

Proclamation of Louis XVI. the Patriot King of the French."

"LOUIS,
"By the grace of God, and by the constitutional law of the state, King of the French. To all citizens—Greeting.

"I HAVE accepted the constitution; I will use all my endeavours to maintain it, and cause it to be executed.

"The revolution is completed. It is time that the re-establishment of order should give to the constitution the support which is still more necessary; it is time to fix the opinion of Europe on the destiny of France, and to shew that the French are worthy to be free.

"But my vigilance and my cares ought still to be seconded by the concurrence of all the friends of their country, and of liberty. It is by submission to the laws; it is by abjuring the spirit of party, and all the passions which accompany it; it is by a happy union of sentiments, of wishes, and of endeavours that the constitution will be confirmed, and that the nation will enjoy all the advantages which it secures.

"Let every idea of intolerance then be abandoned forever; let the rash desire of independence no longer be confounded with the love of liberty; let those pernicious qualifications, with which it has been attempted to inflame the people, be irrevocably banished; let religious opinions no longer be a source of persecution and animosity; let all who observe the laws be at liberty to adopt the form of worship to which they are attached; and let no party give offence to those who may follow opinions different from their own, from motives of conscience. But it is not sufficient to shun those excesses to which you might be carried by a spirit of violence; you must likewise fulfil the obligations which are imposed by the public interest: one of the first, one of the most essential, is the payment of the contributions established by your Representatives. It is for the observance of engagements, which national honour has rendered sacred, for the internal tranquility of the states, for its external security; it is for the stability of the constitution itself, that I remind you of this indispensable duty.

"Citizens, armed for the maintenance of the law, national guards, never forget that it is to protect the safety of persons and of property, the collection of public contributions, the circulation of grain and of provisions, the arms which you bear have been delivered into your hands; it belongs to you to feel that justice and mutual utility demand, that between the inhabitants of the same empire, abundance should be applied to the aid of indigence; and that it is the duty of the public force to promote the advancement of commerce, as the means of remedying the intemperance of seasons, correcting the inequality of harvest, uniting together all the parts of the Kingdom, and establishing a community of the various productions of their soil and industry.

"And you, whom the people have chosen to watch over their interests; you also, on whom they have conferred the formidable power of determining on the property, the honour, and the life of citizens; you, whom they have instituted to adjust their differences, members of the different administrative bodies, judges of tribunals, judges of peace, I recommend to you to be impressed with the importance and dignity of your functions; fulfil them with zeal, with courage, impartiality;—labour with me to restore peace and the government of laws; and by thus securing the happiness of the nation, prepare for the return of those whose absence has only proceeded from the fear of disorder and violence.

"And all you who from different motives have quitted your country, your King invites you to return to your fellow-citizens; he invites you to yield to the public wish and the national interest. Return with confidence under the security of the law; and this honourable return, at the moment when the constitution is definitively settled, will render more easy and more expeditious, the re-establishment of order and of tranquility.

"And you, French people, a nation illustrious for so many ages, show yourselves magnanimous and generous at the moment when your liberty is confirmed; resume your happy character; let your moderation and wisdom revive

among you the security which the disturbances of the revolution had banished; and let your King henceforth enjoy, without inquietude, and without molestation, those testimonies of attachment and fidelity which can alone secure his happiness.

"Done at Paris, the twenty-eighth of September, 1791.

(Signed) "LOUIS:
(and underneath) "DE LESSART."

The RESPECTFUL PETITION of the Christian Society of FRIENDS called Quakers, delivered before the National Assembly of France, Thursday, 10th February, 1791.

Respectable Legislators,
THE French nation having appointed you her Legislators, and your hearts having been disposed to enact wise laws, our minds have been deeply engaged to solicit the extension of your justice and benevolence to the Society of peaceable Christians to which we belong.

You know that in several states of Europe and North-America, there are a great number of Christians known by the name of Quakers, who profess to serve God according to the ancient simplicity of the primitive Christian church. Several towns and villages of Languedoc contain a number of families attached to this primitive Christianity. Many other families which came from America, have settled at Dunkirk, under the auspices of the late government, in consequence of the invitation given to the inhabitants of Nantucket, for the purpose of extending the French Fisheries.

These islands have proved themselves worthy of your kindness by their success; and the same motive will induce them to continue to deserve it.—Concerns, however, of far greater moment, have this day brought us before you.

In an age signal for the increase of knowledge, you have been struck with this truth, that conscience, the immediate relation of man with his Creator, cannot be subject to the power of man: and this principle of justice hath induced you to decree a general liberty for all forms of worship. This is one of the noblest decrees of the French legislature. You have set a great example to the nations which continue to persecute for religion, and sooner or later, we hope, they will follow it.

We are come to implore this spirit of justice, that we may be suffered, without molestation, to conform to some principles; and to use some forms, to which the great family of Friends called Quakers, have been inviolably attached ever since their rise.

Great persecutions have been inflicted on us, on account of one of these principles, but to no purpose. Providence hath enabled us to surmount them without using violence. We mean the principle which forbids us to take arms, and kill men on any pretence; a principle consistent with the holy Scriptures: "Render not," said Christ, "evil for evil, but do good to your enemies."

Would to Heaven this principle were universally adopted! All mankind becoming one family, would be brethren united by acts of kindness. Generous Frenchmen, you are convinced of its truth; you have already begun to reduce it to practice; you have decreed never to defile your hands with blood in pursuit of conquest. This measure brings you,—it brings the whole world, a step towards universal peace. You cannot therefore behold with an unfriendly eye men who accelerate it by their example. They have proved in Pennsylvania, that vast establishments may be formed, raised, and supported without military preparations, and without shedding human blood.

We submit to your laws, and only desire the privilege of being here, as in other countries, the brethren of all men; never to take up arms against any. England, and the United States of America where our brethren are far more numerous than in France, allow us peaceably to follow this great principle of our religion, nor do they esteem us useless members of the community.

We have another request to make, which we hope you will not refuse us, because it flows from those principles of justice to which you do homage,

In our registers of births, marriages, and burials, we have preserved the simplicity of the primitive church. Our maxims forbid useless forms, and limit us to those which are necessary for ascertaining the terms of human life, consistently with the good order of society.—We request that our simple registers may be deemed sufficient to legalize our marriages and births, and authenticate our deaths, by causing a declaration thereof to be made before a magistrate.

Finally, we request that we may be exempted from all oaths, Christ having expressly forbidden them in these words, "You have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, thou shalt perform thine oaths; but I say unto you, I swear not at all; but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay."

Wife legislators, you are persuaded as well as we, that an oath is no assurance of sincerity; that it can give no additional force to the declaration of an honest man, and doth not deter a perjurer. You admit that an oath is but a peculiar way of making a declaration—as it were a peculiar mode of speech. We hope therefore you will not refuse to hear us in ours. It is that of our common Master—that of Christ.

We trust that we shall not be suspected of a wish to evade the great purpose of the civic oath. We are earnest to declare in this place, that we will continue true to the constitution which you have formed; we cherish and respect it; and it is our full purpose to follow its laws in all their purity; on the other hand, if our evidences are found to be false, we willingly submit to the penalties on false witnesses and perjurers.

Can you, respectable legislators, hesitate to grant our request? Cast your eyes on the history of our Society, in the countries in which we are established. More than a century hath elapsed, and we have never been found in any conspiracy against the government. Our temperate rule of life forbids ambition and luxury, and the purpose of our watchful discipline is to preserve us in the practice of those manners to which we were led by the exhortations and example of our founder.

We esteem employment a duty enjoined to all; and this persuasion renders us active and industrious. In this respect therefore our society may prove useful to France. By favoring us you encourage industry. Industry now seeks those countries where the honest industrious man will be under no apprehensions of seeing the produce of a century of labor snatched away, in an instant, by the hand of persecution.

Now that France is becoming the asylum of liberty, of equal law and of brotherly kindness, and adds to these fources of prosperity, perfect liberty forever individual to obey the dictates of his conscience, in relation to the Almighty;—what prospects of advantage will arise, to induce our brethren who inhabit less happy climes, to settle in France, a country favoured by nature, as soon as they learn that you have granted them the same civil and religious liberty which they enjoy in England and the United States of America.

Such is the respectful petition we have now found our hearts disposed to present to you, for the relief of our brethren in France, and for the good of a country which we love. We hope among your important engagements in reforming this great empire, and multiplying the sources of its happiness, you will extend your justice and regard to us and our children: it will bring upon you the reward of the Almighty, and the love of virtuous men.

ANSWER OF THE PRESIDENT.

"Quakers, who have fled from persecutors and tyrants, cannot but address with confidence those legislators who have, for the first time in France, made the rights of mankind the basis of law. And France, now reformed; France, in the bosom of peace, (which she will always consider herself bound to revere, and which she wishes to all other nations) may become another happy Pennsylvania.

"As a system of philanthropy, we adopt your principles. They remind us, that the origin of every society was a family united by its manners, its affections, and its wants; and doubtless those would certainly be the most sublime in-

stitutions, which would renew the human race, and bring them back to this primitive and virtuous original.

"The examination of your principles as a matter of opinion, no longer concerns us: we have decided on that point. There is a kind of property which no man would put into the common stock: the motions of his soul, the freedom of his thought. In this sacred domain, man is placed in a hierarchy far above the social state. As citizen, he must adopt a form of government:—but, as a thinking being, the universe is his country.

"As principles of religion, your doctrines will not be the subject of our deliberation. The relation of every man with the Supreme Being, is independent of all political institutions. Between God and the heart of man, what government would dare to interpose!

"As civil maxims, your claims must be submitted to the discussion of the legislative body. We will examine whether the forms you observe in order to ascertain births and marriages, be sufficient to authenticate those descents which the division of property renders indispensable, independently of good customs.

"We will consider whether a declaration, subject to the penalties against false witnesses and perjury, be not in fact an oath.

"Worthy citizens, you have already taken that civic oath which every man deserving of freedom hath thought a privilege rather than a duty.

You have not taken God to witness, but you have appealed to your consciences. And is not a pure conscience a heaven without a cloud? Is not that part of man a ray of the Divinity?

"You also say, that one of your religious tenets forbids you to take up arms, or to kill, on any pretence whatsoever. It is certainly a noble philosophical principle, which thus does a kind of homage to humanity. But consider well, whether the defence of yourselves, and your equals, be not also a religious duty? You would then have been overpowered by tyrants! Since we have procured liberty for you, and for ourselves, why should you refuse to preserve it?

"Had your brethren in Pennsylvania been less remote from the savages, would they have suffered their wives, their children, their parents, to be massacred rather than resist? And are not stupid tyrants, and ferocious conquerors, also savages?

"The assembly will, in its wisdom, consider all your requests. But whenever I meet a Quaker I shall say,

"My brother, if thou hast a right to be free, thou hast a right to prevent any one from making thee a slave.

"As thou lovest thy fellow-creature, suffer not a tyrant to destroy him: it would be killing him thyself.

"Thou desirest peace—but consider—weakness invites war—general resistance would prove an universal peace.

"The Assembly invites you to stay its fitting."

To the President, Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled:

The Memorial and Address of the people called Quakers,

Respectfully sheweth,
That deeply affected with the great effusion of human blood, and the slaughter of our fellow men in the late contests with the Indian natives, we sincerely lament the miseries and distresses which these mournful circumstances have produced, and may be yet further increased; if the same hostile measures are continued.

We conceive it to be our duty, and among our rights as citizens, to suggest to you our painful feelings on the subject: A serious and deep consideration of its importance, being among the most interesting objects that can claim the attention of the guardians of the public welfare; we, therefore ardently desire, that under the influence of true wisdom, you may be directed to pursue such pacific measures as have been heretofore experienced to be salutary and effectual in securing peace and friendship with the original owners of this land, whose religious instruction and civilization, if rightly promoted, may tend to this desirable end;—believing the blessing of a righteous God, who made of one