

was pre-engaged by appointments for the whole interval, whether it would be in his power to comply with the request.

A few days after the conference with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Monroe received a note from him requesting his attendance at St. Cloud at one o'clock the next day, when he would present him to the First Consul, which was accordingly done. The interview was interesting. Mr. Monroe made to him, in substance, the same communication which he had made to the Minister, to which he added that he was instructed by the President to assure him, before his departure, of his high respect for him personally and of his earnest desire to preserve peace and friendship with France. The First Consul reciprocated the sentiment in favor of the President and the United States in terms that were strong and explicit. He said that he considered the President an enlightened man, a friend to liberty, who understood and pursued with zeal the interest of his country. No one wished, he observed, more than he did the preservation of friendship between the two republics. He had ceded to the United States Louisiana, not so much on account of the sum obtained for it, as to preserve that relation. He had seen that we entertained a jealousy of their possession of that province which threatened to force us into measures which might prove equally injurious to both nations, and which he wished to prevent by an act which should remove all cause for anxiety on that point and leave us at liberty to pursue the course which interest and feeling might dictate.

Mr. Monroe assured him that he viewed the cession in the light in which he had placed it, as an act of enlightened policy which had for its object the great result which he had stated. The First Consul observed that there was no rivalry or conflict of interest between the United States and France, their relation being principally commercial, and each requiring what the other had to spare, but that we must be careful not to give the protection of our flag to the commerce of England. Mr. Monroe suggested that in the latter remark he touched an interest which would merit his most mature deliberation and might, in the consequences, incident to the existing war, form an appeal to his candor. If he admitted that free ships made free goods, as he understood that

he did, no difficulty could arise on that head. He acknowledged that it was one not free from difficulty, and to which due attention should be paid. He then observed that the present was not the proper time to treat with Spain for Florida; that she complained much of the cession which he had made to us of Louisiana and that he must have time to reconcile her to it, Mr. Monroe remarked that as Florida would be within our limits, she had better cede it to us than retain it, since we could not fail ultimately to acquire it, and it would be more admirable for her to cede it by amicable negotiation, at a fair equivalent, at once, than risk the consequences of a rupture. He persisted in the idea that that was not the proper time to treat for it, but left Mr. Monroe under the impression that at some future time he would afford the aid which had been pledged, and thus they parted. The First Consul set out on the evening of that day on his tour along the coast bordering on the Channel, with intention to menace a descent on England.<sup>70</sup>

Mr. Monroe having been treated with great kindness and attention by the Consuls Cambacères and Lebrun, and likewise by Mr. Marbois during the mission, he called on them and made an acknowledgment of it, and likewise explained in a full and candid manner the motives which led to his mission to England. They parted as friends, a relation which was always afterwards preserved between them. He had deemed it proper, as has been observed, on his return to France, not only to treat with respect the existing government but to guard by a suitable precaution against the possibility of injury to the mission from an intercourse with that portion of the friends whom he had formed in his first mission, who had been put down by the change which had occurred in the government in his absence. He was gratified to find on his leaving France that not one of those whom he had particularly designated ever called. He considered it a strong proof of a liberal sentiment and generous feeling on their part towards him. In taking leave of Mr. Marbois, he mentioned the precaution which he had adopted on his arrival and the fact that not one of them had called, which he did as an act of justice to them, and the only retribution which he could then make. Mr. Marbois received the communication in the spirit in which it was made, with a remark that Mr. Monroe