

son. Mr. Madison considered himself as upon strong ground. He answered, with brevity, that he had known Mr. Jefferson for the greater part of his life, and that he knew too much about the excellence of his heart, as to make this allegation incredible. The words were polite; but this was their meaning. Now, as Mr. Madison has been acquainted with Jefferson for at least 30 years, he must have been acquainted with this molatto business, which, in the course of the present rupture, has burst into history. The name of SALLY will walk down to posterity alongside of Mr. Jefferson's own name. The name of Agrippina is as distinctly remembered as that of Nero. Madison must have known all about Sally, and, when he assisted in passing off the president as a trading of virtues, he differed from the president himself precisely as much as the man that circulates a copper dollar, differs from the man that forged it.

FROM COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER FOR APRIL 1802.

LETTER FROM WILLIAM COBBETT,

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

LORD HAWKESBURY,

His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Concluded from our last.

"But," say the sleek-headed sons of Hope, "the Americans, surely, will not so easily be weaned from their British habits, and British connections; the ties of language and blood will not so easily be broken." I will tell you, my lord, what the Americans think on this subject, which they have already discussed, and the substance of their own words, taken from the *Baltimore* [Richmond] *Examiner*, of the 2th of last month, "The high-flying friends of monarchy, who wish to fill us with gloom, because they themselves have cause to be gloomy, now lament that the French did not remain in Egypt rather than come to settle on the banks of the Mississippi, which according to their predictions, will finally compel us to break our commercial connection with Britain. We also, lament that the friends of liberty have been forced to quit Egypt, because, as well withers of the whole human race, we hoped they would have rescued the people of Africa, as well as those of Asia, from the odious tyranny under which they have labored for so many years; but we see no cause to regret that the troops who have evacuated Egypt, should now come to receive a reward for their valor, on the fruitful banks of the Mississippi. They are men and republicans, and we have no objection to their sharing in the happiness that our Western fellow-citizens enjoy. That they will make our navigation of the Mississippi depend on any part of our commercial regulations, there is good reason to doubt. Suppose otherwise, suppose they should desire us even to shut our ports against Britain, who, except the friends, of Britain, the friends of a monarchy, and of a monarch too that tyrannizes over the seas, would for a moment, hesitate to grant the request. Why should we quarrel with France merely for the sake of preserving a market for British manufactures? For some time, the vent of those manufactures, might create some inconvenience, but that inconvenience would be productive of good, as it would encourage our own domestic manufactures, and, in the mean time, a supply would be afforded us by other countries, who would gladly take up a branch of trade that the haughtiness and injustice of Britain has thrown away."

Thus you see, my lord, the Americans have made their mind upon the matter; they are resolved not to submit to any sacrifice for our sake; and, indeed, they appear to anticipate, with no small delight, the injury that England may experience from the commercial revolution, to which the cession of Louisiana will give rise: so great is their

eagerness for our ruin, that they totally overlook the danger and disgrace which must thereby be brought upon themselves.

It is true, indeed, that these sentiments are entertained only by the democratic party, the party of Jefferson; but recollect, my lord, this party has now obtained a complete ascendancy. It is the party that rules, and that will rule for many years to come. Your treaty has not only transferred to France our riches and our power, but our friends also, in every part of the world, and particularly in the American States. This is, as it should be: contempt is the just reward of cowardice: they who have deserted their friends must expect to be deserted in return. Whenever your lordship may wish to know why England is now universally detested and despised, ask Portugal, ask the king of Sardinia; and if they should remain silent, conjure up the names of the murdered royalists at La Vendee.

Thirdly, as a military and naval position, Louisiana and the Floridas present themselves to us in a light still more alarming, than either of the other two, under which we have already considered them.

With respect to the *United States of America*, France will, for a long time at least, make military and naval power subservient to her commercial view. Her new position operates as a constant, though silent menace against the union of those states, which, while she can render them useful in the injuries which she meditates against England, it will never be her interest to divide. Indeed, she sees in the United States the most formidable rival of Great Britain, in matters of commerce and navigation, and for that reason, as well as for the purpose of insuring their aid in future wars against us, she will take special care not to hurry, into any measure against them, that may have the appearance of hostility, that may injure their interest, or wound their pride.

But, towards Canada, she will look with very different eyes. Those who knew any thing of the Northern boundaries of Louisiana, must perceive, that the cession of that country to France, enables her, at any hour she may choose, to enter into our last remaining provinces in that part of the world; where, I am sorry to say it, a vast majority of the natives would receive her with infinite joy. Dr. Becke and Sir Frederick Eden will comfort your lordship by insisting that Canada is not worth preserving. Against such politicians there is no argument to be opposed; and if colonies be really a burden, if the fur trade of Canada, and the market for our manufactures which that country affords, be also a burden, we have the satisfaction to know, that they are a burden from which we shall, probably, very soon be relieved. Sir Alexander Mackenzie has clearly shown, that the principal seat of the fur trade is at the sources of those rivers which fall into the Mississippi, and that those who have the command of that river, and are disposed to employ it for the prosecution of this trade, may easily monopolize it. There wants no new establishments, my lord, to transfer this trade to France. The Indians, who hunt for the furs, and the Canadians who collect them, are already on the spot, and are much more attached to France than to England. When, therefore, the whole country, and the Mississippi which flows through that country to the Gulf of Mexico, are in the hands of the power for whom they already entertain a partiality, it would be folly, in the extreme, to hope that they would seek for a market on the banks of the St. Lawrence. Should they, however, contrary to all reason, be disposed to do this, France will have the power of preventing them, by seizing on Canada itself, which I think has been clearly pointed out in the Register, p. 265; and I can assure your lordship, that the correctness of that statement there given, has been fully and fully confirmed by the opinion of several gentlemen, with whom I have since conversed on the subject, and who, to a deep interest in the affairs of Canada, unite a thorough knowledge of its trade, of its internal situation, and

and its means of defence. The expectation of a gentleman who stands high in military command in Canada, and who has passed great part of his life in the countries of which I am speaking, was, that "the French, once in possession of Louisiana, might walk into Canada, whenever they pleased."

From the cold regions of the North, my lord, from the haunts of the martin and the beaver, let us now turn to the mines of the South. In ceding Louisiana to France, Spain has not stipulated for boundaries. The dominion that France formerly claimed (and she never recedes), extended on the board towards the south, as far as the Rio Bravo, which your lordship may see marked on the map. The mouth of this river, which affords good anchorage for vessels of almost any size, places the all powerful republic at no more than 60 miles from St. Andre, 123 miles from Panuco and 300 miles from the city of Mexico itself, to all which places there is a road from Rio Bravo, much easier to pass than the space between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, which cost the American militia a march of only one and twenty days.

Supposing, therefore, Spain to be independent of France, and supposing Havana Vera Cruz capable of resisting the attacks of the latter, Mexico is completely exposed to her grasp by the cession, at which your lordship and your colleague have dared to connive. What the consequences of this exposure may be to England, it is impossible precisely to say; but, those who can contemplate it without anxiety and dread, must have arrived at that happy state of insensibility, which enables men to smile while the ruins of their country are crumbling around on their heads.

But great as are the injuries, which must inevitably arise to us from the command which this cession will give to France over the United States, Canada and Mexico, those to be apprehended with respect to our naval power, and particularly our navigation in the *West-India seas*, are of a nature and magnitude still more alarming. Whether the Floridas are formally ceded or not along with Louisiana, it is certain they must be under the command of France. She wants not those provinces but as a naval position in which point of view they are extremely important in themselves, and singularly formidable to us. At the same time that they abound in ship-timber of every sort, from the keel to the top-gallant yard; they afford harbours for sheltering the fleets of our enemy, while the Mississippi pours down abundance of provisions for her men. There are two situations, in particular, in these colonies from which, if we should ever see another war, we must expect the most serious annoyance. The first, and most spacious is the Bay of Espiritu Santo, in which the French have already projected a naval establishment, and for an account of which I refer your lordship to the speech of governor Johnstone, on the peace of 1873, which peace put an end to what I greatly fear will prove to have been our *first panic war*. The situation of this excellent harbour, your lordship

"Governor Johnstone dwelt particularly, on the value of East Florida, which was ceded to Spain, and stated, that when he was appointed governor of it, two commissioners were obliged to be made out, in consequence of a geographical blunder in the first. He said all writers knew not the value of that province either in point of situation, or of commercial produce; there was a bay in it, called the bay of Espiritu Santo, that was one of the first harbours in the world. Mr. secretary Townsend, looking a little surprised at this, the governor said, "I see the right hon. secretary of state "is ignorant where the bay lies"; it lies in the gulph of Mexico, on the north-west side of the province, is called Tempa Bay, or Espiritu Santo, and is one of the finest harbours, in the world, infinitely better and more healthy than the Havana. There, the ships are eaten by the worms, and the men are liable to much sickness; in the bay of Espiritu Santo, neither of those inconveniences are experienced."

will learn from the map. You will see that it is not 250 miles nor 48 hours sail from the Gulph of Florida, which is the passage, and the only passage, by which a convoy can come home from Jamaica. It should moreover be observed, that, in consequence of the course of the gulph stream, our ships are obliged to bear up in the Gulph of Mexico, to within about 130 miles of Espiritu Santo; so that it is next to impossible that a fleet, consisting of 30 or 40 ships should escape the observation of the cruizers from that harbour. Should our trade, however have the good fortune to enter the Gulph of Florida unobserved from Espiritu Santo, or from the Havannah, (which lies on the opposite side of the entrance (how is it to elude observations from the inlet of Hillsborough, the other point at which the French have planned a naval establishment. The Gulph, in this part, is not more than an hundred miles wide, altogether, and the charts will inform your lordship, that even a single vessel of any considerable size, cannot, in a clear day, pass unobserved from the heights in the vicinity of Hillsborough. Thus, in case of another war, if the French act with that sagacity and vigour, which have characterized all their plans and operations, our communication with the West India islands will be completely cut off. In fact, this new distribution of power in the western hemisphere has totally changed the nature of our connection therewith. While the French have the command of the Amazons on one side, and of the Mississippi on the other, while they possess the ports of St. Domingo and Florida, we may talk of West-India territory and trade, but we can enjoy them only as vassals of France.

Having now, my lord, pointed out the mischiefs and dangers to be apprehended from the cession of Louisiana, it is hardly necessary to observe that the cession itself is to be ascribed to the peace, but it is of some moment to prove that its confirmation could not have taken place without a departure from the preliminary articles, and that, therefore, those persons who approved of those articles are by no rule of consistency, bound to approve of the Definitive Treaty.

This cession was not publicly known; it was not officially known to you; and your very worthy fellow labourer in the work of peace, at the time of signing the preliminary articles. Since that day, a day which will stand for ever blazoned in the annals of England, this cession, as far at least, as relates to Louisiana has been publicly and officially announced to the world. By the promulgation of a treaty (See Register p. 52), concluded between France and Spain, on the 21st of March 1801, which treaty was never published till January 1802 (more than three months after the conclusion of our preliminary articles with France,) we now know, that Spain has ceded to our enemy the entire possession and sovereignty of Louisiana.

Now, unless your lordship should insist that by agreeing to the Preliminary Articles, this country resigned all pretension to interfere in, or to enquire into the conduct or views of the other nations of the world, unless you should insist, that by that act, she forfeited all her national rights, not excepting even the right of self preservation, you must allow, that the conditions of the Preliminary articles were, by the contracting parties, viewed in connection with the known extent of dominion, respectively possessed by those parties; and as a very great and dangerous addition is now made to that extent, it follows that a definitive treaty, made with the knowledge of that addition, and without any stipulation against it, is, in that respect, a departure from the conditions of the preliminary treaty.

Here, my lord, I close this letter with a promise to lose no time in taking up the remaining points of discussion.

I am, my lord,

Your lordship's most humble,

And most obedient servant,

W. COBBETT.

Post-Office, April 21, 1802.