

friendship, as your answer may enable me.

"I am, with great respect, Sir,

"Your most obedient and most

"humble servant,

"GEO. JOHNSTON.

"London, 11th April, 1778."

This letter contained the whole scope of the Whig policy in England, the encouragement of rebellion in the American Provinces till it "might so far prevail as to oblige this country to see their error,"—that is, till the Whigs had attained office, and towards this object they laboured strenuously, not stopping at the possible dismemberment of "what was called the British Empire." But rebellion proved, like the letting out of water, the plotters at home lost all control over it, and having provoked, aided, raised and sent adrift the monster at what they thought was the right time, they found that it was utterly beyond their control, and that the chances were even, if they were not, overwhelmed by the deluge they had themselves prepared. Yet, with an unabashed front, they still kept up the game of agitation till the honor of Britain was levelled in the dust before a contemptible foe, the best interests of the Empire jeopardised, and a blow dealt at its development which ninety-four years of prosperity has not been able to heal or compensate. The best of these eloquent epistles was addressed to

"Robert Morris, Esq., (Private).

"DEAR SIR,—I came to this country in core belief that a reconciliation between Great Britain and America could be effected on terms honorable and beneficial to both. I am persuaded and can prove that the last treaty with France should be the first treaty, if ever you see should be no inducement, supposing every obstacle to prevent us from treating is removed, we are then to consider whether the terms proposed are advantageous. I enclose you my sentiments on the subject at large; if they concur with yours we shall join in the work with all prudence and all the means possible and virtuous. I believe the men who have conducted the affairs of America incapable of being influenced by improper motives. But in all such transactions there is risk, and I think whoever ventures should be secured, at the same time that honor and emolument should naturally follow the future of those who have steered the vessel in the storm and brought her fairly to port. I think Washington and the President (of Congress) have a right to every favor that grateful nations can bestow, if they should evermore unite our interests and spare the miseries and devastations of war. I wish above all things to see you, and hope you will so contrive, it. Do not think Great Britain is so low—remember, she can never be lower than you were at Trenton. It is the same blunderers who produced war who have conducted it. When the sense of the nation is roused believe me she can make struggles that few have conceived, but which I should be sorry to see exerted on such an occasion. Whatever may be our fate I shall ever retain the strictest private friendship for you and yours; but let me entreat you to recall all those endearing ties to your recollection.

"I am, with affection and esteem, dear Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"GEO. JOHNSTON.

"Philadelphia, June 16th, 1778."

This letter was written two days before the evacuation of Philadelphia by the British troops after all communication had been denied, and although Johnston was a blundering and imprudent negotiator there is nothing either in his conduct or letters to show he was aught but an honest man. His great fault seems to have been that he expected to deal with parties as honest and straightforward as himself, instead of with men practised in subtlety and deceit. He told in those letters some hard truths, for which his Whig friends owed him no thanks—although he intended it to be otherwise, for all the General officers that disgraced the military profession and brought shame and confusion on the British army in America were Whigs of the purest dye. As an ambassador or commissioner he totally forgot the dignity of his position or the honor of the Empire.

Immediately on receipt of information of the dishonest advantage Congress had taken of his unofficial and imprudent personal negotiations, Johnston at once withdrew from the commission, and in the public document by which he did so severely reprimanded Congress for their direct and utter disregard of public honor, directly charging them with using his imprudence as a subterfuge to avoid fulfilling the terms of the convention with Burgoyne's army. The other commissioners at the same time transmitted a declaration that they were utter strangers to Governor Johnston's private negotiations, nor would they admit that they bore the construction Congress put on them. Both declarations were sent to that body on the 26th of August, with a renewed demand for the fulfillment of the Saratoga Convention. In answer to this the Congress passed a resolution on the 4th of September, in which they affected to doubt by implication the power of the commissioners to ratify the convention, but Sir Henry Clinton, on the 19th September, transmitted to them an extract from instructions sent to him by the Secretary of State, received since the date of the commissioners' remonstrance by which he was authorised in express terms to demand a performance of the convention made with Gen. Burgoyne, and, if required, to ratify in the King's name all the stipulations.

The only reply to this was a letter from the Secretary—"That Congress gave no answer to insolent letters;" and thus those brave soldiers that surrendered at Saratoga, under the most sacred of human treaties, a military convention, were by the deceit and treachery of Congress kept in disgraceful captivity and made to work like slaves to the close of the war.

The commissioners issued a manifesto setting forth the powers delegated to the earnest desire of the people and Parliament of Britain to hold out the olive branch of peace, the deceit and subterfuges with which

they had been met and advising that the contest should be carried on in a totally different manner in future. The Congress replied by a manifesto in which it is hard to decide whether its shameful effrontery or blasphemy deserve the greater reprobation, but it was clear the spirit of deceit which animated Franklin in London while approving the concessions contained in the instructions to the commissioners in March, after negotiating with the French court in December, were intensified in the action of the self-constituted Executive of the late British Provinces. And if further evidence were needed of the direct villainy of the agents of Congress and the spirit animating that body, an event which happened at this period on the English coast strikingly illustrated the total want of principle and savage hatred felt towards the English people by the rebels.

Franklin's fellow commissioner at Paris, a Connecticut lawyer named Silas Deane, as early as 1776, laid plans before Congress and the French government for the burning of Liverpool, Bristol and other English ports, at a period when hostilities could be hardly looked on as seriously commenced and when those very scoundrels were trying to hoodwink the people of Great Britain by loud professions of loyalty; opportunity was however wanting to put their precious scheme in execution, but early in 1778 Congress found a proper instrument in the person of an unprincipled miscreant known as John Paul Jones, at one time a servant in the employ of the Earl of Selkirk and a refugee from justice.

This man was appointed to the 18 gun ship, Ranger by Congress, and on the 17th April attempted to burn the shipping and town of Whitehaven, but, although he succeeded in surprising the forts which were not garrisoned, he was obliged to retreat without effecting anything; he subsequently landed at St. Mary's Isle, the seat of the Earl of Selkirk, his former master, whose family plate he carried off. On the 24th of April he appeared off Carrickfergus, where the Drake, sloop of 18 guns was at anchor, and although the disparity of force was very great, her commander, Captain George Burdon, made sail and brought the Ranger to action at dusk, but night coming on very thick separated the combatants; the action was renewed on the 25th and continued for more than an hour, when Captain Burdon and his only lieutenant being killed with twenty-two seamen the Drake surrendered. Capt. Jones landed the surviving crew on the Scotch coast and carried his prize into Brest.

A Montana paper calls for the organization of a company of volunteers who shall have a bounty for Indians they kill, and also have all horses and valuables captured: but it expresses a doubt if Governor Ashley will listen to its wise demands, "through fear of the philanthropists in the Eastern States."