

It should not be forgotten, that the most entire liberty was granted for the exchange of productions between North America and the islands of the West Indies, a trade from which the English colonists derived immense advantages. And in fact, notwithstanding the restrictions laid upon the commerce of the Americans, did there not remain amply sufficient to render them a rich, happy, and enterprising people? Was not their prosperity known, and even envied, by the whole world? Assuredly, if there was any part of the globe where man enjoyed a sweet and pleasant life, it was especially in English America. Was not this an irrefragable proof, a striking example, of the maternal indulgence of England towards her colonies? Let the Americans compare their condition with that of foreign colonists, and they would soon confess, not without gratitude towards the mother country, both their real felicity, and the futility of their complaints.

But all these and other considerations that were alleged by England, had not the effect to satisfy the Americans, and many discontents remained. The French, animated by the spirit of rivalry, which has so long existed between their nation and the British, neglected no means of inflaming the wounds which the Americans had received, or thought they had received, from their fellow citizens in England. The flourishing state of the English colonies, was a spectacle which the French had long been unable to observe with indifference. They had at first the design of establishing others for themselves, in some part of this immense continent, hoping to reap from them the same benefits which the English derived from theirs; and to be able, at length, to give another direction to the commerce of America, and of Europe. They intended, by good laws, or by the employment of their arms, to repair the disadvantages of soil and of climate, observable in the countries which had fallen to their share. But the French government being more inclined for arms than for commerce, and the nation itself having a natural bias much stronger in favor of the one than towards the other of these professions, their resolutions were soon taken accordingly. And as their character, also, disposes them to form vast designs, and renders them impatient to enjoy without delay, they began immediately to fortify themselves, and to enlarge their limits. Bastions, redoubts, arsenals, and magazines, were established at every point, and in a short time a line of French posts was seen to extend from one extremity of the continent to the other; but military power can neither supply population or commerce, nor develop the advantages of either. These fortresses, these arms, these garrisons, occupied