar to the Africans: A gentleman of my acquaintance, who was, at a former period, engaged in the business of a publick Instructor, has assured me, that he had both black and white scholars, who were men grown—and in proportion as they had been neglected in the early part of life, in that proportion

it was found equally difficult to instruct either.—These unhappy persons therefore ought not to be arraigned upon the principles that apply to those who have enjoyed the blessing of an early education—for how can fruit be expected, where no preparation was made for the harvest?

The least attention to the conduct of white persons, who labour under the disadvantages of ignorance, will shew, that vice, indolence, and wretchedness, are not confined to the colour of the skin.—

It may be asked, Whether there is reason to suppose, that, enjoying equal advantages, in point of education, with the whites, they would make equal improvements?—Unfortunately, *experience* does not at present furnish us with documents to decide the question upon a general scale; but nevertheless, there are a great many instances to prove, that blacks, who have had their education begun at a proper period, have proved good mechanics, farmers, traders, and respectable members of society. A variety of particulars in point might be enumerated, especially in the country towns.

This information applies both to those who were imported young, and to those born in the country—with this difference however, against the kidnapped Africans, that they are, in general, past the age when impressions are made to the greatest advantage, when first sent into slavery. C.

MR. ADAMS.

[The following letter, together with 25 others, was written in Holland, in the year 1780, by His Excellency the Vice-President of the United State, in answer to 29 questions proposed to him, by a Society of gentlemen in Amsterdam.—The advertisement annexed to them, will give the best idea of their nature and operation.]

ADVERTISEMENT.

Dr. CALKOEN, an eminent civilian at Amsterdam, to whom these Letters were written, composed, by the means of them, a comparison between the revolt of the Low Countries from Spain, and the revolution of the United States of America; in which he concluded, upon the whole, that “as it was a kind of miracle that the former succeeded, it would be a greater miracle still if the latter should not.” This composition was read by him to a Society of gentlemen of letters, about forty in number, who met sometimes at Amsterdam; and by its means, just sentiments of American affairs began to spread in that country, and to prevail over the continual misrepresentations of certain Gazettes and emissaries. The publications of Gen. HOWE, and Gen. BURGOYNE, in vindication of themselves, were procured to be translated into French, and propagated, together with many other pamphlets, which assisted in the same design, and contributed to excite the citizens to those applications, by petitions to the regencies of the several cities, which finally procured the acknowledgment of American independency, the treaty of commerce, and a loan of money.”

Extract from a printed Pamphlet.

LETTER VI.

Amsterdam, October 10, 1780.

SIR,

THE sixth task is to shew, “That no person, in America, is of so much influence, power, or credit, that his death, or corruption, by English money, could be of any nameable consequence.”

This question is very natural for a stranger to ask; but it would not occur to a native American, who had passed all his life in his own country; and upon hearing it proposed he could only smile.

It should be considered, that there are in America no Kings, Princes or Nobles; no Popes, Cardinals, Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops or other ecclesiastical dignitaries. They are these, and such like lofty subordinations, which place great bodies of men in a state of dependence upon one, which enable one or a few individuals, in Europe, to carry away after them large numbers, wherever they may think fit to go.—There are no hereditary offices, or titles, in families; nor even any great estates that descend in a right line to the eldest sons. All estates of intestates are distributed among all the children; so that there are no individuals, nor families, who have, either from office, title, or fortune, an extensive power or influence. We are all equal in America, in a political view, and as much alike as Lycurgus’s hay cocks. All public offices and employments are bestowed by the free choice of the people, and, at present, throughout the whole continent, are in the hands of those gentlemen who have distinguished themselves the most, by their counsels, exertions, and sufferings, in the contest with Great-Britain. If there ever was a war, that could be called the *people’s war*, it is this of America against Great-Britain; it having been determined on by the people, and pursued by the people, in every step of its progress.

But who is it in America, that has credit to carry over, to the side of Great-Britain, any number of men?—General Howe tells us, that he employ-

ed Mr. Delancy, Mr. Cortlandt Skinner, Mr. Chalmers, and Mr. Calloway, the most influential men they could find; and he tells you their ridiculous success.

Are they members of Congress, who, by being corrupted, would carry votes in Congress in favor of the English.—I can tell you of a truth, there has not been one motion made in Congress, since the declaration of independency, on the 4th of July, 1776, for a reconciliation with Great Britain; and there is not one man, in America, of sufficient authority, or credit, to make a motion in Congress, for a peace with Great-Britain, upon any terms short of independency, without ruining his character for ever. If a delegate from any one of the Thirteen States, were to make a motion for peace, upon any conditions short of independency, that delegate would be recalled with indignation by his constituents, as soon as they should know it.—The English have artfully represented in Europe, that Congress have been governed by particular gentlemen; but you may depend upon it, it is false. At one time, the English would have made it believed that Mr. Randolph, the first President of Congress, was its soul. Mr. Randolph died, and Congress proceeded as well as ever.—At another time Mr. Hancock was all and all. Mr. Hancock left the Congress; and has scarcely been there for three years; yet Congress has proceeded with as much wisdom, honor and fortitude as ever.—At another time, the English represented that Mr. Dickinson was the ruler of America. Mr. Dickinson opposed openly, and upon principle, the declaration of independency; but, instead of carrying his point, his constituents differed with him so materially, that they recalled him from Congress, and he was absent some years; yet Congress proceeded with no less constancy; and Mr. Dickinson lately, finding all America unalterably fixed in the system of independency, has fallen in, like a good citizen, and now supports it in Congress with as much zeal as others.—At another time, the English have been known to believe that Dr. Franklin was the essential member of Congress; but Dr. Franklin was sent to France in 1776, and has been there ever since; yet Congress has been as active and as capable as before.—At another time Mr. Samuel Adams was represented as the man who did every thing; yet Mr. Samuel Adams has been absent for the greatest part of three years, attending his duty as Secretary of State in the Massachusetts Bay; yet it does not appear that Mr. Adams’s absence has weakened the deliberations of Congress in the least.—Nay, they have sometimes been silly enough to represent your humble servant, Mr. John Adams, as an essential member of Congress; it is now, however, three years since Congress did him the honour to send him to Europe as a Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Versailles, and he has never been in Congress since: Yet Congress have done better since he came away, than they ever did before.

In short, Sir, all these pretences are the most ridiculous imaginable. The American cause stands upon the essential, unalterable character of the whole body of the people; upon their prejudices, passions, habits, and principles, which they derived from their ancestors, their education; drew in with their mothers’ milk, and have been confirmed by the whole course of their lives: And the characters whom they have made conspicuous, by placing them in their public employments,

Are but bubbles on the sea of matter borne;
They rise, they break, and to that sea return.

The same reasoning is applicable to all the Governors, Lieutenant Governors, Secretaries of State, Judges, Senators, and Representatives of particular States. They are all eligible, and elected every year by the body of the people; and would lose their characters and influence the instant they should depart, in their public conduct, from the political system that the people are determined to support.

But are there any officers of the army, who could carry over large numbers of people?—The influence of these officers is confined to the army: They have very little among the citizens. But if we consider the constitution of that army, we shall see, that it is impossible that any officer could carry with him any numbers, even of soldiers. These officers are not appointed by a King, or a Prince, nor by General Washington: They can hardly be said to be appointed by Congress. They have all commissions from Congress, it is true; but they are named and recommended, and are generally appointed, by the executive branch of government in the particular state to which they belong, except the general officers, who are appointed by Congress. The continental army consists of the quotas of officers and troops furnished by thirteen States. If an officer of the Massachusetts Bay forces, for example, should go over to the enemy, he might, possibly, carry with him half a doz. soldiers belonging to that State; yet I even doubt whether any