

ed, if at all, in a hundred centuries, was deemed too puerile to be credited, and too distant to be dreaded.

The Revolutionary war gave the first substantial proof that materials for all the purposes of self-government existed in America. In proportion as the genius and resources of the inhabitants were developed, in the same degree did they find advocates in different parts of the world, who either saw with pleasure the successful prospect which opened itself to the people of the United States, (late British colonies,) secretly encouraged and relieved them, or openly supported and assisted them. The happy termination of this contest led to the belief, that the theories of political prophets were not only probable, but their consummation less distant than had been hitherto supposed.

The United States, having by the treaty of peace of 1783, become a nation by the consent of all other nations, had as if to begin the world, without any other capital than the virtue of the citizens, and without security against foreign aggression, except what could be drawn from their own courage and patriotism.

As yet their population was little more than three millions of inhabitants; the want of a well consolidated confederation rendered the government weak; and the many incidents and difficulties attending the attempt to reconcile various interests with a general principle, increased this difficulty. The speculations as to the future des-