

# National Gazette.

By PHILIP FRENEAU.

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## ON MONUMENTS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the number of extraordinary men the French Revolution has produced to the world, the name of *great* is thought to convey an idea too extensive to be allowed to more than one man, and what ought to be understood by the word *great* is admirably defined by one of the French orators. It is also very much to be admired, that previous to the revolution two men only were allowed the name of *great*; the necessary consequence will be that great men, being considered as they really are, very few in number, that august title will never be disputed by their impartial contemporaries, and a still more disinterested posterity.

It was the opinion of Swift, that a nation does not give birth to more than one truly great man in less than 100 years. I have the honor to think the same; and for a definition of the word *great* in its proper extensive meaning, I prefer the French orator to whom I have already alluded.

If we allow one great man to be produced in an hundred years by every civilized nation upon earth, the number to be handed to a remote posterity will be quite sufficient to satisfy human vanity and pride.

It may be enquired what I mean by a great man. I am sure my idea of a great man is, when his works are directed to the benefit of mankind, in the perfection of any human art or science from which the present or future ages must derive eternal benefit; and legislators come most particularly within this meaning. No one can deny the author of the French Revolution to be a man of this description. This author is allowed by that nation itself to be MIRABEAU. The latest posterity must be benefited by the blessings of liberty. For he has the honor to be the cause of the next generation being born free, which otherwise would have been slaves. A greater honor cannot in my opinion be conferred on human nature. The French very modestly allow the honor of this blessed freedom to one man, notwithstanding his numerous coadjutors, and this very wisely, that the word *great* should not be confounded, which it is in this country, by bestowing it on such prodigious numbers, and for such very moderate degrees of merit. By thus multiplying great men, vanity counteracts its own efforts, and we cease to have any great men. When posterity surveys the monuments in Westminster Abbey, and finds them innumerable, they must, if they take it upon credit of monumental testimony, suppose that their ancestors were all great men, without exception. But if they go about to enquire for the works of their illustrious ancestors, they will be told that their performances, as well as themselves, being of a perishable nature, have been long since buried in oblivion, as would the monuments, but for the hardness and durability of a marble. Great men's works are not of a perishable nature:

"Finish'd writings theft and time defy,  
"The only monuments which cannot die."

But such are not the productions of the fiftieth part of our monumental ancestors. How a man would be laughed at if he took the name from a monument in the Abbey, or elsewhere, and then went to enquire for those stupendous performances for which he was supposed to have that honor conferred; or rather, how would he stare when informed his works were so trifling, that they scarcely survived the mourning at his funeral. But these are not the errors of the nation—they are the absurdities of a few interested individuals, who contribute to such empty foppery from the opinion they have of themselves. It is, as the poet says, "a compliment that

vanity pays to self-love," in the conceit that they, possessing a similarity of parts, will have the same honor conferred.

But such a numerous assembly of great men levels all distinctions; and posterity having selected two or three worthies from the numerous groupe, consigns the rest to that oblivion they merit, and they become all little men.

In this absurd manner hath the Abbey been disfigured, and now the same vanity lays siege to St. Paul's, that our folly should be recorded in every part of the metropolis.

Extracted from MARITIME OBSERVATIONS. Written in 1785, by Dr. Franklin.

HOW much more commendable would it be, if we could give up the few minutes gratification afforded once or twice a day by the taste of sugar in our tea, rather than encourage the cruelties exercised in producing it. An eminent French moralist says, that when he considers the wars we excite in Africa, to obtain slaves; the numbers necessarily slain in those wars; the many prisoners who perish at sea by sickness, bad provisions, foul air, &c. &c. in the transportation, and how many afterwards die, from the hardships of slavery, he cannot look on a piece of sugar without conceiving it stained with spots of human blood. Had he added the consideration of the wars we make to take and re-take the sugar-lands from one another, and the fleets and armies that perish in those expeditions, he might have seen his sugar, not merely spotted, but thoroughly dyed scarlet in grain. It is their wars that make the maritime powers of Europe, the inhabitants of London and Paris, pay dearer for sugar than those of Vienna, a thousand miles from the sea; because their sugar costs not only the price they pay for it by the pound, but all they pay in taxes to maintain the fleets and armies that fight for it!

P A R I S, Sept. 21.

The Municipality, as the first effort to aid their fellow citizens in deriving the greatest possible advantage from the new Constitution, have proposed the following questions:

1. What are the best means, within the power of the Municipality, of exciting in Paris the efforts of industry, and encouraging in it the establishment of manufactures of all kinds?

2. What are the best means, within the power of the municipality of procuring for the capital all the advantages which it may hope from general commerce with respect to its situation, the number and character of its inhabitants, its connection with the departments of the kingdom and with foreign nations.

For each of the two best answers, on these questions, to be sent in before the first of February, they offer a gold medal of 600 livres value, and for each of the four next a gold medal of 200 livres value.

L O N D O N, Sept. 18.

Ten of the representatives of Paris for the next legislature were chosen when the last elections came away. The whole number is twenty-four, and the electors go on at the rate of one per day.

In other parts of the kingdom the elections being less contested, proceed with greater dispatch.

In some instances the whole representatives of a department have been elected in one day.

The establishment of Justices of Peace by the new Constitution is universally approved. As an instance, M. Riviere, elected a justice in the district of Bourdeaux, in the course of three months from the time of entering on his office, had three hundred and twelve cases brought before him. Of these he de-

termined three hundred and seven, one was terminated by calling in two arbitrators, and only four came before the tribunal of the district.

The French emigrants are said to be split into two parties. The one at the head of which is Condé, wishes to restore the old government. The other, at the head of which is Bouillie, is for a modification of the new constitution. The parties hold no intercourse.

The plan of the latter party is said to be a pacific system; to prevent a national bankruptcy; to declare the assignats part of the public debt; to convoke the States General in the ancient form; to reinstate the clergy, with a proviso for reimbursing the holders of assignats; the sales of church lands to be confirmed or annulled, as shall be thought expedient, and if annulled, the purchasers to be indemnified in ten years; to sequestrate vacant benefices; to reduce great benefices; to disarm the country people; to reform the religious orders; to abolish all distinctions respecting eligibility to public offices; to re-establish the nobility, without pecuniary privileges; and to make the States General permanent till a perfect consolidation.

Mr. Fawkner's stay on the continent will be much longer than was expected, as he will not only inspect the treaty with the Porte, but it is thought, negotiate a commercial treaty with Russia, upon liberal terms to both countries. This treaty was in agitation some years ago, but suspended on account of the late war; it is now undergoing some new modifications, which the succession of events makes necessary.

Prince John, the African Prince, is arrived here from Sierra Leona. His business to this country appears chiefly to be respecting the slave trade. He has met with a very cordial reception in this city, and particularly among the gentlemen who wish for the abolition of the slave trade.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF FRANCE, September 15.

M. Target, who had in his possession the King's letter of acceptance, moved, that it, as well as the Constitutional code should be deposited in the archives of the assembly—Decreed.

M. Goupil moved, that as the constitution was now finished, it should be published over the Empire with all possible solemnity.

M. Ragnauld seconded the motion, with an amendment, that, after proclaiming it in each municipality, *Te Deum* should be sung, and that this ceremony should be followed with festivals and public rejoicings.

M. Dupont moved, that the publication of the constitution should be accompanied by a release of prisoners of a certain description.

These proposals were adopted—the last with some modification.

In the German papers is the following letter from the Czarina to the King of Sweden:

"Your Majesty may rest assured, that my sentiments agree with yours respecting the unfortunate Louis XVI. and that I sincerely lament his fate as well as your Majesty. I hope that our lamentations will not be fruitless, and that we shall manifest the lively interest which we feel for him. The resolution which you have made in his favour is worthy of your courage and of your magnanimity, and worthy of the successor of the great Gustavus. For the sake of peace I have made some important sacrifices; and I should be willing to make much greater, in bringing effectually to bear your glorious undertaking. I shall consider the day on which I hear that Louis has recovered his authority and his prerogatives, and has forgotten his enemies, as the happiest of my life."

P H I L A D E L P H I A.

C O N G R E S S.

H O U S E O F R E P R E S E N T A T I V E S.

W E D N E S D A Y, N O V. 30.

A bill from the Senate, entitled, "An act concerning consuls and vice-consuls, was read a first and second time, and committed to a committee of the whole on Tuesday next.

The speaker then laid before the house a letter from the attorney-general, relative to his report on the judicial system of the United States; which having been read, it was ordered thereupon, that so much of the order of the 9th inst. as directs the attorney-general to report to this house such further information as he may be in possession of, relative to the operation of the judicial system, be discharged—it was also ordered, that the committee for said report be discharged, and that it be referred to Mr. Sedgwick, Mr. Hillhouse, Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Boudinot, Mr. Kittera, Mr. Murray, and Mr. Madison.

A petition was read from Jonathan Haynes, for relief in consideration of a wound received in the American service during the late war—Referred to the Secretary at War.

Mr. Goodhue, from the committee, presented a bill relative to the registering of vessels—which being read a first and second time, was committed to a committee of the whole, on Tuesday next.

Two memorials from the distillers of rum and geneva, in the town of Providence, were read, praying further revision of the act, passed at the last session, imposing duties on spirits distilled within the United States—Referred to the Secretary of the Treasury.

The house then proceeded to consider the amendments from the committee, reported yesterday, to the bill for making compensation to widows, orphans, and invalids, in certain cases—which amendments being read and debated on, the bill was ordered to be read the third time to-morrow.

A message was received from the Senate, by Mr. Otis, acquainting the house, that the Senate had passed a bill, entitled, "An act relative to the election of a President and Vice-President of the United States, and declaring the officer who shall act as President in case of vacancies in the offices both of President and Vice-President"—to which they desired the concurrence of the house. Adjourned.

T H U R S D A Y, D E C E M B E R 1.

The bill making compensation to widows, orphans, and invalids, in certain cases, was read a third time, passed the house, and sent to the Senate for their concurrence.

The bill sent from the Senate, relative to the election of a President and Vice-President of the United States, in case of vacancies, was read the first time.

A letter was read from the Secretary at War, inclosing his report on the petition of Thomas Campbell—which was ordered to lie on the table.

According to the order of the day, the house resolved itself into committee of the whole on the bill for the relief of David Cook—Mr. Muhlenberg in the chair—who, after some time spent on the bill, reported the same without amendment—An amendment was afterwards introduced by the house, making provision for captain William Campbell—the bill was then ordered to be engrossed for a third reading to-morrow.

A committee was then ordered to be appointed to prepare and bring in a bill to explain and amend the acts which relate to the seven years half-pay pro-