

entered the service of France, in order to defend their brothers and their friends, knew only the treaties and the laws of the United States, no article of which imposes on them the painful injunction of abandoning us in the midst of the dangers which surround us.

It is then evident, Sir, that these armaments cannot be matter of offence in the citizens of the United States; and that those who are on board of our vessels have renounced the immediate protection of their country, on taking part with us.

It is necessary however to examine whether the French houses of Charleston might arm the vessels which belonged to them. I submitted this question to the Governor of South-Carolina, before the delivery of the letters of marque to our privateers. I reminded him that liberty consisted in doing what the laws did not prohibit, that I believed no law existed which could deprive the French citizens in the ports of the United States, of the privilege of putting their vessels in a state of defence, of taking in time of war new commissions, and of serving their country by causing them to cruize out of the United States, on the vessels of their enemy.—Nor indeed were there any which gave to the government the right of submitting the particular operations of merchants to a state inquiry, and that it appeared to me that it could neither authorize nor hinder the said armaments. His opinion appeared to correspond with mine, and our vessels put to sea in spite of all the intrigues which the partizans of England put into action to oppose it.

This is the truth, Sir, this is the conduct, I dare to call it respectable, which I have followed, and I know too well the equitable sentiments of the federal government not to deliver myself to the pleasing hope of seeing it *return* from the first impressions which the reports of the Minister of England appear to have made on it.

The last point which remains to be spoken of, Sir, is relative to the capture of the English ship *Grange*, by the *Embulcade* frigate.

The learned conclusions of the Attorney-General of the United States, and the deliberations of the American government, have been on this subject the rule of my conduct. I have caused the prize to be given up; and although of considerable value, my brave brethren, the seamen of the *Embulcade* have readily concurred in a measure, which I represented to them, as a proper mean to convince the American government, of our deference and of our friendship.

The French republicans, Sir, know the duties which nations owe to one another: enlightened on the rights of man, they have just ideas of the general laws of society comprised under the common denomination of the *law of nations*, (*droit d'gens*) informed with respect to the interests of their country, they know how to distinguish its enemies and its friends, and you may assure the American government, that collectively and individually, they will seize every occasion of shewing to the sovereign people of the United States, their respect for their laws, and their sincere desire to maintain with them the most perfect harmony.

G E N E T.

PHILADELPHIA, 5th June, 1793.

Mr. Jefferson, Secretary of State, to Mr. Genet, Minister Plenipotentiary of France.

S I R,

IN my letter of May 15th, to M. de Ternant, your predecessor, after stating the answers which had been given to the several memorials of the British minister, of May 8th, it was observed that a part remained still unanswered, of that which respected the fitting out armed vessels in Charleston, to cruize against nations with whom we were at peace.

In a conversation which I had afterwards the honor of holding with you, I observed that one of those armed vessels, the *Citoyen Genet*, had come into this port with a prize, that the President had thereupon, taken the case into further consid-

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