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Author of La Puissance américaine, etc. Paris W. Coquebert,
Editor log The History of the French of diverse estates, by Monteil,
48, Rue Jacob 1845**

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Belgium and the Belgians since 1830
By Major G. T. Poussin

Author of La Puissance américaine, etc.

Paris

W. Coquebert, Editor in

**The History of the French of diverse estates, by Monteil,
48, Rue Jacob**

1845

Selections translated from French by Steven Rowan, University of Missouri-St. Louis

Abstract:

Major Guillaume Tell Poussin's summary of the "Internal Improvements made by the federal government providing for defense and transportation throughout the entire United States of America by the US Army Corps of Engineers under General Simon Bernard, assisted by Poussin,"

Text:

"Works of Interior Improvements projected or constructed by the federal government of the United States of America from 1824 to 1831, by Guillaume Tell Poussin, former Major of American Engineers and aide-de-camp of General Bernard."

Travaux d'améliorations intérieures projetés ou exécutés par le gouvernement général des États-Unis d'Amérique de 1824 à 1831; par Gme Tell Poussin ... (Paris: Anselin; Cerilian-Goeury, 1834). French Text <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001514980> Dr. Rowan has translated this text into English.

In 1843, I published studies and historical, scientific and statistical appreciations of a great free people, the Americans. Today I am offering the public a work of the same type on the Belgians, an industrious people who have managed to conquer their independence in 1830, in the manner of our own July uprisings.

I thought a publication that presented in the same method all the available information [2] on the interior organization of this industrial society in which the bourgeoisie and the clergy played such a great role, could present interest and perhaps offer some useful information. I believed that it would sort out in all cases one important fact: it is that the people under all forms of government, follow a progressive route that will lead to the conquest of their liberties; it is that the march and tendency of events is in favor of improving the fate of the masses, the unique purpose of modern civilization, a sacred work that the world affirms for men of heart and talent.

Paris, January 1845

[3-18] Introduction

[3] No other country has revealed more traces of French influence to such a high degree than Belgium, in its constitution, in its administration, in its social organization and its language. Further, no country in these days has remained less French in its international tendencies, where it counts, by the disposition of men who hold in their hands the direction of public affairs.

How do we explain this singular anomaly, how do we understand this contradiction between a past so full of our memories and a present that [4] becomes every day less favorable? That is the question that presents itself involuntarily to the spirit as little as it penetrates Belgian society. In any case, the explanation is not hard to discover: it is entirely expressed with a certain pride that can be expected at every step: "We are not Belgians! What would our studied nationality absorb of your French unity and our men lost in your midst?"

There is no doubt that the sentiment of nationhood, or independence, is at once worthy, noble and respectable. But, is it not sometimes possible that it is pushed a little far? Is it not an error from the point of view of the very interest of the people whose spirit is being encouraged, compromising the means of existence itself for the profit of a dubious unity, or so restrained that the organs indispensable for the life of a nation can hardly function easily? And, besides, cannot the independence of a people coexist with putting into practice this great principle of the community of commercial and international interests, thanks to which a people joined in indissoluble solidarity will achieve the end of their efforts, moral improvement and material well-being for all?

For a long time the spirit of conquest agitated the world and animated peoples against one another, [5] to the detriment of their solid interests, their progress, their civilization. These brutal rivalries, final reflections of barbarian times, appear finally to have taken the place of more intelligent rivalries: the search for the means properly to enhance their particular well-being by respecting the constitutional state of the others! This disposition of peoples regarding others signal the new era in which we have entered, an era of peace and of association.

Belgium and the Belgians since 1830

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