

ought to found the basis of all their proceedings on the interest or power of their neighbours; and that that which departs from these maxims will be accused of weakness or pusillanimity.

Spain, weak in Europe, and without force or consideration in America, neither knows how to make herself feared or respected. It requires a more vigorous arm to keep the keys of a barrier, on which depends the invasion of this part of the continent, and consequently the independence of the colonies, as soon as they shall find neighbours powerful enough to protect them, and sufficiently industrious to supply their wants.

In vain it is advanced that the Americans are not a warlike nation; that being occupied in agriculture and commerce, they do not think on aggrandizement; that the form of their government is opposite to all projects of conquest; and lastly, that it is their interest to live in the most perfect harmony with the powers of Europe. I reply, they are not warlike, because they have not a superabundance of men; and that if the system of the government appears at the moment opposite to all aggrandizement, it is not less prudent to provide against the changes which may happen in its policy; and from the revolutions which threaten America, a new system may arise, which will make them occupy a rank in the political balance of the world, which they have not hitherto done.

Another, no less important consideration for France, is, the necessity of a large colony, to which she might send the overplus of her population. All well-governed nations among whom commerce and the arts have flourished, soon obtain a superabundant population, which not finding a sufficient subsistence in their own country, must emigrate in search of new settlements.

The Romans had numerous colonies; the Greeks also in their prosperity founded many. The people of the north, too numerous, invaded the south; and in times less remote we have seen all the great powers of Europe fill countries, of immense extent, and which before had been deserts, without any sensible decrease of their population. Thus Holland has carried her industry to the two Indies, where she possesses large colonies; and England, the least populous state in Europe, has created new kingdoms, which contain more subjects than herself. France alone is deprived of this resource. No part in the world seems better suited for this purpose than Louisiana, where every species of industry cannot fail of success.

It is no longer doubted that the new continent will at some future period be independent of the old. The lands are too

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