

the materials, and the skill of the workmen, render them the best in the world.

Without foretelling its future grandeur, I shall only observe, the whole town is in motion: the workshops resound with the noise of the workmen; ships constantly arrive from all parts of the world: indeed, the opulence of this rising state cannot better be described than by comparing it with ancient Tyre, which all contemporary authors have represented as the queen of commerce, and the sovereign of the seas.

I should have viewed with greater pleasure the prosperity of this beautiful city, if my mind, yet lamenting the situation of France, had not been obliged to draw the sad comparison. The shattered condition of our ships, with which the sea was formerly covered, but which are now rotting in our ports; the misery of our commercial cities, compared with the opulence of this; every thing, in short, made me ardently desire peace, which alone can restore wealth and prosperity to France.

In New York, as in most other provinces of the United States, the laws are weak, and are often made the source of great abuse. This assertion is confirmed by the great number of bankruptcies which occur every day; more from knavery than the consequence of real misfortune. As commerce increases, those laws will be rendered more efficacious. The state of New York has already adopted some useful regulations, and the government will stop only at that point where too great severity would oppose the good of society and its true interests.

In a country where population consists of people who have emigrated from different nations, different modes of religion must be tolerated; in the United States all are equally protected by the government. Each sect has a separate place of worship, in which its followers assemble without dread of molestation. Fifty-three christian sects are reckoned in the United States. New ones are daily springing up, and it is impossible to say where the number will stop.

The greater part of the inhabitants of New York profess the reformed religion. A Frenchman cannot, without having been a witness, form an idea of the decorum which reigns in their churches. To talk or laugh in them would be a want of respect, which, if it produced the least disturbance, becomes punishable. Among all the sects (the Jews excepted) Sunday is particularly devoted to the offices of religion. On that day all business is suspended, and all public amusements forbidden. Every person only goes from home to the house of prayer, three times a day, except the Roman catholics, who have only two services. The Methodists, Universalists, and others, being fewer here than at