

SMITH TO JONES.^a

No. 25

LEGATION OF TEXAS, LONDON

October 21. 1842

THE HON. ANSON JONES
Secretary of State.

SIR,

From the facts communicated in my previous Dispatches particularly those numbered 23 and 24, I think it may be confidently assumed that Texas is no longer permitted to hope for peace with Mexico through the mediation of England—that, Mexico is using every exertion to make an effective attack on Texas the ensuing spring if not earlier—and, that the augmentation of her naval force by the Frigates Guadalupe and Montezuma demands our serious attention.

To cope with Mexico, Texas needs ships and munitions of war which can only be obtained with money.

I find no reason to change the opinion expressed in my former Despatches that money cannot be obtained by the Texian Government in Europe in the way of an ordinary Loan. In order that any bonds of Texas may find sale they must have the guarantee of some European Government. There appears but a single means in the possession of Texas, wherewith to obtain such a guarantee, and that is some commercial equivalent.

The question then presents itself whether the Government of Texas are prepared to concede an equivalent of this nature for a moral guarantee of their Loan. If they are, I am convinced that an application to the Government of France would most likely prove successful. That Government it is thought, would guarantee a Texian Loan on some such basis as the following.

The introduction into Texas of French manufactures, either all objects of French manufacture or production, or only certain specified articles—at a very low rate of duty or free of duty—for a specified number of years or until the redemption of the Loan—and, the granting of such means as should be agreed on for facilitating the sale of French imports to citizens of the adjoining countries who should wish to come into Texas to trade.

I would suggest for example that certain and specified articles of French manufacture or production should be subject to entry at one third, or more or less, of the custom House duties, and payable in the same currency and on the same terms as are paid by the manufactures or productions of other nations. The arrangement might also concede special facilities for a time to French emigrants.

I am aware that this plan has no merit of novelty, and that the subject has already claimed the careful consideration of the Government. I need not therefore enter into details.

I have had some conversation on such a plan with the Count de Cramayel, the French Chargé d' Affaires to Texas, now in this town on his way to our Country. He appears to think it feasible, and will confer with you on the subject, should you think best to entertain its consideration.

: Complex commercial arrangements I confess are not to my taste. But as something of the nature above proposed seems the only means whereby money can be raised in Europe, I have thought perhaps that in the peculiar situation of our country, it might be deemed advisable to resort to it.

I shall leave for Paris in a few days and there present the subject to the consideration of the French Government, hypothetically and to be carried into effect or dropped according to my instructions from your Department.

I received a letter from Mr Bourgeois a short time since stating that he had made no progress in effecting his Loan.

London is in fact the great money mart of the world, but the prostrate condition of American Credit here and the combination entered into by the London Bankers to discredit every thing American so long as the repudiating states refuse to pay, as well as our own much damaged reputation on London Change forbid the offering of any Bonds of Texas here unless with the guarantee of an European Government.

The Viscount de Craymael, Chargé d' affaires from France to Texas, leaves London to day for his post.

I have the honor to be

Very respectfully

Your obedient servant

ASHBEL SMITH.

SMITH TO JONES.*

LEGATION OF TEXAS, PARIS,

Oct 31, 1842

HON ANSON JONES

Secretary of State

SIR,

I arrived in this City day before yesterday, the 29th Instant.

I called on Mr Bourgeois to learn the prospects of the Million Loan. He has not accomplished anything, nor is he likely to do so, under present circumstances. A gentleman conversant with financial matters and well acquainted with Capitalists and official men, in a long conversation we had yesterday on the subject of a Texian Loan, expressed the opinion that money may be obtained here for Texas

* A. L. S., indorsed "Re'd 15th Decr 42."

with the guarantee of the French Government, for which commercial equivalents are to be given as mentioned in my last Despatch, and the Loan to be secured ultimately on specific lands surveyed and sectionized for this purpose. There are some obstacles in the way, the negotiation would require to be conducted with much discreetness and the negotiator must possess full powers to conclude it, before much certain progress could be made towards its completion.

The New York Papers of the 8th Instant arrived in Paris this morning, containing statements that the Mexicans are preparing to invade Texas by sea and land with vigor, and that a force under General Woll has already captured San Antonio.* Although Mexican threats and exaggerations are pretty well understood, yet as these accounts seem to be credited by the New York editors, they will produce some doubt and hesitation here in regard to Texas. The news arrived too late for the Paris papers of today; it will appear tomorrow and I must counteract any unfavorable influence as I best may until certain intelligence shall be received.

The renewal of hostilities by Mexico leads me again to suggest that powers be furnished me to grant letters of marque to cruise against their commerce.

The refusal of England to unite in a "*triple interposition*" in the affairs of Texas and Mexico appears to have left me not much else to do on this subject at the present time, than to express to the Minister for Foreign affairs, Mr Guizot, that the Government of Texas will esteem the good offices of the French Government if exerted alone or in connection with the United States, no less highly than they would do, were they exerted in concert with Great Britain.

I was informed this morning at the Office for Foreign Affairs that the unfavorable reports of Mr Castro had been confirmed. I have accordingly revoked his Commission as Consul General.

Mr Castro is in Havre, at this time, superintending the embarkation of some emigrants for Texas. In the list which he has made of these Emigrants they appear to be of a re[spect]able class; and this conduct seems to manifest an intention to execute the conditions of his "Contract."

I have not yet seen M de Saligny the late Chargé d'Affairs, as he is at this moment absent from town.

My last communication from your Department was dated early in June, since which time I have received neither intelligence nor instructions.

I have the honor to be
-very respectfully
Your obedient servant

ASHBEL SMITH.

* The capture occurred September 11, 1842.

SMITH TO GUIZOT.^aSMITH TO JONES.^bPARIS *Nov 2. 1842.*

SIR,

On my return to Paris I received a letter from Mr Castro who is now at Havre superintending the embarkation of some Emigrants for Texas, in which he wishes me to give the Emigrants such aid and protection as shall be in my power. Accordingly I write to you.

The list of these Emigrants, which I have seen, shows them to be persons of respectability and means; and that we have good reason to believe they will be a valuable accession to our population and deserving the fostering care and protection of our Government. I am aware that nothing is necessary to recommend these Emigrants to the favorable consideration of the Government of Texas, and that their importance as the commencement of a numerous emigration will be duly estimated by the people of Texas.

It appears to me that Mr Castro's success in despatching a respectable body of Emigrants at this time, when the idle threats of Mexico are so industriously circulated in Europe, is quite creditable to him, and would seem to be the earnest of possible operations under favorable circumstances.

I have the honor to be with great esteem

Very respectfully

Your most obed. servant

ASHBEL SMITH

HON ANSON JONES

*etc. etc. etc.*SMITH TO GUIZOT.^cGUIZOT TO SMITH.^dGUIZOT TO SMITH.^eSMITH TO GUIZOT.^e

^a November 1, 1842. See Smith to Jones, November 13, 1842.

^b A. L. S.; not in the list of numbered dispatches.

^c November 4, 1842. See Smith to Jones, November 13, 1842.

^d November 8, 1842. See Smith to Jones, November 13, 1842.

^e November 10, 1842. See Smith to Jones, November 13, 1842.

SMITH TO JONES.^aLEGATION OF TEXAS, PARIS,
*Place Vendome No 1. Nov. 11. 1842*HON ANSON JONES
Secretary of State

SIR,

Information has been asked of me concerning various persons and matters in Texas. I am well aware that you have no leisure to make the necessary inquiries and write answers; but it occurs to me that one of the clerks of your Department might do this. Such a course would relieve some anxious friends in Europe and show a disposition in our Government to look after and protect their citizens.

The Chevalier de Baccourt late French Minister at Washington transmitted to me the following memorandum from the Minister of Baden

“Charles Blittersdorff born in Carlsruhe, Grand duchy of Baden, Germany the 21st March 1821, brown hair and eyes. His father is Philipp Blittersdorff, his mother Carolina Blittersdorff, the name of his brothers and sisters are Landolinus and Frederic, Fanny and Philippina.

‘In the spring of 1840, he left Havre for New York and from there went to Texas with money sufficient to settle himself.—etc.

‘Since his arrival in Texas he has not been heard from. His relations are anxious to know if he is yet in life, where he lives and what is his present situation.—etc.

‘He is reported to be a very well informed and enterprising young man.

‘Is it possible to obtain some information about him without employing the newspapers?’

A letter from Henri Giraud of Berne attached to the Netherlands' Legation at Rome makes inquiries concerning Frederic Giraud of Berne who embarked at London the 13th November 1839 on board the Northern Castle for Galveston where he arrived on the 4th February following. He wrote shortly afterwards that he was on the point of leaving for Victoria with some persons named Gray, Keetels, Kelly and Stewart. This is the last intelligence of him and his friends are very anxious on his account.

A letter from a lawyer of the Royal Court, named Aronssohn makes inquiry after a Joseph Burgun who left New Orleans for Texas in 1840 to join the army.

Mr. Nightingale son of Lady Nightingale of London left New Orleans for Texas in 1839. Lady Nightingale desires if possible to obtain some information concerning him.

^a A. L. S.; indorsed, “Recvd Deer 30th 42.” This indorsement was evidently intended to apply also to dispatch No. 28, which was inclosed with 27.

Mrs. Power of London, widow of Tyrone Power Esqr who was lost in the Steamer "President," wishes to know the condition and validity of title of a "Certificate No 16 for 11 leagues of Land issued by the States of Coahuila and Texas to John T. Mason." General Mason sold this certificate purporting to be a title to land, to Robert Emmet of New York and Tyrone Power. Mr Power the son informed me that the subject had been submitted to General Rusk who pronounced the certificate to be a good and valid claim for the quantity of land named. I explained General Mason's transaction to Mrs Power and stated, that while the Govt of Texas recognized every title which under the Mexican Govt was good; I was of opinion that General Mason never had a good title to the lands purported to be sold by him. I promised to refer the subject to the Govt for an answer.

I think that information concerning the individuals in question, if they are still in Texas might be readily obtained from some of our citizens of European origin.^a

I have the honor to be
very respectfully
Your very obedient servant

ASHBEL SMITH.

SMITH TO JONES,^b

PARIS, PLACE VENDOME NO 1.

November 12. 1842

SIR,

Allow me to present to you Messrs Laude and Phene who are proceeding to Texas as Directors of the Colonization now carrying on by Mr Henri Castro. I have not the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with these gentlemen; I am however assured by Mr Castro that they are worthy of every attention and of confidence.

I am sure that the Government will perceive at once and without any observations on my part, the great importance of the expedition of colonists now proceeding to Texas under charge of Messrs Laude and Phene, in reference to future emigration from France. I am aware too that the Government will accord to these colonists every proper facility for their advantageous settlement in our country.

Should it be impracticable to occupy the lands set apart for colonization in the country of Bexar, Mr. Castro desires that other

^a On the back of this letter is penciled the following: "Giraud is now in Victoria—has done rather a bad business by trusting his goods to individuals—would have done well but from the unprecedented hard times—stands fair and in good health."

^b A. L. S.; primarily a letter of introduction and not in the numbered series.

lands should be conceded to his colonists for this purpose; and by this means he will be able to fulfil the terms of his concession.

Should the report of the present Expedition be favorable, I am induced to believe that Mr Castro will be able to introduce at an early period a numerous body of valuable emigrants

I am with great respect

Your very obedient Servant

ASHBEL SMITH.

Hon ANSON JONES
etc. etc. etc.

SMITH TO JONES.*

28.

LEGATION OF TEXAS, PARIS

November 13, 1842

Hon ANSON JONES
Secretary of State

SIR,

The intelligence of the capture of San Antonio and the threats of the Mexicans to renew hostilities on a large scale, received by the last Steamer from America have naturally attracted some attention in England and France. Most persons however are beginning to understand how little reliance is to be placed in the promises or threats of our enemies; and, by making proper representations in certain quarters, I do not find much difficulty in keeping public opinion correctly informed on most matters relating to Texas. I am sometimes placed in a disagreeable position by being left wholly without advices from home of the condition of our affairs except as I learn it from the newspapers.

On the 10th Instant I had a conversation with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Guizot, which turned chiefly on the refusal of England to unite with France and the U States in the proposed "triple mediation," and on the line of conduct which France will now pursue in this matter.

Mr Guizot stated that the French Minister at Mexico had been instructed, since the refusal of England, to urge separately the good offices of the French Govt. on Mexico for the establishment of peace. To my inquiry whether France would act jointly with the U. States, without the accession of England, in making a representation to Texas and Mexico, should an invitation to this effect be hereafter proposed to the French Govt. Mr Guizot replied he was not prepared to answer definitely. I apprehend from his remarks that the French

* A. L. S. See *, p. 1393.

Govt. would take this course under present circumstances, rather reluctantly, if at all. It would probably be regarded as likely to prove offensive to England.

In our conversation I represented to Mr Guizot at length how England seems to have consulted only her present commercial interests in the line of conduct she has adopted in regard to Texas and Mexico. He appeared to contemplate the subject in this light, without expressing any opinion. In all my intercourse with this Govt. and in their promptitude to cooperate in a "triple mediation" I have had evidences of a very friendly regard and increasing estimation of Texas.

Mr Henri Castro has just dispatched a vessel the Ebro with a number of emigrants for Texas. According to the list which he has shown me of their occupations and means, they appear to be a desirable class of persons; and from his sending them at the present time, it is fair to presume that under more favorable circumstances he will be able to introduce a large number of colonists who would be valuable citizens. As so much depends on the reports of these the first Emigrants, Mr Castro is very solicitous that they should receive every aid and facility on their arrival, for making an advantageous settlement; and as it is quite probable that they cannot now occupy the Lands set apart beyond San Antonio he desires that another region should be appropriated for these colonists, and that an additional twelve months shall be accorded for fulfilling the terms of his contract.

So far as I am able to judge, Mr. Castro has labored to execute the terms of his contract with promptness, energy and good faith. I strongly incline to the opinion that the "objections" which rendered it proper for me to withdraw his "Commission" from the Foreign Office, were chiefly of a political nature.

Major Victor Pir[s]on has mentioned to me in terms of commendation, Mr. G. Escalon of Marseilles as a proper person for Texian Consul of that Port. Mr Escalon is Consul of Belgium and Consul General of the Papal States, which in this country are evidences of respectability and fitness.

Mr Joshua J. Crosswyck of Rotterdam has been strongly recommended to me by very respectable authority as a very suitable person for Consul of Texas at that Port. "He is a Merchant of *good* standing, thoroughly conversant with the Dutch, French and English languages." etc.

Mr Escalon and Mr Crooswyck have both signified to me their wishes to be appointed Texian Consuls.

The Count de Briey, Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs has written to you, I am informed, some time since, explaining the reasons for deferring to establish treaty relations between Texas and Belgium.

Copies of Mr Guizot's answer to the invitation to the French Govt. to unite in the "mediation" and of my correspondence with him on some subjects of minor importance have been transmitted to your Department by the hands of A. T. Burnley Esquire.*

I have the honor to be

Very respectfully

Your obedient servant

ASHBEL SMITH.

Mr. Guizot to Ashbel Smith.

PARIS, le 22 Août 1842

MONSIEUR,

J'ai reçu la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire le 15 de ce mois, pour m'exprimer au nom de votre gouvernement, le désir de voir la France intervenir, de concert avec l'Angleterre et les Etats-Unis afin d'amener le rétablissement de la paix entre la République du Texas et le Mexique.

Le gouvernement du Roi, toujours prêt à donner au Texas de nouveaux témoignages d'intérêt et d'amitié, adhère volontiers à cette demande et unira avec plaisir ses bons offices à ceux des cabinets de Londres et de Washington, pour faciliter, autant qu'il dépendra de lui, une pacification si désirable à tous égards. J'ai déjà prescrit au chargé d'affaires du Roi à Londres de se concerter à ce sujet avec le cabinet de sa majesté Britannique; et je compte adresser des instructions au Ministre du Roi à Mexico pour que cet Envoyé agisse d'accord avec celui d'Angleterre en vue du but qu'il s'agit d'atteindre.

Recevez, Monsieur, l'assurance de la considération très distinguée avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur.

GUIZOT

Mr. ASHBEL SMITH

chargé d'affaires du Texas.

Ashbel Smith to His Exy Mr Guizot.

Mr Ashbel Smith has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Note of His Excellency Mr Guizot, His French Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs, dated the 22d August, expressing the readiness of the Government of His Majesty to interpose their good offices in concert with Great Britain and the United States, to mediate a peace between Texas and Mexico. He also thinks it proper to mention that

* The letters here referred to are those that follow. Copies seem to have been sent by Burnley (see Secretary of State to Smith, February 26, 1843); but there is good evidence that the copies now on file, of which the archives contain but one set, were sent as inclosures with this dispatch.