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TRANSLATED

For the National Intelligencer.

Obſervations on Canals taken from a ſpeech of Boſc, member of the Tribunate of France, on 2d Nivoſe.

Every well informed man will allow, that to raiſe the produce of the ſoil to its higheſt value, a communication muſt be opened to all parts of the country, in the moſt eaſy and leaſt expenſive manner. There exiſt only two methods of internal communication; the carriage by land, or the navigation of rivers and canals. We will now ſpeak of canals and, which in opening to internal commerce, a communication and vent the leaſt expenſive, will facilitate the tranſportation of cumberous, and low priced commodities, and are preciſely in relation to agriculture, what ingenious machines, which ſave time and ſimplify labour, are to manufactures.

Arneld has demonſtrated in an unanſwerable manner, how greatly the circulation of territorial produce is affected by the difficulty and high price of land carriage, that empoveriſhes equally the department which cultivates, and the department which conſumes the produce. He has proved that the price of grain in the northern departments compared to that in the ſouthern departments, is nearly as one to four. Thus while in the fertile country of the north the cultivator is kept in a ſtate of miſerable poverty by the low price at which he is obliged to ſell his produce, the inhabitant of the ſouth has to buy it at ſo extortant a price for the maintenance of his family, that he is exhauſted and impoveriſhed. From whence reſults the ruin of the cultivator from the want of a regular conſumption, and that of the conſumer from want of a plentiful market. This abuſe would be remedied if an equilibrium in the price was eſtabliſhed by facility in providing and economy in the tranſportation.

I could, by accumulating examples, prove to you that many precious mines are not yet explored, and that many important manufactures languiſh, on account of the difficulty attending transportation. I could preſent to your view the fertile banks of navigable rivers and lands interſected by canals, always covered with a rich harveſt and a large population; while thoſe places, which are mountainous and difficult of acceſs are poor and thinly peopled. I could point out to you immenſe tracts of land covered with ſwamps and ſtagnant water, becoming healthy and fertile by the opening of a navigable canal; I could ſhew you ſcorched and uncultivated plains, made productive by a canal, which ſerved at the ſame time for tranſportation and irrigation. If any doubts exiſt of the feaſibility and utility of this ſyſtem, let the eye be caſt over the hydrographical charts where it will be ſeen that this country is watered by nearly *four thouſand rivers.*

To conſtruct canals at the expence of the government is to load the treaſury with an unneceſſary burden; it is to ſubmit the execution of the plan to chances which human ſagacity cannot calculate; it is to occaſion delays, perhaps even dilapidations generally inſeparable from the operations of a great adminiſtration; it is in a word, to dream of a benefit, but not to realiſe it.

To yield the property of the canals to thoſe who will dig them, will give an immediate impulſe to public opinion, it will employ all the free capitals in thoſe uſeful enterprizes; it will be to inſure their prompt execution, and awaken that ſpirit of induſtry which will ſo ſoon diſcover the moſt ſimple and moſt economical plans for their contruction and improvement. In ſhort, it is perhaps the only means of realiſing and completing this beneficial project of internal navigation.

The ſcience of government conſiſts, in putting into motion the two great ſprings of human nature, intereſt and ſelf-love. It is by forming a continual and cloſe alliance between public and private intereſt, that projects will be executed worthy of a great people; and that it will ſurmount obſtacles which can only be conquered by a reciprocity of efforts. Let the government inſure to the citizens who will open canals, a certainty of replacing their capitals, and the peaceable and incommutable poſſeſſion of the profits which they yield, and it will excite among the capitaliſts, an emulation of acquiring wealth by this employment of their funds and of the glory attached to ſucceſs in theſe immortal labors. England is an example of the utility of this ſcheme, during the laſt 12 years parliament has incorporated 62 companies for opening canals, all of which have been begun or finiſhed, although ſhe has had to ſupport an *expenſive war.*

The high intereſt which is given for money, the eaſe with which it can be advantageouſly placed, without any hazard or danger, and the power of reſuming it at any moment, is an objection to the employment of it in works of this kind: a canal cannot be finiſhed in leſs than ſeveral years, and during this time the funds thus employed are idle and unproductive. To remove this obſtacle, and to induce capitaliſts to engage in theſe enterprizes, the government ſhould allow to the undertakers an annual, but a decreaſing premium, equal the firſt year to the common and lawful intereſt, and decreaſing one tenth part each ſucceeding year; this premium ſhould be in proportion to the labours of conſtruction, and to the capitals employed. It ſhould ceaſe as ſoon as the canal was finiſhed; and a dividend of the profits be afterwards made among the ſtockholders. Let us for inſtance imagine a canal of 15 leagues, the eſtimated expences of which ſhould amount to 3 millions; the intereſt being 10 per cent. the undertakers, if they employed one million and dug 5 leagues the firſt year, would receive a premium of 100,000 francs. If they had dug 10 leagues and employed two millions, the ſecond year, they would receive 180,000 francs or 9 per cent. for the funds thus employed; if they terminate their work and employ three millions the third year they will receive a premium of 240,000 francs or 8 per cent.

You will perceive by this ſtatement that government with a ſum of 15 or 20 millions, divided between 10 or 12 years, will employ in the conſtruction of canals more than a hundred millions, and will rapidly complete the ſyſtem of internal navigation throughout France.

The property in canals ſhould be as ſacred as patrimonial property, and like that tranſmiſſible from family to family; with this guarantee, the ſtockholder will feel as great an intereſt in their preſervation and improvement as we do in the preſervation and improvement of the fields of our fathers.

It is by this extenſive ſyſtem of internal navigation, that we ſhall open cheap and eaſy communications as various and as multiplied as our wants. It is thus by enlarging the markets for the produce of our ſoil, that we ſhall increaſe the proſperity of our country, encourage the activity of our manufactures, diminiſh the burden of our taxes, reſtore to agriculture the labor of men and horſes hitherto employed in land carriage, and relieve the public treaſury from a great proportion of the expences of conſtructing and repairing high ways, which are perpetually broken and deſtroyed by the immenſe weight which is carried over them.

This morning a gentleman politely favoured us with the following copy of the articles of capitulation of the iſland of St. Thomas, entered into between the governor of that iſland and the commander of his Britannic majeſty's forces.

True Amer.

(COPY.)

CAPITULATION.

Article 1ſt.—The iſland of St. Thomas and St. John's and their depencencies are hereby placed under the protection of his Britannic majeſty, until by a concluſion of peace it ſhall be ſettled whether they are to be Daniſh or Engliſh property.

Anſwer.—The iſland of St. Thomas and St. John's and their dependencies muſt be ſurrendered to the force of his Britiſh majeſty, on the conditions as follows:

2d.—Military honours are to be ſhewn at the ſurrender. The officers keep and continue to carry their ſwords.

Anſwer.—Agreed.

3d.—All inhabitants of the iſland are to enjoy the fulleſt ſecurity for their perſons and property and other rights, as well as a free exerciſe of religion.

Anſwer.—All Daniſh inhabitants and the ſubjects of the iſland and of the United States of America, ſhall enjoy the fulleſt ſecurity for their perſons and properties, as well as the free exerciſe of religion, provided they do not endeavour colluſively to cover property of the enemies of Great Britain and Ireland.—By properties is to be underſtood goods and merchandizes now on ſhore.

4th.—Arms and ammunition are to be delivered by a commiſſion compoſed of officers of both parties, alſo the magazines and proviſions and what elſe may be found in the fort as it ſhall be found to day, according to returns of the drawn up.

Anſwer.—Agreed.

5th.—All Daniſh officers of this garriſon, naval officers and ſailors, to be conducted conveniently and ſafely to their native country and thoſe that may deſire to proceed to America or elſewhere to be provided with proper paſſports.

Anſwer.—The garriſon muſt be conſidered as priſoners of war, and will be conveyed to Europe as ſpeedily as poſſible and every indulgence ſhewn them.

6th.—No military to be quartered in houſes but in barracks and decent rooms to be aſſigned by the burgher council and a commiſſion appointed to that purpoſe.

Anſwer.—Agreed.

7th.—The Daniſh laws and ordinances to remain in force, all courts and judicial offices to be occupied by the preſent officers. In caſe that no appeal can take place to the high court of juſtice at Copenhagen, one is to be eſtabliſhed here by the Engliſh government, to conſiſt of three of the moſt able candidates in law and two reſpectable citizens, acquainted with the Daniſh language.

Anſwer.—The Daniſh laws and ordinances will remain in force as at preſent. But the perſons filling civil offices, muſt be ſubject to the approbation of their excellencies the commanders in chief. In the event of appeal to lie to his Britannic majeſty in council.

8th.—The king's and public treaſures, all public book keepings and accounts, archives and protocolls, remain unmoleſted under the hands of the reſpective officers for mutual ſecurity and uſe.

Anſwer. All property belonging to the king or the government muſt be given up to his Britannic majeſty, and all public records and papers be ſubmitted to the inſpection of the Britiſh, and the records and papers will afterwards be allowed to remain in the proper offices.

9th.—His majeſty the king of Denmark having advanced a loan to the planters, the ſaid planters continue to pay off according to the method regulated, unto his ſaid majeſty. The king of Denmark retains the right of mortgage in the ſaid eſtates, with the exception that the owners in conſideration of precedent in faverable commercial conjunctures and the preſent circumſtances make no payment this year upon the royal loan which has been effected for the benefit of the planters.

Anſwer to the laſt articles. But with reſpect to the payment to be made upon the loan advanced by the king of Denmark to the planters, it is agreed to be left to the determination of the king of Great Britain and Ireland in council, how they are to be made and applied.

10th. No inhabitant ſhall be compelled to carry arms or perform duty when he has made his oath of military.

Anſwer. Agreed to, but they will be requeſted to take an oath of allegiance, expreſſing that they will not either openly or ſecretly do any thing hoſtile to the Britiſh government.

11th. The Americans ſhall be permitted without conſtraint to export produces of the iſland and provide with neceſſaries. The inhabitants alſo to ſhip to America.

Anſwer. Theſe colonies muſt trade under the ſame laws as govern the Britiſh Weſt-India iſlands.

12th. A ſecret and ſeparate convention to permit the inhabitants of the neighbouring iſlands, or from the main, to trade thither in order to provide the country with freſh proviſions.

Anſwer. The affirmation to this propoſition muſt depend upon the deciſions of his majeſty the king of Great Britain and Ireland.

13th. The free coloured people of this iſland ſhall be regarded and protected as heretofore under the Daniſh government, and they ſhall not be forced to do any military duty.

Anſwer. The Daniſh free coloured people will be protected as heretofore, and will not be forced to do any military duty, but they muſt take the oath of allegiance conformable to the anſwer to article 10th.

14th. The preliminary articles on which this propoſed capitulation depends, that the officers ſent on board of the fleet aſcertain the number of Britiſh troops be three thouſand men at leaſt.

Anſwer. His excellency the Daniſh governor is not expected to ſign the capitulation until the return of the officers he has ſent to ſee the Britiſh troops.

15th. In the general claim of Daniſh and neutral property to be reſpected as belonging to lawful owners, is alſo comprehended the veſſels and all property afloat in this harbour, or what might arrive during the time the Daniſh colonies remain in poſſeſſion of his Britannic majeſty.

Anſwer. To reply to the 3d propoſition additional, all the forts, military poſts and veſſels of war, muſt be given up as ſoon as the capitulation is ratified by the commander in chief.

16th. It is requeſted that the military and naval officers ſhould be permitted either to remain here, or to return by the way of America, or any other neutral ſtate, and that the private ſoldiers and ſailors ſhould be provided with paſſports.

Anſwer. The officers of the army are to be priſoners of war on their parole of honor, not to ſerve till exchanged, and will have permiſſion to depart in the moſt convenient manner with paſſports, but their ſtay here muſt not exceed a month. The non-commiſſioned officers, ſoldiers and ſailors muſt be diſpoſed of as his majeſty ſhall direct.

17th. It is underſtood, it is hoped, that ſlaves belonging to the Daniſh ſubjects or other ſubjects conſidered as neutrals, are to be conſidered as property belonging to the owners, and to continue as ſuch.

Anſwer. Agreed.

18th. Shall the police of this iſland continue to perform their official duty with the ſame authority as under the Daniſh government, and with the known uſages of the colony?

Anſwer. Agreed, unleſs ordered otherwiſe.

19th. The property afloat conſidered to be given into the hands of the Britiſh commanders will be conſidered it is hoped as left under ſequeſtration, and not to be diſpoſed of, but in caſe of a declaration of war and all ſuch property to be treated in the ſame manner as was uſual, in caſe of declaration by Britiſh cruizers, before the preſent miſunderſtanding between the Britiſh and Daniſh nations.

Anſwer. The property afloat will be detained agreeable to his majeſty's inſtruction in the hands of agents who are reſponſible for their conduct, and are only to diſpoſe of periſhable articles. It will probably be found expedient to ſend part of this property to Europe, to await his majeſty's deciſion.

20th. In regard to the twelfth article of the Capitulation, refered to the determination of his Britannic majeſty, it is hoped their excellencies the Commanders in chief will give a proviſory order to admit all traders with proviſions as heretofore, becauſe this Iſland from immediate wants of proviſions might be expoſed to great inconveniences and ſufferings.

Anſwer. The commanders in chief will take the matter in conſideration, being diſ-