

FRANCE.

To the President and Commissioners of Trade at Bourdeaux.
Paris, 8th March, 1790.

GENTLEMEN,

IT is with the utmost pleasure we felicitate our constituents and fellow-citizens on account of the calm which has taken place of the tempest with which they were threatened. Of this we have the most satisfactory and pleasing proof.—You will readily conceive it, Gentlemen, from the copy of a decree, passed this day at noon, unanimously, and without debate. Never was the unanimity of the National Assembly more conspicuous; and we take the earliest opportunity of dispatching to you the intelligence.

We are with respect,
Gentlemen,
Your most humble,
And most obedient servants,
CORBUN,
BECHADE-CASAU.

Decree of the National Assembly, concerning the French Colonies. Passed Monday 8th of March, 1790. Transmitted, in Manuscript, by M. Nairac, one of the Deputies from this city to the National Assembly.

THE National Assembly, taking into consideration the addresses and Petitions of the commercial and manufacturing towns, the Memorials received from St. Domingo and Martinique, addressed to them by the Minister of the Marine, and the representations of the deputies from the colonies—

DECLARE that, viewing the colonies as a part of the French Empire, and desirous that they should enjoy the benefits of the happy revolution which has been accomplished here, they, nevertheless, never meant to include them in the Constitution which they have established for the Kingdom, and to subject them to laws which might be incompatible with their local and particular interests.—WHEREFORE, They have decreed, and do decree, as follows:

1st. Each Colony is authorized to make known its wishes with respect to a constitution, a Legislature, and that administration of the government which may be most conducive to its prosperity, and the happiness of its inhabitants; provided they conform to those general principles which bind the colonies to the mother-country, and ensure the preservation of their respective interests.

2d. In those colonies where there are colonial assemblies, freely chosen by the citizens and acknowledged by them, these assemblies shall be permitted to make known the wishes of the colony; in those colonies where there are no such assemblies, they shall be immediately formed, in order to exercise the same privileges.

3d. The King shall be petitioned for permission to circulate in each colony an instruction from the National Assembly, containing 1st. The means of establishing Colonial Assemblies in those Colonies where there are none. 2d. The general principles to which the Colonial Assemblies shall conform in the plans which they shall offer.

4th. The plans prepared in the said Colonial Assemblies shall be submitted to the National Assembly, in order to be examined and adopted by them, and presented to the King for his acceptance and confirmation.

5th. The Decrees of the National Assembly, respecting the organization of municipalities, and of Administrative Assemblies, shall be transmitted to the said Colonial Assemblies, with authority to carry into execution any part of the said decrees which may apply to their local situation, subject to the final determination of the National Assembly, and of the King, with respect to the modifications which it may be proper to admit; and subject, also, to the provisional approbation of the Governor, with regard to the provisional execution of the Decrees which shall be made by the Administrative Assemblies.

6th. The same Colonial Assemblies shall express their wishes with respect to the modifications which might be introduced into the prohibitory regulations of the commerce between the Colonies and the Mother-Country, in order, upon their petition, and after having heard the representations upon the part of the French Commerce, that they may be adopted, if it shall be found expedient.

FURTHERMORE—The National Assembly declare they have no intention to effect, either directly, or indirectly, any change in any of the branches of the trade of France with her Colonies. Placing the Colonists and their property under the special protection of the nation, they pronounce all those to be criminal against the nation who shall attempt to excite any insurrections among them.

Judging favourably of the motives which have actuated the Citizens of the said Colonies, they declare there is no ground of complaint against them; and they expect from their patriotism, the maintenance, of tranquility, and an inviolable fidelity to the Nation, to the Laws, and to the King.

THE TABLET.—No. CXIX.

“Many events, alluded to as a matter of revelation, may be accomplished by the operation of natural causes.”

MR. EDITOR,

SOME years ago I was present at one of the public exhibitions of a neighbouring University. There was an ingenious discussion of the following question; *Whether the universal diffusion of literature will precede and prepare the way for the universal prevalence of religion?* One of the young gentlemen, who took a part in the affirmative of the question, gave me a copy of the arguments he delivered on the occasion. I was so highly gratified with them, that I am induced to request you to divide them into several essays, and publish them in different numbers of the Tablet. Z.

IN compliance with the wishes of our correspondent we begin the publication of the performance above mentioned, and may perhaps continue it through three or four succeeding numbers.—

FOR THE TABLET.

WERE the favorable influence of Literature upon religion, to be determined by the impartial voice of reason only—a decision of this question in the affirmative would be the result of a single reflection. But since our reasonings, in this imperfect state, are liable to error, and we sometimes find experience demolishing the speculative systems that are erected by demonstration itself, it will be necessary to take a view of the state and connection of literature and religion, at different periods of the world, that we may be able, by a knowledge of past facts, to frame probable conjectures concerning future events.

“As the question is supposed to refer to christianity, as the most rational system of religion ever published to mankind, I shall offer it as a principle which reason and fact concur to establish, That it is impossible for a rational system of religion to exist among a barbarous and illiterate people. In confirmation of this principle, we may observe that the inhabitants of most of the vast empires of Asia are uncivilized or unlettered, and their religion mostly idolatry—that altho christianity has been frequently preached among them, yet the repeated efforts of Missionaries, from the times of the Apostles, down to the modern Jesuits, have hardly been able to establish it in a single province. So early as the 7th century, christianity was published in China. In the 13th, we are informed, the New Testament and Psalms of David were translated into the language of the Tartars. Yet so incapable were those Asiatics of comprehending the sublime ideas of an invisible Deity, that they chose to follow Confucius and Brumma, rather than Jesus Christ, and to worship Fo and Dilailama in preference to the Deity owned by Christians.

“The Emperors, it is true, opposed the propagation of christianity, from motives of policy. Tamerlane, in particular, used the sword to extirpate it—probably he was apprehensive that the ideas of equality and independence, which our religion inculcates, would disturb the tranquility of his dominions, or prove fatal to his extensive and despotic power. But, waving the question, why so many millions of the human race, for thousands of ages, have slumbered in tame submission to the will of a tyrant, without effecting material innovations in their government: It is certain that had the body of the people in these empires, been enlightened by science, the sword of Tamerlane, of Kouli Khan, and of Omar would have been as impotent in resisting the progress of religion in Asia, as the victorious armies of Charles Vth, the pompous decrees of ecclesiastical councils, and the awful fulminations of the Roman Pontiff, were unsuccessful in opposing the reformation in Europe.”

(To be continued.)



LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES.
PUBLISHED

By Authority.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:
AT THE SECOND SESSION,

Begun and held at the city of New York, on Monday the fourth of January, one thousand seven hundred and ninety.

AN ACT to provide for mitigating or remitting the Forfeitures and Penalties accruing under the Revenue Laws in certain cases therein mentioned.

BE it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That whenever any person who now is or hereafter shall be liable to a fine, penalty or forfeiture, or interested in any Vessel, Goods Wares or Merchandise, or other thing which may be subject to seizure and forfeiture by force of the laws of the United States now existing, or which may hereafter exist for collecting duties of Import and Tonnage, and for regulating the coasting trade, shall prefer his petition to the judge of the district in which such fine, penalty or forfeiture may have accrued, truly and particularly setting forth the circumstances of his case, and shall pray that the same may be mitigated or remitted: The said judge shall enquire in a summary manner into the circumstances of the case, first causing reasonable notice to be given to the person or persons claiming such fine, penalty or forfeiture, and to the Attorney of the United States for such district, that each may have an opportunity of shewing cause against the mitigation or remission thereof; and shall cause the facts which shall appear upon such enquiry to be stated and annexed to the petition, and direct their transmission to the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, who shall thereupon have power to mitigate or remit such fine, penalty or forfeiture, or any part thereof, if, in his opinion, the same was incurred without wilful negligence, or any intention of fraud, and to direct the prosecution, if any shall have been instituted for the recovery thereof, to cease and be discontinued upon such terms or conditions as he may deem reasonable and just.

Provided that nothing herein contained shall be construed to affect the right or claim of any person to that part of any fine, penalty or forfeiture incurred by breach of either of the laws aforesaid which such person may be entitled to by virtue of the said laws, in cases where a prosecution has been commenced, or information has been given before the passing of this act; the amount of which right and claim shall be assessed and valued by the Judge of the district in a summary manner.

And be it further enacted, That this act shall continue and be in force until the end of the next session of Congress—and no longer.

FREDERICK AUGUSTUS MUHLENBERG,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
JOHN ADAMS, Vice-President of the United States,
and President of the Senate.
APPROVED, MAY TWENTY-SIXTH, 1790.
GEORGE WASHINGTON, President of the United States.
(TRUE COPY)
THOMAS JEFFERSON, Secretary of State.

AN ACT for the Government of the Territory of the United States, South of the River Ohio.

BE it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Territory of the United States South of the River Ohio, for the purposes of temporary government, shall be one district; the inhabitants of which shall enjoy all the privileges, benefits and advantages, set forth in the ordinance of the late Congress, for the government of

the Territory of the United States, North-West of the River Ohio, and the government of the said Territory, South of the Ohio, shall be similar to that which is now exercised in the Territory North-West of the Ohio; except so far as is otherwise provided in the conditions expressed in an Act of Congress of the present Session, entitled “An act to accept a cession of the claims of the State of North-Carolina, to a certain District of Western Territory.”

And be it further enacted, That the salaries of the officers, which the President of the United States shall nominate, and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint by virtue of this act, shall be the same as those, by law established, of similar officers in the government North-West of the River Ohio.

And the powers, duties and emoluments of a Superintendent of Indian Affairs, for the Southern department, shall be united with those of the Governor.

FREDERICK AUGUSTUS MUHLENBERG,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
JOHN ADAMS, Vice-President of the United States,
and President of the Senate.
APPROVED MAY TWENTY-SIXTH, 1790.
GEORGE WASHINGTON, President of the United States.
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THOMAS JEFFERSON, Secretary of State.

CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.
MONDAY, MAY 31.

THE report of the Post Master General on the petition of Colles, respecting a survey of the public roads, was read, and referred to the committee on the subject of regulating the Post-Offices, and Post Roads.

Mr. Fitzsimons moved that the motion laid on the table, respecting Congress holding their next session in Philadelphia, should be taken up.

Mr. Sherman and Mr. Livermore objected to the motion: It was observed that the third reading of the funding bill was the order of the day, which was a subject of the greatest importance, on which the House has been long deliberating—and which has never been before the Senate. The subject occasioned a lengthy discussion the last session, and will probably introduce much debate whenever renewed.

Mr. Vining supported the motion. He observed, that the business was now brought forward in the most simple form, unconnected with those questions of permanency, &c. with which it was formerly encumbered. He hoped the resolution would be immediately attended to; it was certainly of some consequence to determine whether Congress should in future hold their sessions nearer the centre of the Union, or not. The question now comes before us in an abstract form; the members are free and unembarrassed; no undue influence and combinations that he knew of existed.

Mr. Lawrance opposed the motion, and urged taking up the business which had a prior claim to the attention of Congress.

Mr. Thatcher observed, that as there was business of the greatest consequence before the House, and on which the public mind is particularly anxious; and this question is confessedly trifling and unimportant in a comparative view, he hoped that the time of the House would not be consumed in discussing it. He did not think it of two paper dollars' consequence to the United States, whether Congress sat at New-York, Philadelphia, or on the Potowmac.

Mr. Vining and Mr. Hartley replied to Mr. Thatcher. Mr. Sherman observed, that the business more immediately before Congress, he considered of so much consequence, that he could wish the present motion might be withdrawn. He should have no objection to taking it up next Tuesday or Wednesday.

Mr. Fitzsimons said, that if the House would agree that it should be taken up next Tuesday or Wednesday. He was not so tenacious of the present moment as to object to such a postponement.

Mr. Livermore objected to the House's pledging themselves to take up the resolution next week.

Mr. White was in favor of taking up the resolution at the present time: He conceived that it might be soon determined. Recurring to the Journals, he said, it appears that the last session there was a considerable majority of the House in favor of Germantown, as the permanent residence; that being the case, there can be no difficulty in fixing on Philadelphia as a temporary residence. He wished therefore the question might now be determined.

Mr. Parker was in favor of deciding on the question. He mentioned a variety of inconveniences which resulted from meeting in New-York.

Mr. Gerry replied particularly to the two last gentlemen, and observed, that it is of more consequence to the people what Congress do, than where they sit.

Mr. Smith objected to the motion. He considered the question as unimportant to the community at large, whether Congress met at one place or another. He considered it improper in itself, as it is not certain that the present Congress will hold another session. The members of this Congress were chosen to meet in New-York. He thought it quite unnecessary that at the last session the members should be dragged away to another place. He added many other observations, and concluded by saying that he should call for the Ayes and Noes.

Mr. Williamson, Mr. Burke, and Mr. Bloodworth, made a few remarks.—A sufficient number of members rising, in favor of calling the Ayes and Noes, they are as follow:

AYES.
Messrs Ahe, Baldwin, Brown, Cadwallader, Carroll, Clymer, Coles, Contee, Fitzsimons, Gale, Gilman, Griffin, Hartley, Heister, Jackson, Lee, Madison, Matthews, Moore, P. Muhlenberg, Page, Parker, Scot, Seney, Sinnickson, Steele, Stone, Sumpter, Vining, White, Williamson, Wynkoop.—32.

NOES.
Messrs Ames, Benson, Bloodworth, Boudinot, Burke, Floyd, Foster, Gerry, Goodhue, Grout, Huger, Huntington, Lawrance, Leonard, Livermore, Partridge, Ranfellaer, Schureman, Sedgwick, Sherman, Sylvester, Smith (M.) Smith (S. C.) Sturges, Thatcher, Trumbull, Tucker.—27.

So it was determined to take up the Resolution. The Resolution was then read.

Mr. Lawrance observed, that the last session it was said that the union of the States depended on fixing the permanent residence. He queried whether it would be more easy to fix on this residence after an adjournment to Philadelphia? If Congress removes to Philadelphia, he conceived the difficulty of ever fixing on a permanent residence would be greatly increased, and probably rendered insuperable. How far the question of permanency would be involved in the present discussion he would not pretend to say. The last session the question greatly agitated the House, in such a manner that the members generally regretted that it had been brought on. He considered the question as local, and in that view he thought it ought to subside till business which concerned the whole Union should have been decided on. He thought the question premature, so far as it might involve the idea of a permanent residence, as it appeared to be proper to wait till the enumeration of the inhabitants should be completed; New-York does not contemplate Congress tarrying here for a long season. He observed, for a variety of reasons, that it was as proper a situation as any for a temporary residence.

Mr. Huntington objected to the resolution, and on general principles contended for Congress tarrying where they now are. He pointed out the difficulties, and expence, which would attend the removal. He adverted to the conveniences and accommodations of this city; but he was opposed particularly to the idea of a change, till a permanent situation should be fixed on.