

“Our Debt to France”

Why The Franco-American Alliance
Should Not Be Ratified

PRESIDENTS WASHINGTON, JOHN
ADAMS, MADISON AND ANDREW
JACKSON ON THE WITNESS STAND

CHARLES SUMNER ON FRANCE'S
ATTITUDE DURING THE CIVIL WAR

HORACE GREELEY AND CHARLES A. DANA OPPOSED
TO FRANCE IN 1870-71

WOULD ABRAHAM LINCOLN SPEAK OF THE ETER-
NAL DEBT WHICH WE OWE FRANCE? WOULD
DANIEL WEBSTER?

The Whole Case Examined in
the Light of History

Debt same

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The Franco-American Treaty

Let Us Know all the Facts About our Debt
to France and Beware of Serious Mistakes

To the Senate of the United States:

The attempt to make the Franco-American alliance palatable to the public produces another instance of that distortion of history and of ordinarily well-known facts that have marked more than one of the important stages of the diplomacy attending the war and its settlements. Some grievous misstatements have crept into our State papers and as grievous misinformation has been fostered among the ill-informed.

In the light of the dark-lantern treaty-making methods of the Big Three under the dictation of the inspired French apostle of "revanche," Clemenceau, it is important to recall the language used in the official declaration of war. On April 6, 1917, the United States declared war, not on Germany, but on the "imperial German government," a government which ceased to exist before the armistice was concluded. **The language is this:**

"Whereas the imperial German government has committed repeated acts of war against the government and people of the United States," etc., "Therefore, Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled, that a state of war between the United States and the imperial German government which has been thrust upon the United States, is hereby formally declared . . . and he (the President) is hereby authorized and directed to employ the entire naval and military forces of the United States, etc., to carry on war against the imperial German government."

Apparently this vital distinction between a government which has ceased to exist and the people's government which has succeeded it, has been lost sight of.

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We find another equally amazing disregard of facts, as they stare us in the face from the history of the country, in the note on the Franco-American treaty which the President sent to the Senate on July 29. I will not dwell upon the fact that in this treaty we do indeed break with the Washingtonian traditions which the President is said in English quarters to have announced as his final determination. This treaty of alliance involves us, hand and foot, in the foreign entanglements against which George Washington warned his countrymen, and witnesses the parting of the ways for the United States, after a century and a half of peaceful isolation from European embroilments.

Is This True?

The particular thought that amazes the man who has even a rudimentary acquaintance with the history of his country is contained in the following paragraph of the President's statement of July 29:

“We are bound to France by ties of friendship which we have always regarded and shall always regard as peculiarly sacred. She assisted us to win our freedom as a nation. It is seriously to be doubted whether we could have won it without her timely and gallant aid. We have recently had the privilege of assisting enemies, who were also enemies of the world, from her soil, but that does not pay our debt to her.”

These are pretty sentiments, but they would have more importance if they were unqualifiedly true. Neither England nor the United States, it may be recalled, rushed to the defence of France in 1870. No prominent American then seemed conscious of the sacred debt under which we rested to France. Horace Greeley and Charles A. Dana, the foremost editors of that period, openly sided against France, the former declaring that as a result of the attitude of France during the Civil War, she had forfeited our friendship and sympathy. France, he declared, had been our ally in the past, but Germany would be our ally in future. The distinction which marked public opinion in 1870 and 1919 is the difference between the divergent views of public men educated respectively under Union and Confederate influences. And in the case of France and our alleged debt to her, we must judge the present-day Francophile demonstrations, in and out of high

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places, in the light of the adage that distance lends enchantment. Could we summon either Washington or Lincoln to give testimony on our debt to France, we should (as I shall attempt to show) hear an emphatic contradiction of the words delivered to the Senate on July 29. The paragraph quoted serenely ignores the momentous truth of history that the conduct of France toward the young American republic was so provocative that we found ourselves in a state of war against her in 1798, and Washington was appointed to take command of the American forces for the impending conflict.

We seem to have forgotten that unfortunate interlude in our relations with France, just as we seem to have forgotten that we declared war on "the imperial German government," while the terms we are asked to exact under the Clemenceau treaty interpret the French spirit of revenge for the result of 1871, and constitute a peace, at the expense of starving women and famishing babies—a peace of studied cruelty designed to sap the vitality of a nation of 70,000,000 and to exterminate it by a graduated process of economic serfdom.

No one inquires into our history to discover the reason why this debt was regarded as discharged by the founders of the republic who still lived and spoke in 1798, only twenty-two years after our declaration of independence; again by the great men of the '60s as well as in 1870, when not a hand was raised in America to save France from the consequences of her declaration of war against Prussia.

American Presidents on the Witness Stand.

The messages of the early Presidents are full of complaints of the treatment accorded American ships and American commerce by the French, and such allusions abound from the time of President Washington to that of President Jackson, and in the replies of the Houses of Congress to the Presidents. Witness the following:

President Washington

January 19, 1797: "Some circumstances of an unwelcome nature lately occurred in relation to France; our trade has suffered, and was suffering, extensive injuries in the West Indies from the cruisers and agents of the French republic."

President John Adams

November 22, 1797: "The numerous captures of American vessels by the cruisers of the French republic . . . have occasioned considerable expenses in making and supporting the claims of our citizens before their tribunal."

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February 5, 1798: "A number of depositions of witnesses of several captures and outrages committed within and near the limits of the United States by a French privateer—called "Veritude" or "Fortitude"—and particularly upon an English merchant ship named the "Ora Cabissa", which he first plundered and then burned, with the rest of the cargo of great value, within the territory of the United States in the harbor of Charleston on the 17th of October last." (Adams was not content to send "notes of protest"; he points out to Congress the "propriety and necessity of enabling the executive authority of the government to take measures for protecting the citizens of the United States and such foreigners as have a right to enjoy the peace and protection of their laws within the limits in that as well as other harbors which are equally exposed.")

December 8, 1798: "The decree of the Directory alleged to be intended to restrain the depredations of French cruisers on our commerce has not given and cannot give relief Hitherto nothing is discoverable in the conduct of France which ought to change or relax our measures of defense. . . . But considering the late manifestations of her policy toward foreign nations, I deem it a duty deliberately and solemnly to declare my opinion that whether we negotiate with her or not, vigorous preparations for war will be alike indispensable. This alone will give us an equal treaty and insure its observance."

Address of the United States Senate to President John Adams, December 11, 1798:

"The government of France has not only refused to repeal, but has recently enjoined the observance of its former edict respecting merchandise of British fabric or produce, the property of neutrals, by which the interruption of lawful commerce and the spoliation of the property of our citizens have again received a public sanction. They speak a more intelligible language than professions of solicitude to avoid a rupture, however ardently made. We are of the opinion with you, sir, that there has nothing yet been discovered in the conduct of France which can justify a relaxation of the means of defense adopted during the last session of Congress, the happy result of which is so strongly and generally marked."

December 12, 1798: "I have seen no real evidence of any change of system or disposition in the French republic toward the United States."

Address of the House of Representatives to President John Adams, December 13, 1798:

"The continuing in force of the decree of January last ought of itself to be considered as demonstrative of the real intentions of the French government. That decree proclaims a predatory warfare against the unquestionable rights of neutral commerce which, with our means of defense, our interest and our honor command us to repel. It therefore now becomes the United States to be as determined in resistance as they have been patient in suffering and condescending in negotiations."

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December 14, 1798: "While those who direct the affairs of France persist in the enforcement of decrees hostile to our essential rights, their conduct forbids us to confide in any of their professions of amity."

February 15, 1790: "The arrest of the Executive Directory of the 2d of March, 1797, remains in force, the third article of which subjects explicitly and exclusively American seamen to be treated as pirates if found aboard ships of the enemies of France."

President James Madison

June 1, 1812: "Our relations with France will have shown that since the revocation of her decrees, as they violated the neutral rights of the United States, her Government has authorized the illegal captures by its privateers and public ships, and that other outrages have been practiced on our vessels and citizens."

President Andrew Jackson

December 7, 1835: "It is sufficient to say that for ten years and upwards our commerce was, with but little interruption, the subject of constant aggression on the part of France—aggressions the ordinary features of which were condemnation of vessels and cargoes under arbitrary decrees, adopted in contravention as well of the laws of nations as of treaty stipulations, burning on the high seas and seizures and confiscations under special imperial rescripts in the ports of other nations occupied by the armies or under the control of France. The treaty of July 4, 1831, recognized the justice of our claims and promised payment to the amount of 25,000,000 francs in six annual installments. The expectations justly founded upon the promises thus solemnly made to this government by that of France was not realized. This is not the first time that the government of France has taken exceptions to the messages of the American Presidents. President Washington and the first President Adams in the performance of their duties to the American people fell under the animadversions of the French Directory."

These extracts from the "Messages of the Presidents to Congress" indicate most clearly how completely the high-handed and unfriendly acts of France had effaced the memory of her support of the Colonies.

War with France in 1798 was thoroughly popular. "Everything seemed to indicate immediate war with the French republic. And there was much casus belli," writes Elson, p. 365. "France had heaped one insult upon another. . . . Her privateers had captured scores of American merchant vessels; she had rejected an American minister because he belonged to a party distasteful to the French. Even after all this our President was so anxious to maintain peace that he sent three envoys; and these were kept waiting three months in the antechamber, hearing the

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most humiliating proposals, and at last two of them were driven in disgrace from the country. Was not this enough to raise the ire of every true-hearted American?” Public sentiment he epitomizes in one sentence: “Such an outburst had not been known since the battle of Lexington.” Patriotic songs were written, and one of these, “Hail, Columbia,” still lives in our literature.

Benson J. Lossing Testifies.

Benson J. Lossing, the popular American historian, recorded his unmistakable dissent from the opinion expressed by President Wilson in an article, “Our French Allies,” printed on page 753 et seq. of Harper’s Magazine for December, 1870, to May, 1871 Lossing says:

“From the time that the king of France publicly recognized the nationality of the united American colonies struggling for independence, and sent troops to help them, until our government recognized the republic of France as it suddenly arose out of the ruins of Caesarism, our French friends have not ceased to remind Americans that they owe their being as a nation to the generosity of the French monarch and the gallantry of French warriors. So Frenchmen believe and so many Americans believe. Like most other superstitions, there are many grains of truth in it. To winnow those grains from the chaff is the the object of this paper.”

Lossing admits that the French government did aid the Americans.

“State policy, simulating friendship for them, overruled the opposition of the weak king, . . . who could never hear Franklin, the embodiment of democracy, praised without petulance, nor of help being given to the Americans without breaking out into a fit of passions.”

He then sets forth the motives which actuated France in coming to the aid of the colonies:

“In the Seven Years War, which ended with the treaty of 1763, France had been thoroughly humbled by England. Her pride had been wounded. She had been shorn of vast possessions in America and Asia. She had been compelled, by the terms of the treaty, to cast down the fortifications of Dunkirk, and to submit forever to the presence of an English commissioner, without whose consent not a single paving stone might be moved on the quay or in the harbor of a French maritime city. This was an insult too grievous to be borne with equanimity. Its keenness was maintained by the tone of English diplomacy, which was that of a conqueror—harsh, arrogant, and

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often uncivil. A desire for relief from the shame became a vital principle of French policy, and the most sleepless vigilance was maintained for the discovery of an opportunity to avenge the injury and efface the mortification.

“The quarrel between Great Britain and her colonies, which rapidly assumed the phase of contest after the port of Boston was closed, early in the summer 1774, attracted the notice and stimulated the hope of the French government. But it seemed hardly possible for a few colonists to hold a successful or even effective contest with powerful England—‘the mistress of the seas’; and it was not until the proceedings of the First Continental Congress had been read in Europe, the skirmish at Lexington and the capture of Ticonderoga had occurred, and the Second Congress had met, thrown down the gauntlet of defiance at the feet of the British ministry, and been proclaimed to be ‘rebels’, that the French cabinet saw gleams of sure promise that England’s present trouble would be sufficiently serious to give France the coveted opportunity to strike her a damaging blow.”

Lossing sums up our debt to France in the following words :

“That all assistance was afforded, primarily, as a part of a State policy for the benefit of France;

“That the French people as such never assisted the Americans; for the French democracy did not comprehend the nature of the struggle, and had no opportunity for expression, and the aristocracy, like the government, had no sympathy with their cause;

“That the first and most needed assistance was from a French citizen (Beaumarchais), favored by his government for State purposes, who hoped to help himself and his government;

“That, with the exception of the services of Lafayette and a few other Frenchmen, at all times, and those of the army under Rochambeau, and the navy under De Grasse, for a few weeks, in the seventh year of the struggle, the Americans derived no material aid from the French;

“That the moral support offered by the alliance was injurious because it was more than counterpoised by the relaxation of effort and vigilance which a reliance upon others is calculated to inspire, and the creation of hopes which were followed by disappointment;

“That the advantage gained by the French over the English, because of their co-operation with the Americans, were equivalent to any which the Americans acquired by the alliance;

“That neither party then rendered assistance to the other because of any good will mutually existing, but as a means of securing mutual benefits; and

“That the Americans would doubtless have secured their independence and peace sooner without their entanglements with the French than with it.

“A candid consideration of these facts, in the light of present knowledge on the subject, compels us to conclude that there is no

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debt of gratitude due from Americans to France for services in securing their independence of Great Britain which is not cancelled by the services done by the Americans at the same time in securing for France important advantages over Great Britain. And when we consider these facts, and the conduct of the French toward us during a large portion of the final decade of the last century, and of the decade of this just closed—the hostile attitude, in our national infancy, of the inflated Directory, sustained by the French people, and the equally hostile attitude, in the hour of our greatest national distress, of the imperial cabinet, also sustained by the French people, Americans cannot be expected to endure with absolute complacency the egotism which untruthfully asserts that they owe their existence as a nation to the generosity and valor of the French.”

Mr. Wilson on the Witness Stand.

Finally, it is proper to take the testimony of President Wilson himself, as given at a period considerably ante-dating the statement of July 29, that “We are bound to France by ties of friendship which we have always regarded and shall always regard, as peculiarly sacred.” In his “History of the American People” Mr. Wilson treats the subject in the following words:

“The Congress at Philadelphia explicitly commanded its commissioners to be guided by the wishes of the French court; Dr. Franklin, Mr. John Adams and Mr. John Jay, who bore its commission, were men of honor, and entertained, besides, a lively sense of the very deep obligations of the United States to France, for the money and the armed assistance in the field and upon the seas, without which, apparently, their victory would have been impossible. It proved impracticable, nevertheless, to act with France; for she conducted herself not as the ingenuous friend of the United States, but only as the enemy of England, and as first and always, a subtle strategist for her own interest and advantage. The American commissioners would not be tricked, and came to terms separately with the English.”

These American commissioners of 1783, specifically described as “men of honor” by Mr. Wilson, the historian, would not be “tricked.” Will the Senate of today?

Here is evidence of such a total disregard of our debt to France that the address of July 29 conveys something akin to a rebuke to the men who occupied the White House for a period of thirty-five years immediately following the establishment of our government. At a later period France seized the Hawaiian islands, and on June 18, 1851, Secretary of State Webster instructed the American minister in Paris to say that the further enforcement of the French demands against Hawaii “would tend seriously to disturb our friendly relations with the French government.”

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France in Our Civil War

What would be the probable attitude of President Lincoln toward France, in view of the pernicious French anti-American activity during the Civil War? The British government was formally approached by the government of France with a proposal for the joint recognition of the Confederacy; Mr. Davis was more popular in France than Mr. Lincoln, and Justin McCarthy in his “History of Our Own Times,” (II, p. 231) says: “The Southern scheme found support only in England and in France. In all other European countries the sympathy of the people and government alike went with the North. . . . Assurances of friendship came from all civilized countries to the Northern States except from England and France alone.”

While the Northern and Southern States were engaged in a death grapple, Napoleon III was defying the Monroe Doctrine by invading Mexico, and in 1862 was sending instructions to the French general Forey, as follows:

“People will ask you why we ascribe men and money to establish a government in Mexico. In the present state of civilization the development of America can no longer be a matter of indifference to Europe. . . . It is not at all to our interest that they should come in possession of the entire Gulf of Mexico, to rule from there the destinies of the Antilles and South America, and control the products of the New World.”

After Lee's surrender, General Slaughter of the Confederate army opened negotiations with the French Marshal Bazaine for the transfer of 25,000 Confederate soldiers to Mexico, and many distinguished Confederate officers cast their lot with the French to establish Maximilian on the throne. General Price was commissioned to recruit an imperial army in the Confederate States. Governor Harris of Tennessee and other Americans naturalized as Mexicans and now took the lead in a colonization scheme of vast proportions. The North became thoroughly alarmed. A French army co-operating with Confederate expatriates could not be tolerated on the Mexican border. The government at Washington lodged an emphatic protest with the French government, and an army of observation of 50,000 men under General Sheridan was dispatched to the Rio Grande, ready to cross into Mexico and attack Bazaine at a moment's notice. The American

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minister in Paris was instructed by Seward to insist on a withdrawal of the French forces from Mexico, and as the French government was in no position to engage in a war in a distant country against a veteran army of a million men, it was forced to yield.

"The Emperor of the French," writes McCarthy (p. 231), "fully believed that the Southern cause was sure to triumph, and that the Union would be broken up; he was even willing to hasten what he assumed to be the unavoidable end. He was anxious that England should join with him in some measures to facilitate the success of the South by recognizing the Government of the Southern Confederation. He got up the Mexican intervention which assuredly he would never have attempted if he had not been persuaded that the Union was on the eve of disruption."

The French populace was enthusiastically on the side of Napoleon in the Mexican adventure, as attested by the proceedings in the French legislature, especially by the scenes in the Senate, February 24, 1862, and in the Corps Legislatif, June 26 of the same year, when Billault, Minister of Foreign Affairs, spoke on French aims in Mexico. On March 23, 1865, Druyn de Lluys, the French premier, notified Mr. Seward, our Secretary of State, that American intervention in favor of Juarez, the Mexican patriot, would lead to a declaration of war on the part of France. The necessary military preparations had been made by Marshal Bazaine, who, as related by Paul Garlot in "L'Empire de Maximilian" (Paris, 1890), had erected "fortified supports" at the United States frontier and made certain "arrangements" with Confederate leaders.

"In our dark hours and the great convulsions of our war," said Charles Sumner, then chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations in the Senate, in New York, September 11, 1863, "France is forgetting her traditions."

Our Late Enemies During the Revolution

Since the ratification of the treaty of alliance with France has become predominantly a **question of sentiment**, let us be just and fair enough to recall at this momentous juncture what the attitude of our late enemies toward us was during the Revolution and what our relations always were down to 1914—and the writer

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is bold enough to assert that this debt is greater than the average man is aware of, and may well enlist the critical interest of the Senate.

Had Russia in 1778 formed an alliance with England, Russian troops would have swelled the forces arrayed against the American patriots to such proportions that the result of the struggle presumably would have been different. The influence of Prussia in that relation is a chapter of history practically closed to most students. But for immense bribes to Count Panin, Catherine the Great's premier, paid by Frederick the Great, as testified by British authorities, Russia would have extended aid to England in her struggle with the Colonies which might have proved decisive.

It was England's interest to secure if possible the alliance of Russia, and, as in the Seven Years War, to involve France in continental complications. In 1778 there seemed every reason to expect the outbreak of hostilities in Europe. The continuance of the war gave an increased importance to an alliance with Russia, and while the Dutch appealed to Catherine on the ground that Great Britain had broken with Holland solely on account of the armed neutrality, the English government offered to hand over Minorca as the price of a convention. In 1778 Catherine was approached by the English government through Sir James Harris and invited to make a **defensive and offensive alliance**. But the opposition of the Premier, Nikolai Ivanovich, Count Panin, influenced by Frederick the Great, prevented any reprochement between England and Russia, and Catherine declared her inability to join England against France unless the English government bound itself to support her against the Turks.

"The Prussian party, headed by Panin at St. Petersburg," writes Arthur Hassall, M.A., in "The Balance of Power, 1715-1789" (p. 338; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1907), "had won its last triumph, and all chance for an Anglo-Russian alliance had for the moment disappeared. . . . Since 1764 Count Panin had been the head of the Prussian party at the Russian capital, and the Prussian alliance had been the keystone of Catherine's policy. . . . **Frederick the Great, partly by immense bribes to Panin, had kept Catherine true to the existing political system, and had contributed to prevent Russian assistance from being given to England during the American struggle.**" (P. 361.)

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I need hardly cite the fact that Frederick himself was approached by England for the purpose of inducing him to send troops to America, and we know his reply: “If the English crown would give me all the millions possible I would not furnish it two small files of my troops to serve against the Colonies. Neither can it expect from me a guarantee of its electorate of Hanover,” and he gave France his solemn assurance that she had nothing to fear from him in case of a war with England.

Driving a Hard Bargain with a Starving People

If the truth is to play any part in the present discussion of ancient friendships, it is necessary to point out the attitude alike of France and Prussia during our struggle for survival as a united nation, and it is of vital importance to do so because it is purposed to commit us to the levy of a heavy and oppressive retribution upon one nation under a specious pretext of sentimental duty to another, a retribution so rashly conceived and remorselessly applied that we may well pause to reflect upon the possible consequences.

Let us dispassionately look at some of the conditions of the peace treaty which the German people (not “the imperial German government”) were compelled to sign, and see whether my statements are true. I quote:

PARIS, July 24 (Associated Press).—Germany will have to surrender to France 500 stallions, 3,000 fillies, 90,000 milch cows, 100,000 sheep, and 10,000 goats, according to a report made yesterday before the French Peace Commission, sitting under the presidency of Rene Viviani, by M. Dubois, economic expert for the commission, in commenting on the peace treaty clauses.

Two hundred stallions, 5,000 mares, 5,000 fillies, 50,000 cows, and 40,000 heifers, also are to go to Belgium from Germany. The deliveries are to be made monthly during a period of three months until completed.

A total of 140,000 milch cows! Forty thousand heifers! To be surrendered by a country in which little children are dying for lack of milk, and babies are brought into the world blind, because of the starved conditions of the mothers! Henry Nevison, an eminent journalist, recently published in the *London Daily News* a tragic description of what he saw in the hospitals of Cologne: “Although I have seen many horrible things,” he writes, “I have seen nothing so pitiful as these rows of babies, feverish from

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want of food, exhausted by privations to the point that their little limbs were slender wands, their expressions hopeless and their faces full of pain.”—(*The Nation*.)

A formidable number of equally impartial witnesses might be quoted to the same end. We have read of revolts against the course of deliberate cruelty by starvation recorded of the British soldiers in the occupied Rhinelands—against the inspired policy of “revanche” on a conquered foe, and we now have the testimony of Miss Jane Addams to the prevailing misery created by the “illegal and indefensible blockade” of Germany.

There are even now milk stations for the supply of milk to French babies in many cities of this country, just as there were throughout the war. France, in truth, is over-supplied with milk. It has been selling milk to Germany at a substantial profit. The *New York Sun* of April 3, last, printed a dispatch from The Hague, as follows: “They (the Germans) are particularly happy over the purchase of 250,000 cases of condensed milk from the military stores of France and England, which, to cover the cost, will be sold at 2:20 marks (at normal exchange about 60 cents) for a one-pound can.” Observe: “normal exchange”—the mark is down to about 7 cents at present from approximately 25 cents, normal!

These are but fugitive instances of the grinding terms of peace which the Senate is asked to ratify, while the attempt is made to stifle its conscience and divert its attention by a barrage of sentimental eloquence about our debt to France.

Let Us Know the Truth

We know from the discussion in the Senate during the Franco-Prussian war, without quoting other authorities, that both England and France prohibited the listing of Union bonds on their exchanges, while the Germans bought some \$600,000,000 of our securities. (“Globe Congressional Record,” 41st Congress, third session; part II, pp. 953-55.)

Mr. Sewart, Senator from Nevada:

“Allow me to call the attention of the Senator from Tennessee to the fact, which he must recollect, of the amount of our bonds that were taken in Germany at the time we needed that they should be taken, and when they were prohibited from the Exchange in London and from the Bourse in Paris, and not allowed to be on the markets

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there at all, on account of the state of public opinion there, while Germany alone came in and took five or \$600,000,000 dollars at a time when we needed money more than anything else, to sustain our credit. That is a fact showing sympathy, certainly.”

Let us quote again from the official proceedings of that same Congress, same session (“Congressional Record,” p. 954). Senator Pomeroy is speaking now :

“They (the Germans) sent us men; they recruited our armies with men; they helped to save the life of this nation. Though the French were our ancient allies, the Germans have been our modern allies.”

And Senator Charles Sumner declared (“Congressional Record,” 3rd Session 41st Congress, p. 956): “We owe infinitely to Germany.”

Elson in his “History of the United States” (p. 779), says: “It is a pleasure to turn to our relations with Germany and Russia during the war. Not only was the German Confederation in full sympathy with the Union cause, but thousands of German-Americans [the hyphen was not then a badge of dual alliance] gave their lives in defence of the cause.”

After the close of the Civil War, the Prussian deputies, some 260 in number, on April 26, 1865, submitted an address to the American minister in Berlin, in which the following language occurs :

“Living among us you are witness of the heartfelt sympathy which this people have ever preserved for the people of the United States during the long and severe conflict. You are aware that Germany has looked with pride and joy on the thousands of her sons who, in this struggle, have arrayed themselves on the side of law and justice. You have seen with what joy the victories of the Union have been hailed and how confident our faith in the final triumph of the great cause of the restoration of the Union in all its greatness has ever been, even in the midst of adversity.”

William H. Seward, as Secretary of State, wrote to the United States minister at Berlin in May, 1863 :

“You will not hesitate to express assurance of the constant good will of the United States toward the king and the people who have dealt with us in good faith and great friendship during the severe trials through which we have been passing.”

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Are these things which I have cited, out of an abundance of material, relevant? We are asked to take a position of the most stupendous consequences on a problem based upon a pretended debt of gratitude, and to become parties to a compact for the fastening of economic slavery upon one nation in order to protect another which avowedly has been waiting forty-eight years to glut its revenge—revenge upon a people (no longer "the imperial German government"), who in every crisis of our history have been our friends. Shall we enter blindly into this dismal compact of revenge? If so, let it be upon some pretext other than a profession of gratitude, and let us understand the treaty of peace and our responsibility in connection with it. "Those who will sign this treaty will sign the death warrant of millions of German men, women and children," said Count Rantzau; "already since the war we have 1,000,000 dead—victims of the blockade."

Respectfully,

R C. DASHER.

"'Tis better using France than trusting France."—Shakespeare, 3d Henry VI, IV, Sc. I.

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