

FOREIGN CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE LIBERTIES OF THE UNITED STATES.

CHAPTER I.



Samuel Morse

- The first impression of the improbability of foreign conspiracy considered
- Present political condition of Europe favors an enterprise against our institutions
- The war of opinions commenced
- Despotism against Liberty
- The vicissitudes of this war
- The official declaration of the despotic party against all liberty
- Necessity to the triumph of despotism that American Liberty should be destroyed
- The kind of attack upon us most likely to be adopted from the nature of the contest
- Particular reasons why our institutions are obnoxious to the European governments
- Has the attack commenced? Yes! by Austria – Through a Society called the St. Leopold Foundation-Ostensibly religious, in its designs.

DOES this heading seem singular? What, it will be said, is it at all probable that any nation or combination of nations, can entertain designs against us, a people so peaceable, and at the same time so distant? Knowing the daily increasing resources of this country in all the means of defense against foreign aggression, how absurd in the nations abroad to dream of a conquest on this soil? Let me, nevertheless, ask attention, while I humbly offer my reasons for believing that a conspiracy exists, that its plans are already in operation, and that we are attacked in a vulnerable quarter which cannot be defended by our ships, our forts, or our armies.

Who among us is not aware that a mighty struggle of opinion is in our days agitating all the nations of Europe; that there is a war going on between despotism on one side, and liberty on the other. Footnote: The War of Opinions. EVERY account from Europe attests the correctness of the views here taken more than a year since, of the political state of the civilized world. This war of opinions, or of categories, as Lafayette termed it, is in truth commenced, and Americans, if they will but use common observation, cannot but feel that a neglect to notice, and provide against the consequences of that settled, systematic hostility to free institutions so strongly manifested by foreign powers, and which is daily assuming amore serious aspect, will inevitably result in mischief to the country, will surely be attended with

anarchy if they wake not to the apprehension of the reality of this danger. Americans, you indeed sleep upon a mine. This is scarcely a figure of speech; you have excitable materials in the bosom of your society, which, skilfully put in action by artful demagogues, will subvert your present social system; you have a foreign interest too, daily, hourly, increasing, ready to take advantage of every excitement, and which will shortly be beyond your control, or will be subdued only by blood. You have agents among you, men in the pay of those very foreign powers, whose every measure of foreign and domestic policy has now for its end and aim the destruction of liberty every where. To increase your peril, you have a press that will not apprise you of the dangers that threaten you; we can reach you with our warnings only through the religious journals ; the daily press is blind, or asleep, or bribed, or afraid; at any rate, it is silent on this subject, and thus is throwing the weight of its influence on the side of your enemies. Foreign spies have clothed themselves in a religious dress, and so awe-struck are our journalists at its sacred texture, or so unable or unwilling to discern the difference between the man and his mask, that they start away in fear, lest they should be called bigoted or intolerant, or persecuting, if they should venture to lift up the consecrated cloak that hides a foreign foe. Americans, if you depend on your daily press, you rely on a broken reed; it fails you in your need. It dare not, no, it dare not attack Popery. It dare not drag into the light the political enemies of your liberty, because they come in the name of religion. All despotic Europe is awake and active in plotting your downfall, and yet they let you sleep, and you choose not to be awaked; "a little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep." And now like a man whose house is on fire, dreaming of comfort and security, you will perhaps repel with passion and reproach the friendly hand that would wake you in season to escape with your life.

Do you doubt whether Europe is in hostile array against liberty? Read of the movements and revolutions of foreign cabinets, as one or the other principle temporarily predominates. Read the views of the statesmen of Europe. A distinguished member of the Spanish Cortes Don Telesforo de Trueba, in a speech delivered before that body a few months since, says, "The present war is not a war of succession but of principle-liberty and despotism are at issue. England, France, Belgium, Spain and Portugal, have ranged themselves under the banner of the former, but it is not necessary for me to name those powers who follow the standard of the latter."-Of Don Carlos and his government he says, "Ignorance, hypocrisy, and fanaticism, are his only counsellors, whispering to him new modes of oppressing his people. Every thing around is stamped with the marks of baseness and falsehood, while in this infernal region desolation and death reign triumphant. **A sanguinary priesthood is sacrificing human victims to the God of peace and love, -men who wish to bring back the dark ages, the age of tyranny, and ignorance, and death.**"

The foreign correspondent of the Evening Post, in a letter from Florence, Italy, published in that journal, Dec. 27, 1834, has the following information, directly from Tuscany.

"Hitherto" (in the administration of the government) "a disposition has been

shown to let off political offenders as lightly as possible-but lately, however, something of the same jealousy of republicanism has shown itself, which has been manifested by the other absolute governments of Europe. A quarterly journal was suppressed a few months since, on account of something which gave offense to Austria. This, and several other acts of the Grand Duke, have greatly diminished his personal popularity. The rulers of Italy appear to have come to an understanding, that it is time to make an example of some of the disaffected."

Now this Austria is the same busy, meddling government that is operating in this country; we scarcely read the name of Austria in a foreign journal, or in letters from abroad, but in connection with some plan for extinguishing liberty, and yet we harbor her emissaries, promote their secret designs, contribute our money to swell their coffers, build for them their seminaries and convents, entrust our children to their instruction, court their favor, shield them from all attack, yes, even put ourselves under their protection: all, all this we do, and our native blood flows evenly in our veins. Spirit of 76 where dost thou sleep? And with what deep anxiety should Americans watch the vicissitudes of the conflict. Having long since achieved our own victory in the great strife between arbitrary power and freedom, having demonstrated by successful experiment before the world, the safety, the happiness, the superior excellence of a republican government, a government proceeding from the people as the true source of power; enjoying in overflowing abundance the rich blessings of such a government, must we not regard with more than common interest the efforts of mighty nations to break away from the prejudices, and habits, and sophistical opinions of ages of darkness, and struggling to attain the same glorious privileges of rational freedom? But there are other motives than that of curiosity, or of mere sympathy with foreign trouble, that should arouse our solicitude, in the fearful crisis which has at length arrived, a crisis which the prophetic tongue of a great British statesman Footnote: Mr. Canning. long since foretold, the war of opinion, threatening the world with a more frightful sacrifice of human life, than history in any of its blood-stained pages records. Happily separated by an ocean-barrier from the great arena where the physical action of this bloody drama is to be performed, we are secure from the immediate physical effects of the strife; but we cannot remain unaffected by the result.

Of European wars arising from the craving of personal ambition, from thirst for national glory, from desire of territorial increase, or from other local causes, we might safely be ignorant both of cause and result. No armed bands of a conqueror flushed with victory, could give us a moment's alarm. But in a war of opinions, in a war of principles, in which the very foundations of government are subverted, and the whole social fabric upturned, we cannot, if we would, be uninterested in the result. Principles are not bounded by geographical limits. Oceans present to them no barriers. All of principle that belongs to despotism throughout the world, whether in the iron systems of Russia and Austria; or the scarcely less civilized system of China, and all of principle that belongs to pure American freedom in the United States, or in the mixed systems of Britain, France, and some other European states, are in this great contest arrayed in opposition. The triumph of the one or

the other principle, whether in the field of battle, or in the secret councils of the cabinet, or the congress of ministers, or the open debate, produces effects wherever society exists. The recent convulsions in Europe should not pass unheeded by Americans. The three days' revolution of France, the reform in Britain on the side of liberty; the suppressed revolutions of Italy and Poland on the side of despotism ; the yet doubtful victory of the two principles now in contest in Portugal and Spain; Footnote: These numbers were written in January and February, 1834. the crooked diplomacy, the contradictory measures, the faithless promises of the despotic cabinets, all show that the war of principles has indeed commenced, and that Europe is agitated to its very centre with the anxieties of the contest.

No open annual message reveals frankly to all the world the true internal condition of the oppressed nations of Europe. From the well guarded walls of the secret council chamber of the imperial power, documents seldom escape to show us the strength of the opposing principle. Despotism glosses over all its oppressions. The people are always happy under the paternal sway. They that plead for liberty are always enemies of public order. "Order reigns in Warsaw," was the proclamation that told the world that despotism had triumphed over Poland, and none now may know the number of her sons of freedom still at large. still unexiled to the mines of Siberia; yet it is great; for Russia, and Prussia, and Austria. have leagued anew against unconquerable Poland ; and the agony of determination, the desperate resolution which the Russian Autocrat has just uttered, tells the secret of the yet unvanquished spirit of Polish patriots, and at the same time discloses the plot of mighty efforts, of united efforts, of persevering efforts utterly to extinguish liberty.

"As long as I live," says the Emperor, "I will oppose a will of iron to the progress of liberal opinions. The present generation is lost, but we must labor with zeal and earnestness to improve the spirit of that to come. It may require an hundred years; I am not unreasonable, I give you a whole age, but you must work without relaxation."

This is language without ambiguity, bold, undisguised; it is the clear official disclosure of the determination of the Holy Alliance against liberty. It proclaims unextinguishable hatred, a will of iron. There is no compromise with liberty, a hundred years of efforts unrelaxed, if necessary, shall be put forth to crush it for ever. Its very name must be blotted from the earth. What! and is there a Holy Alliance, a "union of Christian princes," leagued to extinguish the kindling sparks of liberty in Europe? and will they make no effort to quench the great altar-fires, that blaze in their strength in the temples of this land of liberty? An oversight like this would seem to be too palpable for the wisdom of the despotic cabinets to commit. This conquest must be achieved, or liberty will never die in Europe.

With declarations before us, thus officially put forth by despotism, of such exterminating hostility to liberty, is it not possible that an attack on us may be made from a quarter, and in a shape little expected? Should we not at least look about us? Nations may be attacked and conquered too, with other weapons than the sword. The diplomatic pen, as England can testify, has often wrested from her that territory which her sword had won. We need not look,

therefore, to the ports of Europe to see if fleets are gathering. We are safe enough from ships. Nor need we fear diplomacy, for we have "entangling alliances with none." Where, then, shall we look? What shape would attack be likely to assume? Let the nature of the contest aid us in the inquiry. It is the war of opinion; the war of antagonist principles: the war of despotism against liberty. But how can this contest be carried on in this country? We have not the warring opinions to set in array against each other. One principle is certainly absent. We have no party in favor of despotism. This party is to be created. If then a scheme can be devised for sowing the seeds, and rearing the plants of despotism, that is the scheme which would find favor with the Holy Alliance, to subserve its designs against American liberty.

Is it asked, Why should the Holy Alliance feel interested in the destruction of transatlantic liberty? I answer, the silent but powerful and increasing influence of our institutions on Europe, is reason enough. The example alone of prosperity which we exhibit in such strong contrast to the enslaved, priest-ridden, tax-burdened despotisms of the old world, is sufficient to keep those countries in perpetual agitation. How can it be otherwise? Will a sick man, long despairing of cure, learn that there is a remedy for him, and not desire to procure it? Will one born to think a dungeon his natural home, learn through his grated bars, that man may be free; and not struggle to obtain his liberty? And what do the people of Europe behold in this country? They witness the successful experiment of a free government; a government of the people; without rulers de jure divino, (by divine right:) having no hereditary privileged classes; a government exhibiting good order and obedience to law, without an armed police and secret tribunals; a government out of debt; a people industrious, enterprising, thriving in all their interests; without monopolies; a people religious without an establishment; moral and honest without the terrors of the confessional or the inquisition; a people not harmed by the uncontrolled liberty of the press, and freedom of opinion; a people that read what they please, and think, and judge, and act for themselves; a people enjoying the most unbounded security of person and property; among whom domestic conspiracies are unknown; where the poor and rich have equal justice; a people social and hospitable; exerting all their energies in schemes of public and private benefit without other control than mutual forbearance. A government so contrasted in all points with absolute governments, must, and does engage the intense solicitude, both of the rulers and people of the old world. Every revolution that has occurred in Europe for the last half century, has been in a greater or less degree the consequence of our own glorious revolution. The great political truths there promulgated to the world, are the seed of the disorders and conspiracies, and revolutions of Europe, from the first French revolution, down to the present time. They are the throes of the internal life, breaking the bands of darkness with which superstition and despotism have hitherto bound the nations struggling into the light of a new age. Can despotism know all this, and not feel it necessary to do something to counteract the evil?

Let us look around us. Is despotism doing any thing in this country? It becomes us to be jealous. We have cause to expect an attack, and that it will be of a kind suited to the character of the contest, the war of opinion. Yes!

despotism is doing something. Austria is now acting in this country. She has devised a grand scheme. She has organized a great plan for doing something here, which she, at least, deems important. She has her Jesuit missionaries traveling through the land; she has supplied them with money, and has furnished a fountain for a regular supply. She had expended a year ago more than seventy four thousand dollars in furtherance of her design! Footnote: From the best authority, I have just learned, Dec. 1834, that \$100,000 have been received from Austria, within two years! These are not surmises. They are facts. Some official documents giving the constitution and doings of this Foreign Society, have lately made their appearance in the New-York Observer, and have been copied extensively into other journals of the country. This society having ostensibly a religious object, has been for nearly four years at work in the United States, without attracting, out of the religious world, much attention to its operations. The great patron of this apparently religious scheme is no less a personage than the Emperor of Austria. The Society is called the St. Leopold Foundation. It is organized in Austria. The field of its operations is these United States. It meets and forms its plans in Vienna. Prince Metternich has it under his watchful care. The Pope has given it his apostolic benediction, and "His Royal Highness, Ferdinand V., King of Hungary, and Crown Prince of the other hereditary states, has been most graciously pleased, prompted by a piety worthy the exalted title of an apostolic king, to accept the office of Protector of the Leopold Foundation." Now in the present state of the war of principles in Europe, is not a society formed avowedly to act upon this country, originating in the dominions of a despot, and holding its secret councils in his capital, calculated to excite suspicion? Is it credible that a society got up under the auspices of the Austrian government, under the superintendence of its chief officers of state, supplying with funds a numerous body of Jesuit emissaries who are organizing themselves in all our borders, actively passing and re-passing between Europe and America; is it credible, I say, that such a society has for its object purely a religious reform? Is it credible that the manufacturers of chains for binding liberty in Europe, have suddenly become benevolently concerned only for the religious welfare of this republican people? If this Society be solely for the propagation of the Catholic faith, one would think that Rome, and not Vienna should be its headquarters! that the Pope, not the Emperor of Austria, should be its grand patron! It must be allowed that this should be a subject of general and absorbing interest. If despotism has devised a scheme for operating against its antagonist principle in this country, the stronghold, the very citadel of freedom, it becomes us to look about us. It is high time that we awake to the apprehension of danger. I propose to show, why I believe this ostensibly religious society covers other designs than religious.

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