

treatment of the loyalists and the slowness in paying pre-war debts. The Americans objected to the retention of the frontier forts and charged that the Indians of the West and North were being incited to make war. President Washington felt that all the blame could not be charged to one side. "It was impolitic and unfortunate, if not unjust, in these States," he wrote to a member of Congress, "to pass laws which by fair construction might be considered as infractions of the treaty of peace. . . . Had we observed good faith and the Western posts had been withheld from us by Great Britain, we might have appealed to God and man for justice." Washington sounded the British authorities through a friend* about the setting up of a regular channel of diplomatic intercourse, so, in August, 1791, Hammond was appointed to Philadelphia, which at that time was the seat of the federal capital. Hammond was only twenty-eight years old. Attached to the Paris mission during the negotiations of the treaty, he had afterwards seen service at Vienna, Madrid, and other European capitals. He appears to have been equal to his opportunities and was popular socially. He married Miss Allen of Philadelphia, a fact which still further qualified him for residence in the United States. He was able to ward off misunderstandings when war broke out between France and England, and during his term of office Jay's Treaty, regulating commerce with the West Indies, was successfully negotiated. The friendly attitude of President Washington aided his efforts. Hammond returned to London in 1795 and became Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He survived his American experiences by more than half a century. He and his son, Lord Hammond, were influential in the British foreign office for many years.

Sir Robert Liston, the second Minister, was a Scotsman of good education and ample diplomatic experience. He conducted the business of his post with discretion and maintained a close

correspondence with the governors of Canada. A proposal was made to him to countenance an attack upon New Orleans, then a possession of Spain. To this scheme, as likely to be regarded with hostility by the Americans, he turned a deaf ear. When he left Washington in 1802, the relations between the two countries were, on the whole, satisfactory, although they were soon to be strained to the breaking point. It is doubtful if any British Minister at this period could have done much to ward off the impending calamity of war. England was fighting for life and liberty against Napoleon and it was the desire of Napoleon to set England and America by the ears. If he failed in his greater designs, he certainly succeeded in this one. Liston was followed at Washington by Anthony Merry. His were not the qualities required at this juncture. Jefferson was President and preferred an understanding with France to an alliance with England. There was a disposition to inflict social slights upon Merry and his wife. Thomas Moore, the poet, who visited them, confirms the story, and Merry "the gentlest of diplomatists", as he has been described, found himself in a situation with which he could not cope.

It is a ludicrous chapter in diplomacy. Jefferson adhered to simplicity in social manners. This included absence of formality and untidiness in dress. Merry wrote home to his Government: "I, in my official costume, found myself, at the hour of reception he had himself appointed, introduced to a man as the President of the United States, not merely in an undress, but actually standing in slippers down at the heels, and both pantaloons, coat, and underclothes indicative of utter slovenliness and indifference to appearances, and in a state of negligence actually studied." Merry erred in supposing that it was a prearranged affront to the King's minister. There is ample American testimony that the President took no pains with his attire. He was especially ad-

* Gouverneur Morris.