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FOR THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

THE NEW WORLD.
No. XIII.

An enquiry into the National Character of the People of the United States of America.

The amalgamating influence of the course and condition of things in America, is manifested by the actual character of the Hebrew nation, residing among us. This circumstance will be found to prove, that however different the sources from which our population is extracted, the powerful influences upon the hearts, understandings and habits of all who reside here, occasion them to acquire the same characteristics. The mutual animosities subsisting in Europe between christians and Jews, and between Jews and Mahometans, do not exist at this time in America. The Hebrew, left to the theocratical power which governs the conscience of man, has no cause to hate or to fear his christian neighbor, who does him no injury in mind, body or estate. When a Mahometan Sultan, in times not very remote, has caused a procession in Constantinople, at every mile of which a Jew was ordered to be slain, the Hebrews among us have thanked our common Father in Heaven, that they enjoy peace and the rights of conscience in this land. When they found that American christians thus extended humanity and love to every neighbor, they ceased to despise christians as hypocritical professors of a mild and tender religion, which, in too many other countries, was turned into persecution and cruelty. The inconsistencies of proclaiming peace in the name of Jesus Christ, when the tortured Jew could find no peace, and of converting the simplicity and self-denying character of christianity into pomp, voluptuousness and a thirst of power they did not find here. They unite, therefore, with us, as men, as citizens, as patriots, in the love of God, our common creator, differing in their private minds inasmuch as they believe the Messiah is yet to come. Most reverently submitting the consciences of these our fellow creatures to the divine power, which can command the light to shine upon them, it is sufficient for our enquiry to ascertain that the Hebrews from England, Italy, Spain, Germany and Portugal, are assimilated to us in many essential particulars, and that their minds are amalgamated with those of the other united Americans, in the love of religious and civil liberty, humanity, virtue and knowledge. As a description of men, the Hebrew citizens were generally attached to the revolution of the United States, and they are at this time as friendly as any other church to the principles of our free constitutions.

It may be correctly affirmed, that no people, equally civilised, has derived the principles and structure of its various institutions in so great a degree from its own will, mind and power, as the united Americans. We are more original than any others in our polity and economy. Nor has any people varied so much from systems prevalent in the old world, as we have done in the two centuries of our existence. The world has surely passed, in its freest parts, to greater despotism, and we have progressed to greater freedom. Liberty has been won by the sword, and confirmed by the councils of the United States. If we reflect upon the civil constitutions of Great Britain, and upon her internal economy at the æra of our separation, it will be found that our country has altered both, more than Great Britain. As the changes in America result from the proceedings of seventeen subordinate and one general legislature, the uniformity of the national character will be manifested to be much greater than has heretofore appeared to superficial observers.

In this country, one language is spoken by all the white people, with a very small exception in a single state, among persons who have been for a long time settled inhabitants. These have always, in their own numerous gazettes, the fullest information of the business, politics and affairs of the United States. In the country, from which we have been separated, four several languages are spoken by numbers of persons in the four grand divisions. In three of those languages, no publications respecting the affairs of the country are ever made. Three religions bear a forcible sway by the operation of law or of natural strength. The colonies are remote from the metropolitan state, and widely separated from each other by situation, habits and interests. These observations are not made with an invidious design, but, if nations, claiming *national character*, are, in truth, so diversified by natural and habitual circumstances, it may be fairly presumed, that we also, less diversified, may really possess national character.

It is well known that the versatile character of man is quickly formed and altered by the influence of natural or moral causes. It is therefore important, that general principles are so universally established, after mature consideration, in the United States, as to produce universal effects; and thus too upon aliens as well as natives. The laws are not only to govern, but to protect the orderly. This coincides with the interests and feelings of the many, whether foreign or American. They all rejoice in the circumstance, because it gratifies their self-love and promotes their interests. No men would more earnestly oppose an inquisition, a conscription, an impressment, a picketting, a poll tax, a *gabelle*, a *corvee*, the torture, or an established church in America, than those, who have fled from their native homes to enjoy our exemptions from those evils. This description of men might be expected to endure every hardship and suffer all the severities of battle and warfare, before they would relinquish our protecting constitutions.

The form and nature of our country, without conquered annexations, or dependent colonies, occasions the *condition* of the Americans to exhibit a perfect civil uniformity, unknown in any other maritime empire, and highly influential upon the uniformity of the national character. The white and free black inhabitants are all included in this observation, for it is a truth, that the free blacks regularly adopt and display the institutions, apparel, furniture and habits of the whites. They are generally Episcopalians, Friends, Calvanists and Methodists, in those places where all the christian sects are within their free observation. It would be very difficult to adopt a civil constitution, by which the white inhabitants of the West Indian, South American, and East Indian colonies of the European states, could fully partake in their respective national governments. Yet it is found not only easy in this country, but really necessary to the just, convenient, and uniform operation of our principles and systems. Man is contemplated by our laws and by our political science, as an intelligent creation of the divine power. It is known that the highest intellect of the red and black races of men is sensibly better than that of the feeblest of the whites. As we cannot discriminate *as to rights* among the whites by the principle of intellect, the same rule presses itself upon our regard with respect to the free people of the red and black races. Divine Providence, which has ordained the existence of the colored races of men, has ordained their introduction into our political family, and we believe and know that the same supreme authority has ordained humanity and justice among his intelligent and responsible creatures. Our institutions therefore, consider all men alike. We endeavor with care, pains and expence to civilize the red people, and to persuade them to embrace our political economy, our civil institutions, our morals and our religion; or in other words, to conform to our national plan of public and private happiness. So of the blacks, in certain degrees, times and places, though it is true and manifest that their numbers and their condition, with many attending circumstances, render the operations of justice, humanity, and an enlightened policy towards them, dangerous and costly, and consequently very gradual, deliberate and arduous. Their natural condition is a dispensation of the divine hand, and when it shall appear, in a future time, that the humanity of the white people has raised the blacks from their African condition, which is little higher than the next inferior class of beings, to the knowledge and practice of the salutary arts of civilization, morals and religion, the meritorious choice of good on the part of the whites, will be thereby humbly manifested to the universal father of men.

The comparative wisdom and virtue of the large descriptions of men in various nations, who hold the numerous bodies of slaves, which exist within their respective countries, is a fair subject of consideration, and it is believed that it cannot be justly made to appear to the disadvantage of those of North America. The citizens of our slave states, and the Northern slave holders have consented to and co-operated in the measures of this country for the arrestation and abolition of the slave trade. They have softened the rigor of ancient slave laws; they have improved the apparel, food, habitations, and general treatment of the black people. In most of those states and districts, where safety permits the measures, they have adopted a system for the gradual abolition of slavery, and entered upon the operation by numerous emancipations, and by the substitution of a contracted service for a term of years, in lieu of personal and hereditary slavery. Did the laws of Greece or Rome go further? Do those of the modern empires of Europe go so far, in respect to their white cerfs or African slaves?

When it is considered with what ease and promptitude doctrines so new as those of *the Newtonian* philosophy were adopted in all free countries, and even in others, though they were the fruit of the wisdom and learning of a single mind, it will not be considered as improbable, that the political principles of the North Americans, and their manifest beneficence to the many, should as easily and promptly become objects of adoption and attachment to those persons who arrive among us from foreign climes. These acceptable principles occasion all men, who have not opposing interests or prejudices, to rally around them, to partake of their nature and spirit, and thus exhibit the same characteristics. Republican principles, or in other words, their own just rights and interests must be acceptable to the unbiassed mass of every community, and this must occasion them, where it is safe and lawful, to be nationally embraced and exhibited. Many, nay, all may enjoy these personal rights. A few only can enjoy the advantages of aristocracy. The citizens of this country therefore, as well naturalised as native, easily and quickly assimilate themselves in a cautious opposition to the power of a few, and an open legitimate maintenance of the rights of the whole of the members of the community.

COLUMBIANUS.

(The next number will close these sketches of our National Character.)

Downing, street, Sept. 4.

Dispatches, of which the following are copies, were yesterday morning received at the office of Lord Castlereagh, one of his majesty's principal Secretaries of State, from Lieut. General Sir J. Stuart, dated Ischia, 5th and 9th July last,

Ischia, July 5 1809.

My Lord—In my dispatches to your Lordship of the 9th ult. from Milazzo, I did myself the honor to acquaint you with a project which I had formed, in concert with Rear Admiral Martin, to make such a movement as, although it should produce no issue of achievement to ourselves, might still operate a diversion in favor of our Austrian allies, under the heavy pressure of reverse with which we had learned, at the period, they were bravely but unequally struggling.

The first measure that suggested itself to our contemplation was, a menace upon the kingdom and the capital of Naples, and the army as within detailed being embarked, we sailed under convoy of his majesty's ships Canopus, Spartiate, Warrior, and some frigates and smaller vessels, on the 11th of last month, leaving orders to the division of his Sicilian majesty's troops, which had been placed under my conduct, and were waiting my instructions at Palermo, under the command of Lieut. General de Bourcard, to proceed to a given rendezvous.—His royal highness Prince Leopold, I found at our subsequent junction, had embarked with this division.

Our appearance on the coast of Calabria which we reached on the morning of the 13th, had the effect of inducing the body of the enemy stationed in that province to abandon, for the purposes of immediate concentration, the greater part of their posts along the shore, when those upon the line opposite Messina were seized and disarmed by a corps under Lieut. Col. Smith, who had been detached from the fleet immediately after our sailing from Milazzo with provisionary orders for that purpose.

Major Gen. Mackenzie, who had sailed with me, as designed to bear a part in this expedition, returned also, at my request, about this period, for the general superintendance of these services, as well as to hold the general command in Sicily, which becomes a charge so important during the term of our present operations.

On the 24th ult. the advanced division of the British and Sicilian fleet namely, that which contained the British troops, anchored off Cape Miseno, in the vicinity of Baia, when our preparations were immediately made for a debarkation upon the island of Ischia; and the necessary arrangements and dispositions of boats being intrusted by the Admiral to Sir Francis Laforey, a descent was forced on the following morning by the troops named in the margin,* commanded by Major Gen. McFarlane, under the immediate fire of his majesty's ships Warrior and Success, aided by the British and Sicilian gun-boats, in the face of a formidable chain of batteries with which every accessible part of the shore was perfectly fortified. These were turned & successively abandoned as our troops gained their footing. About 250 or 300 men of the 1st legere, in the first instance fell into our hands. Gen Colonna, who commanded, retired with his principal force into the Castle, where he rejected a summons from Major Gen. MacFarlane, and held out until the 30th ult. when a breaching battery having been erected against his works, he surrendered upon terms of capitulation.

As it was conjectured by the Admiral and myself that the success and promptitude with which the landing upon Ischia was effected, might probably operate an influence upon the adjacent garrison of Procida, a summons was immediately sent to the commander thereof, who, in the course of the day, submitted to our proposed terms; an event which contributed most fortunately to the almost entire capture or destruction of a large flotilla of about forty heavy gun boats, which attempted their passage during the night & following morning to Naples from Gaeta, and expected to find protection as well as co-operation, under the artillery of the fortress in their passage through the the narrow streight that separates the island and the Main.

This important service was executed by Capt. Staines, of his majesty's ship Cyane, assisted by the Espoir sloop, and the British and Sicilian gun-boats. It is with regret I add, that in a subsequent intrepid attack upon the frigates and corvettes of the enemy in the Bay, the above gallant officer has received a wound which must for some time deprive the service of his assistance.

The amount of prisoners who have fallen into our hands already exceed 1500 regular troops, exclusive of their killed and wounded, both of military & marines, in different partial encounters, which we have reason to think is considerable. Among the prisoners are a general of brigade, two colonels and upwards of 70 officers of progressive ranks. Nearly 100 pieces of ordnance, with their corresponding stores, have also become our capture.

It is with much greater satisfaction, however, my Lord, than any that can be derived from these local or momentary advantages, that I contemplate our success in the material and important object of diversion for which this expedition was designed. A considerable body of troops which had been recently detached from Naples as a reinforcement to the army in Upper Italy, as well as almost the whole of the troops which had been sent into the Roman States to aid the late usurpation of Papal dominions, were precipitately recalled on our first appearance on the coast; and I venture to hope, that the check which has been operated, and which I shall endeavor to preserve, will have already, though remotely, contributed to support the efforts of our brave allies.

The preponderating regular force which the enemy has now assembled on the contiguity of Naples, aided by a large body of national guards, preclude the hope at this moment of any attack upon the capital. But our footing upon these healthy Islands (which were essentially necessary to us as a temporary lodgment as well as depot) in affording us the earliest means of information, is also a position from which we can profit from circumstances or can move with facility and promptitude to ulterior objects; while our enemy, who are observing us from the unhealthy plains of Baia, must be kept on the alert by the uncertainty of our operations, and harrassed by the necessity of corresponding with our every movement.

A flotilla of gun-boats, which I found it necessary to fit out at Messina to aid the army in that narrow Streight under the direction of capt. Reade, of the quarter-master general's department, has acquired the approbation of the admiral by their conduct upon this service. Captain Cameron of the 21st regiment who commanded a division of these boats is unfortunately among the few who have fallen.

The harmony and perfect concert that have subsisted between the naval and military branches upon this duty, and between his majesty's forces and those of his Sicilian majesty; the great disposition to concurrence and support which I have received from Lieut. Gen. Ld. Forbes, and the other general officers, the able arrangements of the adjutant general and the quarter-master general's departments under the major general Campbell and lieut. col. Bunbury, as well as those of the ordnance branches under lieut. colonels Bryce and Lemoine; the providence of the commissariat and medical departments under Mr. Burgman and Dr. Franklin; and the zeal, readiness and good will of the army throughout, are the means by which I am prepared to avail myself of opportunities to prosecute further a service, the plans and progress hitherto of which I humbly hope will meet his majesty's most gracious approbation.

I have the honor to be, &c.
(Signed)

I. STUART.

[Here follows the articles of Capitulation of Ischia and Procida, &c.]

Ischia, July 9.

My Lord,

In in my dispatch of the 5th instant, I had the honor of stating to your Lordship, that lieutentant col. Smith had been detached after our sailing from Milazzo, with the 10th regiment and Chasseurs Britanniquis, which were to be joined at the Faro by the 21st regiment, with orders to occupy and disarm the posts upon the Streights opposite to Messina, upon the first appearance of our armament upon the coast of Calabria.

An attempt to reduce the castle of Scylla was attended, in the first instance, with disappointment, from the sudden re-appearance of a large preponderating force of the enemy, which constrained lieutenant colonel Smith to raise the seige, and embark for Messina; a measure which was effected, I am happy to say on the 20th ult. without the smallest loss, but that of his besieging train, which necessarily became a sacrifice. It fortunately, however, has proved only a sacrifice of the moment. The official report from maj. gen. M'Kenzie states to me, that on the night of 2d instant, the enemy, from some sudden panic, retreated again from the coast, having previously blown up the works of Scylla, and not only left us again our captured stores, but an immense quantity of ordnance and stores of their own, which had been placed in depot. Major general M'Kenzie mentions to me in particular, that 30 pieces of brass cannon had been thrown into the sea, from whence, however there could be no difficulty in raising them, the water being extremely shallow.

These stores had been progressively assembling, I am informed, by means of coasting navigation, for a considerable time past, as preparatory to the long menaced, and I believe really intended invasion of the Kingdom of Sicily.