

CHAPTER XVII.

NEW ROCHELLE AND THE BONNEVILLES.

THE Bonneviles, with whom Paine had resided in Paris, were completely impoverished after his departure. They resolved to follow Paine to America, depending on his promise of aid should they do so. Foreseeing perils in France, Nicolas, unable himself to leave at once, hurried off his wife and children—Benjamin, Thomas, and Louis. Madame Bonneville would appear to have arrived in August, 1803. I infer this because Paine writes, September 23d, to Jefferson from Stonington, Connecticut; and later letters show that he had been in New York, and afterwards placed Thomas Paine Bonneville with the Rev. Mr. Foster (Universalist) of Stonington for education. Madame Bonneville was placed in his house at Bordentown, where she was to teach French.

At New York, Paine found both religious and political parties sharply divided over him. At Lovett's Hotel, where he stopped, a large dinner was given him, March 18th, seventy being present. One of the active promoters of this dinner was James Cheetham, editor of the *American Citizen*, who, after seriously injuring Paine by his patronage, became his malignant enemy.

In the summer of 1803 the political atmosphere was in a tempestuous condition, owing to the widespread accusation that Aaron Burr had intrigued with the Federalists against Jefferson to gain the presidency. There was a Society in New York called "Republican Greens," who, on Independence Day, had for a toast "Thomas Paine, the Man of the People," and who seem to have had a piece of music called the "Rights of Man." Paine was also apparently the hero of that day at White Plains, where a vast crowd assembled, "over 1,000," among the toasts being: "Thomas Paine—the bold advocate of rational liberty—the People's friend." He probably reached New York again in August. A letter for "Thomas Payne" is in the advertised Letter-list of August 6th, and in the *American Citizen* (August 9th) are printed (and misprinted) "Lines, extempore, by Thomas Paine, July, 1803."¹

¹ "Quick as the lightning's vivid flash
The poet's eye o'er Europe rolls ;
Sees battles rage, hears tempests crash,
And dims at horror's threatening scowls.

"Mark ambition's ruthless king,
With crimsoned banners scathe the globe ;
While trailing after conquest's wing,
Man's festering wounds his demons probe.

"Palléd with streams of reeking gore
That stain the proud imperial day,
He turns to view the western shore,
Where freedom holds her boundless sway.

"'T is here her sage triumphant sways
An empire in the people's love ;
'T is here the sovereign will obeys
No king but Him who rules above."

The verses, crudely expressing the contrast between President Jefferson and King George—or Napoleon, it is not clear which,—sufficiently show that Paine's genius was not extempore. His reputation as a patriotic minstrel was high; his "Hail, great Republic," to the tune of "Rule Britannia," was the established Fourth-of-July song, and it was even sung at the dinner of the American consul in London (Erving) March 4, 1803, the anniversary of Jefferson's election. Possibly the extempore lines were sung on some Fourth-of-July occasion. I find "Thomas Paine" and the "Rights of Man" favorite toasts at republican celebrations in Virginia also at this time. In New York we may discover Paine's coming and going by rancorous paragraphs concerning him in the *Evening Post*.¹ Perhaps the most malignant wrong done Paine in this paper was the adoption of his signature, "Common Sense," by one of its contributors!

¹ On July 12th the *Evening Post* (edited by William Coleman) tries to unite republicanism and infidelity by stating that Part I. of the "Age of Reason" was sent in MS. to Mr. Fellows of New York, and in the following year Part II. was gratuitously distributed "from what is now the office of the Aurora." On September 24th that paper publishes a poem about Paine, ending:

" And having spent a lengthy life in evil,
Return again unto thy parent Devil !"

Another paragraph says that Franklin hired Paine in London to come to America and write in favor of the Revolution,—a remarkable example of federalist heredity from "Toryism." On September 27th the paper prints a letter purporting to have been found by a waiter in Lovett's Hotel after Paine's departure,—a long letter to Paine, by some red-revolutionary friend, of course gloating over the exquisite horrors filling Europe in consequence of the "Rights of Man." The pretended letter is dated "Jan. 12, 1803," and signed "J. Oldney." The paper's correspondent pretends to have found out Oldney, and conversed with him. No doubt many simple people believed the whole thing genuine.

The most learned physician in New York, Dr. Nicholas Romaine, invited Paine to dinner, where he was met by John Pintard, and other eminent citizens. Pintard said to Paine: "I have read and re-read your 'Age of Reason,' and any doubts which I before entertained of the truth of revelation have been removed by your logic. Yes, sir, your very arguments against Christianity have convinced me of its truth." "Well then," answered Paine, "I may return to my couch to-night with the consolation that I have made at least one Christian."¹ This authentic anecdote is significant. John Pintard, thus outdone by Paine in politeness, founded the Tammany Society, and organized the democratic party. When the "Rights of Man" appeared, the book and its author were the main toasts of the Tammany celebrations; but it was not so after the "Age of Reason" had appeared. For John Pintard was all his life a devotee of Dutch Reformed orthodoxy. Tammany, having begun with the populace, had by this time got up somewhat in society. As a rule the "gentry" were Federalists, though they kept a mob in their back yard to fly at the democrats on occasion. But with Jefferson in the presidential chair, and Clinton vice-president, Tammany was in power. To hold this power Tammany had to court the clergy. So there was no toast to Paine in the Wigwam of 1803.²

President Jefferson was very anxious about the constitutional points involved in his purchase

¹ Dr. Francis' "Old New York," p. 140.

² *The New York Daily Advertiser* published the whole of Part I. of the

of Louisiana, and solicited Paine's views on the whole subject. Paine wrote to him extended communications, among which was the letter of September 23d, from Stonington. The interest of the subject is now hardly sufficient to warrant publication of the whole of this letter, which, however, possesses much interest.

“Your two favours of the 10 and 18 ult. reached me at this place on the 14th inst. ; also one from Mr. Madison. I do not suppose that the framers of the Constitution thought anything about the acquisition of new territory, and even if they did it was prudent to say nothing about it, as it might have suggested to foreign Nations the idea that we contemplated foreign conquest. It appears to me to be one of those cases with which the Constitution had nothing to do, and which can be judged of only by the circumstances of the times when such a case shall occur. The Constitution could not foresee that Spain would cede Louisiana to France or to England, and therefore it could not determine what our conduct should be in consequence of such an event. The cession makes no alteration in the Constitution ; it only extends the principles of it over a larger territory, and this certainly is within the morality of the Constitution, and not contrary to, nor beyond, the expression or intention of any of its articles Were a question to arise it would apply, not to the Cession, because it violates no article of the Constitution, but to Ross and Morris's motion. The Constitution empowers Congress

“Rights of Man” in 1791 (May 6-27), the editor being then John Pintard. At the end of the publication a poetical tribute to Paine was printed. Four of the lines run :

“ Rous'd by the reason of his manly page,
Once more shall Paine a listening world engage ;
From reason's source a bold reform he brings,
By raising up mankind he pulls down kings.”

At the great celebration (October 12, 1792) of the third Centenary of the discovery of America, by the sons of St. Tammany, New York, the first man toasted after Columbus was Paine, and next to Paine “The Rights of Man.” They were also extolled in an ode composed for the occasion, and sung.

to *declare* war, but to make war without declaring it is anti-constitutional. It is like attacking an unarmed man in the dark. There is also another reason why no such question should arise. The english Government is but in a tottering condition and if Bonaparte succeeds, that Government will break up. In that case it is not improbable we may obtain Canada, and I think that Bermuda ought to belong to the United States. In its present condition it is a nest for piratical privateers. This is not a subject to be spoken of, but it may be proper to have it in mind.

“The latest news we have from Europe in this place is the insurrection in Dublin. It is a disheartening circumstance to the english Government, as they are now putting arms into the hands of people who but a few weeks before they would have hung had they found a pike in their possession. I think the probability is in favour of the descent [on England by Bonaparte] . . .

“I shall be employed the ensuing Winter in cutting two or three thousand Cords of Wood on my farm at New Rochelle for the New York market distant twenty miles by water. The Wood is worth $3\frac{1}{2}$ dollars per load as it stands. This will furnish me with ready money, and I shall then be ready for whatever may present itself of most importance next spring. I had intended to build myself a house to my own taste, and a workshop for my mechanical operations, and make a collection, as authors say, of my works, which with what I have in manuscript will make four, or five octavo volumes, and publish them by subscription, but the prospects that are now opening with respect to England hold me in suspence.

“It has been customary in a President’s discourse to say something about religion. I offer you a thought on this subject. The word, religion, used as a word *en masse* has no application to a country like America. In catholic countries it would mean exclusively the religion of the romish church ; with the Jews, the jewish religion ; in England, the protestant religion or in the sense of the english church, the established religion ; with the Deists it would mean Deism ; with the Turks, Mahometism &c., &c., As well as I recollect it is *Lego, Relego, Relegio, Religion*, that is say, tied or bound by an oath

or obligation. The french use the word properly ; when a woman enters a convent, she is called a novitiate ; when she takes the oath, she is a *religieuse*, that is, she is bound by an oath. Now all that we have to do, as a Government with the word religion, in this country, is with the civil rights of it, and not at all with its *creeds*. Instead therefore of using the word religion, as a word en masse, as if it meant a creed, it would be better to speak only of its civil rights ; *that all denominations of religion are equally protected, that none are dominant, none inferior, that the rights of conscience are equal to every denomination and to every individual and that it is the duty of Government to preserve this equality of conscientious rights.* A man cannot be called a hypocrite for defending the civil rights of religion, but he may be suspected of insincerity in defending its creeds.

“I suppose you will find it proper to take notice of the impressment of American seamen by the Captains of British vessels, and procure a list of such captains and report them to their government. This pretence of searching for british seamen is a new pretence for visiting and searching American vessels. . . .

“I am passing some time at this place at the house of a friend till the wood cutting time comes on, and I shall engage some cutters here and then return to New Rochelle. I wrote to Mr. Madison concerning the report that the british Government had cautioned ours not to pay the purchase money for Louisiana, as they intended to take it for themselves. I have received his [negative] answer, and I pray you make him my compliments.

“We are still afflicted with the yellow fever, and the Doctors are disputing whether it is an imported or a domestic disease. Would it not be a good measure to prohibit the arrival of all vessels from the West Indies from the last of June to the middle of October. If this was done this session of Congress, and we escaped the fever next summer, we should always know how to escape it. I question if performing quarantine is a sufficient guard. The disease may be in the cargo, especially that part which is barrellled up, and not in the persons on board, and when that cargo is opened on our wharfs, the hot steaming air in contact with the ground imbibes the infection. I can conceive that infected air can be barrellled up, not in a hogshead

of rum, nor perhaps sucre, but in a barrel of coffee. I am badly off in this place for pen and Ink, and short of paper. I heard yesterday from Boston that our old friend S. Adams was at the point of death. Accept my best wishes."

When Madame Bonneville left France it was understood that her husband would soon follow. but he did not come, nor was any letter received from him. This was probably the most important allusion in a letter of Paine, dated New York, March 1, 1804, to "Citizen Skipwith, Agent Commercial d'Amerique, Paris."

"DEAR FRIEND—I have just a moment to write you a line by a friend who is on the point of sailing for Bordeaux. The Republican interest is now compleatly triumphant. The change within this last year has been great. We have now 14 States out of 17,—N. Hampshire, Mass. and Connecticut stand out. I much question if any person will be started against Mr. Jefferson. Burr is rejected for the vice-presidency ; he is now putting up for Governor of N. York. Mr. Clinton will be run for vice-president. Morgan Lewis, Chief Justice of the State of N. Y. is the Republican candidate for Governor of that State.

"I have not received a line from Paris, except a letter from Este, since I left it. We have now been nearly 80 days without news from Europe. What is Barlow about? I have not heard anything from him except that he is *always* coming. What is Bonneville about? Not a line has been received from him. Respectful compliments to Mr. Livingston and family. Yours in friendship."

Madame Bonneville, unable to speak English, found Bordentown dull, and soon turned up in New York. She ordered rooms in Wilburn's boarding-house, where Paine was lodging, and the author found the situation rather complicated. The family was absolutely without means of their

own, and Paine, who had given them a comfortable home at Bordentown, was annoyed by their coming on to New York. Anxiety is shown in the following letter written at 16 Gold St., New York, March 24th, to "Mr. Hyer, Bordenton, N. J."

"DEAR SIR,—I received your letter by Mr. Nixon, and also a former letter, but I have been so unwell this winter with a fit of gout, tho' not so bad as I had at Bordenton about twenty years ago, that I could not write, and after I got better I got a fall on the ice in the garden where I lodge that threw me back for above a month. I was obliged to get a person to copy off the letter to the people of England, published in the Aurora, March 7, as I dictated it verbally, for all the time my complaint continued. My health and spirits were as good as ever. It was my intention to have cut a large quantity of wood for the New York market, and in that case you would have had the money directly, but this accident and the gout prevented my doing anything. I shall now have to take up some money upon it, which I shall do by the first of May to put Mrs. Bonneville into business, and I shall then discharge her bill. In the mean time I wish you to receive a quarter's rent due on the 1st of April from Mrs Richardson, at \$25 per ann., and to call on Mrs. Read for 40 or 50 dollars, or what you can get, and to give a receipt in my name. Col. Kirkbride should have discharged your bill, it was what he engaged to do. Mrs. Wharton owes for the rent of the house while she lived in it, unless Col. Kirkbride has taken it into his accounts. Samuel Hileyar owes me 84 dollars lent him in hard money. Mr. Nixon spake to me about hiring my house, but as I did not know if Mrs. Richardson intended to stay in it or quit it I could give no positive answer, but said I would write to you about it. Israel Butler also writes me about taking at the same rent as Richardson pays. I will be obliged to you to let the house as you may judge best. I shall make a visit to Bordenton in the spring, and I shall call at your house first.

"There have been several arrivals here in short passages from England. P. Porcupine, I see, is become the panegyrist of Bonaparte. You will see it in the Aurora of March 19,

and also the message of Bonaparte to the french legislature. It is a good thing.

“Mrs. Bonneville sends her compliments. She would have wrote, but she cannot yet venture to write in English. I congratulate you on your new appointment.

“Yours in friendship.”¹

Paine’s letter alluded to was printed in the *Aurora* with the following note:

“TO THE EDITOR.—As the good sense of the people in their elections has now put the affairs of America in a prosperous condition at home and abroad, there is nothing immediately important for the subject of a letter. I therefore send you a piece on another subject.”

The piece presently appeared as a pamphlet of sixteen pages with the following title: “Thomas Paine to the People of England, on the Invasion of England. Philadelphia: Printed at the Temple of Reason Press, Arch Street. 1804.” Once more the hope had risen in Paine’s breast that Napoleon was to turn liberator, and that England was to be set free. “If the invasion succeed I hope Bonaparte will remember that this war has not been provoked by the people. It is altogether the act of the government without their consent or knowledge; and though the late peace appears to have been insidious from the first, on the part of the government, it was received by the people with a sincerity of joy.” He still hopes that the English people may be able to end the trouble peacefully, by compelling Parliament to fulfil the Treaty of Amiens, naïvely informing them that “a Treaty

¹ I am indebted for this letter to the N. Y. Hist. Society, which owns the original.

ought to be fulfilled." The following passages may be quoted :

"In casting my eye over England and America, and comparing them together, the difference is very striking. The two countries were created by the same power, and peopled from the same stock. What then has caused the difference? Have those who emigrated to America improved, or those whom they left behind degenerated? . . . We see America flourishing in peace, cultivating friendship with all nations, and reducing her public debt and taxes, incurred by the revolution. On the contrary we see England almost perpetually in war, or warlike disputes, and her debt and taxes continually increasing. Could we suppose a stranger, who knew nothing of the origin of the two nations, he would from observation conclude that America was the old country, experienced and sage, and England the new, eccentric and wild. Scarcely had England drawn home her troops from America, after the revolutionary war, than she was on the point of plunging herself into a war with Holland, on account of the Stadtholder; then with Russia; then with Spain on account of the Nootka cat-skins; and actually with France to prevent her revolution. Scarcely had she made peace with France, and before she had fulfilled her own part of the Treaty, than she declared war again, to avoid fulfilling the Treaty. In her Treaty of peace with America, she engaged to evacuate the western posts within six months; but, having obtained peace, she refused to fulfil the conditions, and kept possession of the posts, and embroiled herself in an Indian war.¹ In her Treaty of peace with France, she engaged to evacuate Malta within three months; but, having obtained peace, she refused to evacuate Malta, and began a new war."

Paine points out that the failure of the French Revolution was due to "the provocative interference of foreign powers, of which Pitt was the principal and vindictive agent," and affirms the

¹ Paine's case is not quite sound at this point. The Americans had not, on their side, fulfilled the condition of paying their English debts.

success of representative government in the United States after thirty years' trial. "The people of England have now two revolutions before them,—the one as an example, the other as a warning. Their own wisdom will direct them what to choose and what to avoid; and in everything which regards their happiness, combined with the common good of mankind, I wish them honor and success."

During this summer, Paine wrote a brilliant paper on a memorial sent to Congress from the French inhabitants of Louisiana. They demanded immediate admission to equal Statehood, also the right to continue the importation of negro slaves. Paine reminds the memorialists of the "mischief caused in France by the possession of power before they understood principles." After explaining their position, and the freedom they have acquired by the merits of others, he points out their ignorance of human "rights" as shown in their guilty notion that to enslave others is among them. "Dare you put up a petition to Heaven for such a power, without fearing to be struck from the earth by its justice? Why, then, do you ask it of man against man? Do you want to renew in Louisiana the horrors of Domingo?"

This article (dated September 22d) produced great effect. John Randolph of Roanoke, in a letter to Albert Gallatin (October 14th), advises "the printing of . . . thousand copies of Tom Paine's answer to their remonstrance, and transmitting them by as many thousand troops, who can speak a language perfectly intelligible

to the people of Louisiana, whatever that of their governor may be.”

Nicolas Bonneville still giving no sign, and Madame being uneconomical in her notions of money, Paine thought it necessary—morally and financially—to let it be known that he was not responsible for her debts. When, therefore, Wilburn applied to him for her board (\$35), Paine declined to pay, and was sued. Paine pleaded *non assumpsit*, and, after gaining the case, paid Wilburn the money.

It presently turned out that the surveillance of Nicolas Bonneville did not permit him to leave France, and, as he was not permitted to resume his journal or publications, he could neither join his family nor assist them.

Paine now resolved to reside on his farm. The following note was written to Col. John Fellows. It is dated at New Rochelle, July 9th :

“FELLOW CITIZEN,—As the weather is now getting hot at New York, and the people begin to get out of town, you may as well come up here and help me settle my accounts with the man who lives on the place. You will be able to do this better than I shall, and in the mean time I can go on with my literary works, without having my mind taken off by affairs of a different kind. I have received a packet from Governor Clinton, enclosing what I wrote for. If you come up by the stage you will stop at the post-office, and they will direct you the way to the farm. It is only a pleasant walk. I send a price for the Prospect ; if the plan mentioned in it is pursued, it will open a way to enlarge and give establishment to the deistical church ; but of this and some other things we will talk when you come up, and the sooner the better. Yours in friendship.”

Paine was presently enjoying himself on his farm

at New Rochelle, and Madame Bonneville began to keep house for him.

“It is a pleasant and healthy situation [he wrote to Jefferson somewhat later], commanding a prospect always green and peaceable, as New Rochelle produces a great deal of grass and hay. The farm contains three hundred acres, about one hundred of which is meadow land, one hundred grazing and village land, and the remainder woodland. It is an oblong about a mile and a half in length. I have sold off sixty-one acres and a half for four thousand and twenty dollars. With this money I shall improve the other part, and build an addition 34 feet by 32 to the present dwelling.”

He goes on into an architectural description, with drawings, of the arched roof he intends to build, the present form of roof being “unpleasing to the eye.” He also draws an oak floor such as they make in Paris, which he means to imitate.

With a black cook, Rachel Gidney, the family seemed to be getting on with fair comfort; but on Christmas Eve an event occurred which came near bringing Paine’s plans to an abrupt conclusion. This is related in a letter to William Carver, New York, dated January 16th, at New Rochelle.

“ESTEEMED FRIEND,—I have recd. two letters from you, one giving an account of your taking Thomas to Mr. Foster¹—the other dated Jany. 12—I did not answer the first because I hoped to see you the next Saturday or the Saturday after. What you heard of a gun being fired into the room is true—Robert and Rachel were both gone out to keep Christmas Eve and about eight o’clock at Night the gun were fired. I ran immediately out, one of Mr. Dean’s boys with me, but the person that had done it was gone. I directly suspected who it was, and I halloed to him by name, that *he was discovered*. I did this that the party who fired might know I was on the watch. I cannot find any ball, but whatever the gun was

¹ Thomas Bonneville, Paine’s godson, at school in Stonington.

charged with passed through about three or four inches below the window making a hole large enough to a finger to go through—the muzzle must have been very near as the place is black with the powder, and the glass of the window is shattered to pieces. Mr Shute after examining the place and getting what information could be had, issued a warrant to take up Derrick, and after examination committed him.

“He is now on bail (five hundred dollars) to take his trial at the supreme Court in May next. Derrick owes me forty-eight dollars for which I have his note, and he was to work it out in making stone fence which he has not even begun and besides this I have had to pay fortytwo pounds eleven shillings for which I had passed my word for him at Mr. Pelton’s store. Derrick borrowed the Gun under pretence of giving Mrs. Bayeaux a Christmas Gun. He was with Purdy about two hours before the attack on the house was made and he came from thence to Dean’s half drunk and brought with him a bottle of Rum, and Purdy was with him when he was taken up.

“I am exceedingly well in health and shall always be glad to see you. Hubbs tells me that your horse is getting better. Mrs. Shute sent for the horse and took him when the first snow came but he leaped the fences and came back. Hubbs says there is a bone broke. If this be the case I suppose he has broke or cracked it in leaping a fence when he was lame on the other hind leg, and hung with his hind legs in the fence. I am glad to hear what you tell me of Thomas. He shall not want for anything that is necessary if he be a good boy for he has no friend but me. You have not given me any account about the meeting house. Remember me to our Friends. Yours in friendship.”¹

The window of the room said to have been Paine’s study is close to the ground, and it is marvellous that he was not murdered.²

¹ I am indebted for this letter to Dr. Clair J. Grece, of England, whose uncle, Daniel Constable, probably got it from Carver.

² Derrick (or Dederick) appears by the records at White Plains to have been brought up for trial May 19, 1806, and to have been recognized in the sum of \$500 for his appearance at the next Court of Oyer and Terminer and General Gaol Delivery, and in the meantime to keep the peace towards the

The most momentous change which had come over America during Paine's absence was the pro-slavery reaction. This had set in with the first Congress. An effort was made by the Virginia representatives to check the slave traffic by imposing a duty of \$10 on each negro imported, but was defeated by an alliance of members from more Southern States and professedly antislavery men of the North. The Southern leader in this first victory of slavery in Congress was Major Jackson of Georgia, who defended the institution as scriptural and civilizing. The aged Dr. Franklin published (*Federal Gazette*, March 25, 1790) a parody of Jackson's speech, purporting to be a speech uttered in 1687 by a Divan of Algiers in defence of piracy and slavery, against a sect of Erika, or Purists, who had petitioned for their suppression. Franklin was now president of the American Antislavery Society, founded in Philadelphia in 1775 five weeks after the appearance of Paine's scheme of emancipation (March 8, 1775). Dr. Rush was also active in the cause, and to him Paine wrote (March 16, 1790) the letter on the subject elsewhere quoted (i., p. 271). This letter was published by Rush (*Columbian Magazine*, vol. ii., p. 318) while the country was still agitated by the debate which was going on in Congress at the time when it was written, on a petition of the Antislavery Society, signed by Franklin, — his last public act. Franklin died

People, and especially towards Thomas Payne (*sic*). Paine, Christopher Hubbs, and Andrew A. Dean were recognized in \$50 to appear and give evidence against Derrick. Nothing further appears in the records (examined for me by Mr. B. D. Washburn up to 1810). It is pretty certain that Paine did not press the charge.

April 17, 1790, twenty-five days after the close of the debate, in which he was bitterly denounced by the proslavery party. Washington had pronounced the petition "inopportune,"—his presidential mansion in New York was a few steps from the slave-market,—Jefferson (now Secretary of State) had no word to say for it, Madison had smoothed over the matter by a compromise. Thenceforth slavery had become a suppressed subject, and the slave trade, whenever broached in Congress, had maintained its immunity. In 1803, even under Jefferson's administration, the negroes fleeing from oppression in Domingo were forbidden asylum in America, because it was feared that they would incite servile insurrections. That the United States, under presidency of Jefferson, should stand aloof from the struggle of the negroes in Domingo for liberty, cut Paine to the heart. Unperturbed by the attempt made on his own life a few days before, he wrote to Jefferson on New Year's Day, 1805, (from New Rochelle,) what may be regarded as an appeal :

"DEAR SIR,—I have some thoughts of coming to Washington this winter, as I may as well spend a part of it there as elsewhere. But lest bad roads or any other circumstance should prevent me I suggest a thought for your consideration, and I shall be glad if in this case, as in that of Louisiana, we may happen to think alike without knowing what each other had thought of.

"The affair of Domingo will cause some trouble in either of the cases in which it now stands. If armed merchantmen force their way through the blockading fleet it will embarrass us with the french Government; and, on the other hand, if the people of Domingo think that we show a partiality to the french injurious to them there is danger they will turn Pirates

upon us, and become more injurious on account of vicinity than the barbary powers, and England will encourage it, as she encourages the Indians. . . Domingo is lost to France either as to the Government or the possession of it. But if a way could be found out to bring about a peace between France and Domingo through the mediation, and under the guarantee of the United States, it would be beneficial to all parties, and give us a great commercial and political standing, not only with the present people of Domingo but with the West Indies generally. And when we have gained their confidence by acts of justice and friendship, they will listen to our advice in matters of Civilization and Government, and prevent the danger of their becoming pirates, which I think they will be, if driven to desperation.

“The United States is the only power that can undertake a measure of this kind. She is now the Parent of the Western world, and her knowledge of the local circumstances of it gives her an advantage in a matter of this kind superior to any European Nation. She is enabled by situation, and grow[ing] importance to become a guarantee, and to see, as far as her advice and influence can operate, that the conditions on the part of Domingo be fulfilled. It is also a measure that accords with the humanity of her principles, with her policy, and her commercial interest.

“All that Domingo wants of France, is, that France agree to let her alone, and withdraw her forces by sea and land ; and in return for this Domingo to give her a monopoly of her commerce for a term of years,—that is, to import from France all the utensils and manufactures she may have occasion to use or consume (except such as she can more conveniently procure from the manufactories of the United States), and to pay for them in produce. France will gain more by this than she can expect to do even by a conquest of the Island, and the advantage to America will be that she will become the carrier of both, at least during the present war.

“There was considerable dislike in Paris against the Expedition to Domingo ; and the events that have since taken place were then often predicted. The opinion that generally prevailed at that time was that the commerce of the Island was better than the conquest of it,—that the conquest could not

be accomplished without destroying the negroes, and in that case the Island would be of no value.

“I think it might be signified to the french Government, yourself is the best judge of the means, that the United States are disposed to undertake an accommodation so as to put an end to this otherwise endless slaughter on both sides, and to procure to France the best advantages in point of commerce that the state of things will admit of. Such an offer, whether accepted or not, cannot but be well received, and may lead to a good end.

“There is now a fine snow, and if it continues I intend to set off for Philadelphia in about eight days, and from thence to Washington. I congratulate your constituents on the success of the election for President and Vice-President.

“Yours in friendship,

“THOMAS PAINE.”

The journey to Washington was given up, and Paine had to content himself with his pen. He took in several newspapers, and was as keenly alive as ever to the movements of the world. His chief anxiety was lest some concession might be made to the Louisianians about the slave trade, that region being an emporium of the traffic which grew more enterprising and brutal as its term was at hand. Much was said of the great need of the newly acquired region for more laborers, and it was known that Jefferson was by no means so severe in his opposition to slavery as he was once supposed to be. The President repeatedly invited Paine's views, and they were given fully and freely. The following extracts are from a letter dated New York, January 25, 1805 :

“Mr. Levy Lincoln and Mr. Wingate called on me at N. York, where I happened to be when they arrived on their Journey from Washington to the Eastward : I find by Mr. Lincoln that the Louisiana Memorialists will have to return as

they came and the more decisively Congress put an end to this business the better. The Cession of Louisiana is a great acquisition ; but great as it is it would be an incumbrance on the Union were the prayer of the petitioners to be granted, nor would the lands be worth settling if the settlers are to be under a french jurisdiction. . . . When the emigrations from the United States into Louisiana become equal to the number of french inhabitants it may then be proper and right to erect such part where such equality exists into a constitutional state ; but to do it now would be sending the american settlers into exile. . . . For my own part, I wish the name of Louisiana to be lost, and this may in a great measure be done by giving names to the new states that will serve as discriptive of their situation or condition. France lost the names and almost the remembrance of provinces by dividing them into departments with appropriate names.

“ Next to the acquisition of the territory and the Government of it is that of settling it. The people of the Eastern States are the best settlers of a new country, and of people from abroad the German Peasantry are the best. The Irish in general are generous and dissolute. The Scotch turn their attention to traffic, and the English to manufactures. These people are more fitted to live in cities than to be cultivators of new lands. I know not if in Virginia they are much acquainted with the importation of German redemptioners, that is, servants indented for a term of years. The best farmers in Pennsylvania are those who came over in this manner or the descendants of them. The price before the war used to be twenty pounds pennsylvania currency for an indented servant for four years, that is, the ship owner, got twenty pounds per head passage money, so that upon two hundred persons he would receive after their arrival four thousand pounds paid by the persons who purchased the time of their indentures which was generally four years. These would be the best people, of foreigners, to bring into Louisiana—because they would grow to be citizens. Whereas bringing poor negroes to work the lands in a state of slavery and wretchedness, is, besides the immorality of it, the certain way of preventing population and consequently of preventing revenue. I question if the revenue arising from ten Negroes in the

consumption of imported articles is equal to that of one white citizen. In the articles of dress and of the table it is almost impossible to make a comparison.

“These matters though they do not belong to the class of principles are proper subjects for the consideration of Government; and it is always fortunate when the interests of Government and that of humanity act unitedly. But I much doubt if the Germans would come to be under a french Jurisdiction. Congress must frame the laws under which they are to serve out their time; after which Congress might give them a few acres of land to begin with for themselves and they would soon be able to buy more. I am inclined to believe that by adopting this method the Country will be more peopled in about twenty years from the present time than it has been in all the times of the french and Spaniards. Spain, I believe, held it chiefly as a barrier to her dominions in Mexico, and the less it was improved the better it agreed with that policy; and as to france she never shewed any great disposition or gave any great encouragement to colonizing. It is chiefly small countries, that are straitened for room at home, like Holland and England, that go in quest of foreign settlements. . . .

“I have again seen and talked with the gentleman from Hamburg. He tells me that some Vessels under pretence of shipping persons to America carried them to England to serve as soldiers and sailors. He tells me he has the Edict or Proclamation of the Senate of Hamburg forbidding persons shipping themselves without the consent of the Senate, and that he will give me a copy of it, which if he does soon enough I will send with this letter. He says that the American Consul has been spoken to respecting this kidnapping business under American pretences, but that he says he has no authority to interfere. The German members of Congress, or the Philadelphia merchants or ship-owners who have been in the practice of importing German redemptioners, can give you better information respecting the business of importation than I can. But the redemptioners thus imported must be at the charge of the Captain or ship owner till their time is sold. Some of the quaker Merchants of Philadelphia went a great deal into the importation of German servants or redemptioners. It agreed

with the morality of their principles that of bettering people's condition, and to put an end to the practice of importing slaves. I think it not an unreasonable estimation to suppose that the population of Louisiana may be increased ten thousand souls every year. What retards the settlement of it is the want of labourers, and until labourers can be had the sale of the lands will be slow. Were I twenty years younger, and my name and reputation as well known in European countries as it is now, I would contract for a quantity of land in Louisiana and go to Europe and bring over settlers. . . .

"It is probable that towards the close of the session I may make an excursion to Washington. The piece on Gouverneur Morris's Oration on Hamilton and that on the Louisiana Memorial are the last I have published ; and as every thing of public affairs is now on a good ground I shall do as I did after the War, remain a quiet spectator and attend now to my own affairs.

"I intend making a collection of all the pieces I have published, beginning with *Common Sense*, and of what I have by me in manuscript, and publish them by subscription. I have deferred doing this till the presidential election should be over, but I believe there was not much occasion for that caution. There is more hypocrisy than bigotry in America. When I was in Connecticut the summer before last, I fell in company with some Baptists among whom were three Ministers. The conversation turned on the election for President, and one of them who appeared to be a leading man said 'They cry out against Mr. Jefferson because, they say he is a Deist. Well, a Deist may be a good man, and if he think it right, it is right to him. For my own part,' said he, 'I had rather vote for a Deist than for a blue-skin presbyterian.' 'You judge right,' said I, 'for a man that is not of any of the sectaries will hold the balance even between all ; but give power to a bigot of any sectary and he will use it to the oppression of the rest, as the blue-skins do in connection.' They all agree in this sentiment, and I have always found it assented to in any company I have had occasion to use it.

"I judge the collection I speak of will make five volumes octavo of four hundred pages each at two dollars a volume to be paid on delivery ; and as they will be delivered separately,

as fast as they can be printed and bound the subscribers may stop when they please. The three first volumes will be political and each piece will be accompanied with an account of the state of affairs at the time it was written, whether in America, France, or England, which will also shew the occasion of writing it. The first expression in the first N^o. of the Crisis published the 19th December '76 is '*These are the times that try men's souls.*' It is therefore necessary as explanatory to the expression in all future times to shew what those times were. The two last volumes will be theological and those who do not chuse to take them may let them alone. They will have the right to do so, by the conditions of the subscription. I shall also make a miscellaneous Volume of correspondence, Essays, and some pieces of Poetry, which I believe will have some claim to originality. . . .

"I find by the Captain [from New Orleans] above mentioned that several Liverpool ships have been at New Orleans. It is chiefly the people of Liverpool that employ themselves in the slave trade and they bring cargoes of those unfortunate Negroes to take back in return the hard money and the produce of the country. Had I the command of the elements I would blast Liverpool with fire and brimstone. It is the Sodom and Gomorrah of brutality. . . .

"I recollect when in France that you spoke of a plan of making the Negroes tenants on a plantation, that is, allotting each Negroe family a quantity of land for which they were to pay to the owner a certain quantity of produce. I think that numbers of our free negroes might be provided for in this manner in Louisiana. The best way that occurs to me is for Congress to give them their passage to New Orleans, then for them to hire themselves out to the planters for one or two years; they would by this means learn plantation business, after which to place them on a tract of land as before mentioned. A great many good things may now be done; and I please myself with the idea of suggesting my thoughts to you.

"Old Captain Landais who lives at Brooklyn on Long Island opposite New York calls sometimes to see me. I knew him in Paris. He is a very respectable old man. I wish something had been done for him in Congress on his petition; for I think something is due to him, nor do I see how the Statute

of limitation can consistently apply to him. The law in John Adams's administration, which cut off all commerce and communication with France, cut him off from the chance of coming to America to put in his claim. I suppose that the claims of some of our merchants on England, France and Spain is more than 6 or 7 years standing yet no law of limitation, that I know of take place between nations or between individuals of different nations. I consider a statute of limitation to be a domestic law, and can only have a domestic operation. Dr. Miller, one of the New York Senators in Congress, knows Landais and can give you an account of him.

"Concerning my former letter, on Domingo, I intended had I come to Washington to have talked with Pichon about it—if you had approved that method, for it can only be brought forward in an indirect way. The two *Emperors* are at too great a distance in objects and in colour to have any intercourse but by Fire and Sword, yet something I think might be done. It is time I should close this long epistle. Yours in friendship."

Paine made but a brief stay in New York (where he boarded with William Carver). His next letter (April 22d) is from New Rochelle, written to John Fellows, an auctioneer in New York City, one of his most faithful friends.

"CITIZEN : I send this by the N. Rochelle boat and have desired the boatman to call on you with it. He is to bring up Bebia and Thomas and I will be obliged to you to see them safe on board. The boat will leave N. Y. on Friday.

"I have left my pen knife at Carver's. It is, I believe, in the writing desk. It is a small French pen knife that slides into the handle. I wish Carver would look behind the chest in the bed room. I miss some papers that I suppose are fallen down there. The boys will bring up with them one pair of the blankets Mrs. Bonneville took down and also my best blanket which is at Carver's.—I send enclosed three dollars for a ream of writing paper and one dollar for some letter paper, and portage to the boat. I wish you to give the boys some good advice when you go with them, and tell them that the

better they behave the better it will be for them. I am now their only dependance, and they ought to know it. Yours in friendship."

"All my Nos. of the Prospect, while I was at Carver's, are left there. The boys can bring them. I have received no No. since I came to New Rochelle."¹

The Thomas mentioned in this letter was Paine's godson, and "Bebia" was Benjamin,—the late Brigadier-General Bonneville, U. S. A. The third son, Louis, had been sent to his father in France. The *Prospect* was Elihu Palmer's rationalistic paper.

Early in this year a series of charges affecting Jefferson's public and private character were published by one Hulbert, on the authority of Thomas Turner of Virginia. Beginning with an old charge of cowardice, while Governor (of which Jefferson had been acquitted by the Legislature of Virginia), the accusation proceeded to instances of immorality, persons and places being named. The following letter from New Rochelle, July 19th, to John Fellows enclosed Paine's reply, which appeared in the *American Citizen*, July 23d and 24th :

"CITIZEN—I inclose you two pieces for Cheetham's paper, which I wish you to give to him yourself. He may publish one No. in one daily paper, and the other number in the next daily paper, and then both in his country paper. There has been a great deal of anonymous (*sic*) abuse thrown out in the federal papers against Mr. Jefferson, but until some names could be got hold of it was fighting the air to take any notice of them. We have now got hold of two names, your townsman Hulbert, the hypocritical Infidel of Sheffield, and Thomas Turner of Virginia, his correspondent. I have already given Hulbert a basting with my name to it, because he made use of my name in his speech in the Mass. legislature. Turner has

¹ This letter is in the possession of Mr. Grenville Kane, Tuxedo, N. Y.

not given me the same cause in the letter he wrote (and evidently) to Hulbert, and which Hulbert, (for it could be no other person) has published in the Repertory to vindicate himself. Turner has detailed his charges against Mr. Jefferson, and I have taken them up one by one, which is the first time the opportunity has offered for doing it; for before this it was promiscuous abuse. I have not signed it either with my name or signature (Common Sense) because I found myself obliged, in order to make such scoundrels feel a little smart, to go somewhat out of my usual manner of writing, but there are some sentiments and some expressions that will be supposed to be in my stile, and I have no objection to that supposition, but I do not wish Mr. Jefferson to be *obliged* to know it is from me.

“Since receiving your letter, which contained no direct information of any thing I wrote to you about, I have written myself to Mr. Barrett accompanied with a piece for the editor of the Baltimore Evening Post, who is an acquaintance of his, but I have received no answer from Mr. B., neither has the piece been published in the Evening Post. I will be obliged to you to call on him & to inform me about it. You did not tell me if you called upon Foster; but at any rate do not delay the enclosed.—I do not trouble you with any messages or compliments, for you never deliver any. Your’s in friendship.”¹

By a minute comparison of the two alleged specifications of immorality, Paine proved that one was intrinsically absurd, and the other without trustworthy testimony. As for the charge of cowardice, Paine contended that it was the duty of a civil magistrate to move out of danger, as Congress had done in the Revolution. The article was signed “A Spark from the Altar of ’76,” but the writer was easily recognized. The service thus done Jefferson was greater than can now be easily realized.

¹ I am indebted for this letter to Mr. John M. Robertson, editor of the *National Reformer*, London.

Another paper by Paine was on "Constitutions, Governments, and Charters." It was an argument to prove the unconstitutionality in New York of the power assumed by the legislature to grant charters. This defeated the object of annual elections, by placing the act of one legislature beyond the reach of its successor. He proposes that all matters of "extraordinary legislation," such as those involving grants of land and incorporations of companies, shall be passed only by a legislature succeeding the one in which it was proposed. "Had such an article been originally in the Constitution [of New York] the bribery and corruption employed to seduce and manage the members of the late legislature, in the affair of the Merchants' Bank, could not have taken place. It would not have been worth while to bribe men to do what they had no power of doing."

Madame Bonneville hated country life, and insisted on going to New York. Paine was not sorry to have her leave, as she could not yet talk English, and did not appreciate Paine's idea of plain living and high thinking. She apparently had a notion that Paine had a mint of money, and, like so many others, might have attributed to parsimony efforts the unpaid author was making to save enough to give her children, practically fatherless, some start in life. The philosophic solitude in which he was left at New Rochelle is described in a letter (July 31st) to John Fellows, in New York.

"It is certainly best that Mrs. Bonneville go into some family as a teacher, for she has not the least talent of managing affairs for herself. She may send Bebia up to me. I will

take care of him for his own sake and his father's, but that is all I have to say. . . . I am master of an empty house, or nearly so. I have six chairs and a table, a straw-bed, a feather-bed, and a bag of straw for Thomas, a tea kettle, an iron pot, an iron baking pan, a frying pan, a gridiron, cups, saucers, plates and dishes, knives and forks, two candlesticks and a pair of snuffers. I have a pair of fine oxen and an ox-cart, a good horse, a Chair, and a one-horse cart; a cow, and a sow and 9 pigs. When you come you must take such fare as you meet with, for I live upon tea, milk, fruit-pies, plain dumplins, and a piece of meat when I get it; but I live with that retirement and quiet that suit me. Mrs. Bonneville was an encumbrance upon me all the while she was here, for she would not do anything, not even make an apple dumplin for her own children. If you cannot make yourself up a straw bed, I can let you have blankets, and you will have no occasion to go over to the tavern to sleep.

“As I do not see any federal papers, except by accident, I know not if they have attempted any remarks or criticisms on my Eighth Letter, [or] the piece on Constitutional Governments and Charters, the two numbers on Turner's letter, and also the piece on Hulbert. As to anonymous paragraphs, it is not worth noticing them. I consider the generality of such editors only as a part of their press, and let them pass.—I want to come to Morrisania, and it is probable I may come on to N. Y., but I wish you to answer this letter first.—Yours in friendship.”

It must not be supposed from what Paine says of Madame Bonneville that there was anything acrimonious in their relations. She was thirty-one years younger than Paine, fond of the world, handsome. The old gentleman, all day occupied with writing, could give her little companionship, even if he could have conversed in French. But he indulged her in every way, gave her more money

¹ I am indebted for an exact copy of the letter from which this is extracted to Dr. Garnett of the British Museum, though it is not in that institution.

than he could afford, devoted his ever decreasing means to her family. She had boundless reverence for him, but, as we have seen, had no taste for country life. Probably, too, after Dederick's attempt on Paine's life she became nervous in the lonely house. So she had gone to New York, where she presently found good occupation as a teacher of French in several families. Her sons, however, were fond of New Rochelle, and of Paine, who had a knack of amusing children, and never failed to win their affection.¹

The spring of 1805 at New Rochelle was a pleasant one for Paine. He wrote his last political pamphlet, which was printed by Duane, Philadelphia, with the title: "Thomas Paine to the Citizens of Pennsylvania, on the Proposal for Calling a Convention." It opens with a reference to his former life and work in Philadelphia. "Removed as I now am from the place, and detached from everything of personal party, I address this token to you on the ground of principle, and in remembrance of former times and friendships." He gives an historical account of the negative or veto-power, finding it the English Parliament's badge of disgrace under William of Normandy, a defence of personal prerogative that ought to find no place in a republic. He advises that in the new Constitution the principle of arbitration, outside of courts,

¹In the Tarrytown *Argus*, October 18, 1890, appeared an interesting notice of the Rev. Alexander Davis (Methodist), by C. K. B[uchanan] in which it is stated that Davis, a native of New Rochelle, remembered the affection of Paine, who "would bring him round-hearts and hold him on his knee." Many such recollections of his little neighbors have been reported.

should be established. The governor should possess no power of patronage; he should make one in a Council of Appointments. The Senate is an imitation of the House of Lords. The Representatives should be divided by lot into two equal parts, sitting in different chambers. One half, by not being entangled in the debate of the other on the issue submitted, nor committed by voting, would become silently possessed of the arguments, and be in a calm position to review the whole. The votes of the two houses should be added together, and the majority decide. Judges should be removable by some constitutional mode, without the formality of impeachment at "stated periods." (In 1807 Paine wrote to Senator Mitchell of New York suggesting an amendment to the Constitution of the United States by which judges of the Supreme Court might be removed by the President for reasonable cause, though insufficient for impeachment, on the address of a majority of both Houses of Congress.)

In this pamphlet was included the paper already mentioned (on Charters, etc.), addressed to the people of New York. The two essays prove that there was no abatement in Paine's intellect, and that despite occasional "flings" at the "Feds,"—retorts on their perpetual naggings,—he was still occupied with the principles of political philosophy.

At this time Paine had put the two young Bonnevilles at a school in New Rochelle, where they also boarded. He had too much solitude in the house, and too little nourishment for so much work. So the house was let and he was taken in as a boarder by Mrs. Bayeaux, in the old Bayeaux

House, which is still standing,¹—but Paine's pecuniary situation now gave him anxiety. He was earning nothing, his means were found to be far less than he supposed, the needs of the Bonnevilles increasing. Considering the important defensive articles he had written for the President, and their long friendship, he ventured (September 30th) to allude to his situation and to remind him that his State, Virginia, had once proposed to give him a tract of land, but had not done so. He suggests that Congress should remember his services.

“But I wish you to be assured that whatever event this proposal may take it will make no alteration in my principles or my conduct. I have been a volunteer to the world for thirty years without taking profits from anything I have published in America or Europe. I have relinquished all profits that those publications might come cheap among the people for whom they were intended—Yours in friendship.”

This was followed by another note (November 14th) asking if it had been received. What answer came from the President does not appear.

About this time Paine published an essay on “The cause of the Yellow Fever, and the means of preventing it in places not yet infected with it. Addressed to the Board of Health in America.” The treatise, which he dates June 27th, is noticed by Dr. Francis as timely. Paine points out that the epidemic which almost annually afflicted New York, had been unknown to the Indians; that it began around the wharves, and did not reach the higher

¹ Mrs. Bayeaux is mentioned in Paine's letter about Dederick's attempt on his life.

parts of the city. He does not believe the disease certainly imported from the West Indies, since it is not carried from New York to other places. He thinks that similar filthy conditions of the wharves and the water about them generate the miasma alike in the West Indies and in New York. It would probably be escaped if the wharves were built on stone or iron arches, permitting the tides to cleanse the shore and carry away the accumulations of vegetable and animal matter decaying around every ship and dock. He particularly proposes the use of arches for wharves about to be constructed at Corlder's Hook and on the North River.

Dr. Francis justly remarks, in his "Old New York," that Paine's writings were usually suggested by some occasion. Besides this instance of the essay on the yellow fever, he mentions one on the origin of Freemasonry, there being an agitation in New York concerning that fraternity. But this essay—in which Paine, with ingenuity and learning, traces Freemasonry to the ancient solar mythology also identified with Christian mythology—was not published during his life. It was published by Madame Bonneville with the passages affecting Christianity omitted. The original manuscript was obtained, however, and published with an extended preface, criticizing Paine's theory, the preface being in turn criticized by Paine's editor. The preface was probably written by Colonel Fellows, author of a large work on Freemasonry.