

# WILMINGTON GAZETTE.

THREE DOLLS. PER ANN.]

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## THE LATE METEOR.

THE Meteor seen on Sunday night last, between eight and nine o'clock, attracted the notice of all those who happened to see it, for a considerable distance round the metropolis. It had an oval form, and was followed by sparks which gave it somewhat the appearance of having a tail. It emitted a very vivid blue light. It moved with great velocity in a north west direction, and disappeared by entering a thick black cloud; a few seconds after which a most awful rumbling noise, like distant thunder, or a heavy discharge of artillery, was heard; the whole of the metropolis was illuminated by it. The passengers in Leicesterfields were particularly affected by it, and several females were so much alarmed that they screamed out.

A letter from Southampton, of the 14th, says—"Yesterday evening between eight and nine o'clock, the inhabitants of the town were much surprised at a great and unusual appearance of light in the element, about sixty degrees above the horizon; in the W. S. W. quarter, which illuminated the buildings, &c. in its passage upon the opposite point of the compass. It was not visible more than 18 or 20 seconds, the night was fine, the hemisphere clear & starry with a moderate breeze from the westward; the streets were in general pretty much crowded; the evening service at the different churches, &c. having concluded but a short time before this passing meteor was discovered."

Between eight and nine o'clock on Sunday night, the same ball of fire appeared over Lewes, which for several seconds illuminated the hemisphere in an extraordinary manner. A person returning from Brighton on the roof of a coach, asserts, the light was so strong that it enabled him to see, not only the cattle and sheep in the distant meadows, but also the shipping at sea. Its bursting was felt at several houses, which it actually shook, and so alarmed their inhabitants, that they started from their seats as if in fear of being overwhelmed with destruction.

On Sunday evening the inhabitants of Rochester and neighbourhood, were much alarmed by the uncommon luminous meteor which appeared in the air. The light was so great for the space of a minute, that objects were discerned at a considerable distance. It was followed by a tremulous noise.

This phenomenon is not calculated to excite that terror and dread which in the dark ages of superstition, the designing were wont to raise. A comparison of well authenticated facts authorise a conclusion that similar events are by no means uncommon; but by happening in the day time, or after the inhabitants have in general retired to rest, they are observed but by few; and the relation, if made, disregarded; and it is perhaps, as much owing to the time of the evening in which this meteor appeared, as to its magnitude and brilliancy, that it has excited much curiosity. From the circumstance of its appearance at Dover, Cranbrook, Chelmsford, Lewes, Brightelmstone, and Southampton, compared with its appearance at London, it seems that the body which occasioned this light was moving with incredible swiftness at a vast height above the earth, in a direction nearly W. or S. W. and in a line passing to the southward of the coast of Essex. Accordingly we expect in the course of time to hear that it was seen in France, and probably farther in a south west direction, and in a contrary direction across England, Wales, and perhaps Ireland. It was observed near the Horse Guards, in Westminster, to pass about 28 or 30 degrees to the southward of the zenith, and about 23 or 29 minutes after 8 by that clock, which is well and constantly regulated to keep true time; the whole time the light occasioned by the meteor lasted, was not estimated to exceed five or six seconds. From the height at which this meteor was moving, and its velocity, we have but little expectation of hearing of its fall, or of any of those masses of iron and stony matters which have in so many well authenticated instances, fallen from the atmosphere, and buried themselves in the earth, on the bursting or extinction of so many similar meteors. Should however, the noise of the fall of any such masses be heard, or the holes be discovered in any part, we hope that the curious will not fail to thoroughly investigate the facts for the purpose of increasing our knowledge on this very intricate and curious subject.

To the Editor of the Political Observatory.

SIR,  
I send you this TALK.

MAN being imperfect, government therefore becomes indispensable. A republican government is the best medium betwixt the two extremes of anarchy and despotism.—These have been termed two monsters, hard to be overcome. The former of these has generally been detected and conquered with ease, and most frequently without bloodshed; but no way has ever yet been found

out to destroy the latter, though after preying with ferocity for centuries upon the human species, but to drown him in a sea of human blood—Beware of this monster.—

Truth is a divine attribute, the foundation of virtue and happiness and the best weapon of defence. Hence the republican, in the support and defence of his natural rights needs no other weapon but to act consistently with that firm basis. But when the designing aristocrat finds himself detected in his endeavours to introduce an arbitrary system, we behold volumes of scurrility issuing forth, and the truth in retrograde. It is tho' however by the best judges, that nearly seven eighths of our federalists are at heart true and genuine republicans; but by a long series of misinformation, backed by the authority of a few aspiring aristocrats, they are traduced into a wrong belief of things, and the cunning intrigues that have been made use of, have overpowered and imposed on their mistaken credulity and they act by an implicit faith. They believe as they have been taught, viz. that federalism contains the essence of those principles and liberties for which they dared to forsake every enjoyment of a domestic kind, fly to arms and risk both life and fortune to defend; and that the tenets of the democrat are nothing more than a wild, frantic, incoherent system of jargon, impregnated with French revolutionary philosophy, tending to anarchy, deism, atheism and a total subversion of all their rights and privileges, both civil and sacred. I feel, sir, sensibly affected in behalf of this infatuated, innocent and valuable part of the community.

Speak to this people, Mr. Editor:—Tell them that the two opposite spirits which pervade the United States at the present day are very nearly the same as those formerly known by the name of *whig and tory*—that the one favours but too strongly of old monarchy, while the other inculcates the natural and unalienable rights of man. Ask them, by what spirit they were stimulated to march forth with heroic zeal to face the bold veterans of Europe, to jeopard their lives in the high places of the field, to meet the horrid clangor of martial implements, to confront, with undaunted courage, the dread artillery of ruin and death; even the same spirit which they are now inadvertently opposing, the spirit of that liberty and freedom which was given us by God and nature.—Tell them that a world of craft and intrigue were used to prejudice and embitter the minds of the people of the United States against the French nation. Tell them that all the arts of sophistry, stratagem and intrigue were exerted to aggravate and increase that prejudice; that to this end a Cannibal's Progress was forged, circulated, read, and too much believed.—A Peter Porcupine, alias Cobbet, was sent from Britain to sow the seeds of discord, publish the bloody-buoy, &c.—Tell them of Dr. Morse's lodges of illuminati established in America, which have never been heard of since they were first conceived in the brain of the good Doctor.—Tell them how it was proclaimed that our bibles would be burnt, our meeting houses pulled down, and our religion destroyed, if Mr. Jefferson should come in president; and how nothing of this has come to pass, or is likely to come to pass. But instead of this tell them that religion has remarkably revived in many parts of our land, that the new converts are generally the friends of Mr. Jefferson and his administration, that Mr. Jefferson has contributed large sums of money for the propagation of the gospel among the heathen, and supports a clergyman upon his own expence at home.—Tell them how the present government has put an end to the alarming increase of the public debt, and thinned the swarms of placemen who threatened to eat out our substance,—how it has abolished useless offices, removed oppressive systems of taxation, so that we have no more an odious stamp act, excise land tax, superintendants and assessors, nor sedition laws, alien laws, navy-loans, army-loans, and eight per cent. loans, but instead thereof are paying off our public debt at the rate of seven millions three hundred thousand dollars a year with nothing but the old impost as established under the former administration. Tell them furthermore, that the heroic gentlemen, who would have waded in blood for the purpose of taking possession of New-Orleans by force of arms, do now despise to receive that and the whole territory of Louisiana, by the peaceable negotiation of the President, altho' purchased for a song in comparison with its real worth and consequence to the United States. Tell them that the taking of New-Orleans by force, would most certainly have involved us in a war with Spain and France; then must we have implored the assistance of Great Britain, who would undoubtedly have been ready to protect us on her own terms. In a word, tell them that federalism was conceived in the Essex or Hamiltonian junto, lay in embryo till the time of Jay's treaty, and by a preternatural growth under the last administration, was rapidly advancing to the stature of a giant, but thank heaven, is now overthrown and lies convulsing in the agonies of dissolution.

That leading federalists are in love with British and with arbitrary government, is apparent to every observer in many points of view that I shall not here mention: but shall just observe that the federal Newspapers do generally abound with high encomiums on all the transactions of the British government, whether it be the destruction of Copenhagen and the murder of the innocent Danes, or the prostration of the rights of commerce, and of the liberty of its own subjects. Furthermore, I saw not long since, in a federal newspaper, the following exclamation, "the democrats are continually whining about the costs of the British government, and the immense sums lavished away to support the satellites that surround the throne," and then by way of retaliation goes on to state the enormous sums settled on Buonaparte and his connections. But how does the cost of the French or British government concern us, otherwise than we wish well to the people of both nations? It appears, however, plain and obvious that the author of this accusation does ardently thirst for monarchical government, to have a king and nobles in this country, and a retinue of satellites surrounding the throne, (without doubt he would compose one of the number) also an established religion (doubtless possessing great power and splendor) ecclesiastical laws, established on a firm basis, bishops and peace drawing salaries from the crown sufficient to maintain their families in luxury and ease, while the great body of the people would be reduced to slavery, without the hope of alleviation, or the means of delivering themselves from their wretchedness.

Now, Mr. Editor, if the people will hear thee talk and receive light, it will be well for them: otherwise we can only lament that they should live on in darkness and die under the cloud.

AN OLD SOLDIER.

County of Cheshire, Dec. 30, 1803.

N. B. If I should be obliged to talk again, sir, I shall endeavour to talk a little more plain.

[The following affectionate Address from Dr. Priestley to Mr. Jefferson, as a dedication of a valuable work, which is to live for ages, will be a sufficient guard on the mind of posterity, against the criminal invectives, base-misrepresentations, and clandestine purposes of unprincipled men. The work, in four volumes, is a continuation and completion of Dr. Priestley's Ecclesiastical History.]

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON,  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

SIR,  
My high respect for your character, as a politician, and a man, makes me desirous to connect my name in some measure with yours, while it is in my power, by means of some publication, to do it.

The first part of this work, which bro't the history to the fall of the Western empire, was dedicated to a zealous friend of civil and religious liberty, but in a private station.—What he, or any other friend of liberty in Europe, could only do by their good wishes, by their writings, or by patient suffering, you, Sir, are actually accomplishing, and upon a theatre of great and growing extent.

It is the boast of this country that it has a constitution the most favourable to political liberty, and private happiness, of any in the world; and all say, that besides your great merit with respect to several articles of the first importance to public liberty in the instrument itself, you have ever been one of the steady friends to the genuine principles and spirit of it; and to this opinion your conduct in various public offices, and now in the highest, in this free state, give the clearest attestation.

Many have appeared the friends of liberty while they were subject to the power of others, and especially when they were suffering by it;—but I do not recollect one besides yourself who retained the same principles, and acted upon them, in a situation of actual power. You, Sir, have done more than this, having voluntarily proposed to relinquish part of the power which the constitution gave you; and instead of adding to the burdens of the people, you have endeavoured to lighten them, though with the necessary consequences of a proportional diminution of your influence. May this great example, which I doubt not will demonstrate the practicability of truly republican principles on the equal rights of all the members of a state, by the actual existence of a form of government calculated to answer all the useful purposes of government, (giving equal protection to all,

\* When the Constitution was formed, Mr. Jefferson was absent on the service of his country in Europe, but on receiving a copy of it he wrote strongly to Mr. Madison, urging the want of provision for the freedom of religion, the freedom of the press, the trial by jury, the habeas corpus, the substitution of a militia for a standing army, & an express reservation to the states of all the rights not specifically granted to the union. Mr. Madison accordingly moved in the first session of Congress for these amendments, and they were agreed to, and ratified by the states as they now stand.

and leaving every man in the possession of every power that he can exercise to his own advantage, without infringing the equal liberty of others) be followed in other countries, and at length become universal. The eyes of all the civilized, at least all the christianized, part of the world, are now upon this country; as being evidently in a state of more rapid improvement than any other was ever known to be; and I trust that, eventually, your administration will be a blessing not only to the United States of America, but to all mankind.

Another reason why I wish to prefix your name to this work, and more appropriate to the subject of it, is that you have been the strenuous and uniform advocate of religious as well as of civil liberty, both in your own state of Virginia, and through the United States in general; seeing in the clearest light the various and great mischiefs that have arisen from any particular form of religion being favoured by the state more than any other. In consequence of this the profession and practice of religion is here as free as that of philosophy, or medicine; and now the experience of more than twenty years leaves little room to doubt, that it is a state of things the most favourable to mutual candour (which is of great importance to domestic peace and good neighbourhood) and to the cause of all truth, that of religion least of all excepted. When every thing is thus left to free discussion, there can be no doubt but that truth will finally prevail, and establish itself by its own evidence; and he must know little of history, or of human nature, who can imagine that truth of any kind will be ultimately unfavourable to general happiness.—A man must entertain a secret suspicion of his own principles, who wishes for any exclusive advantage in the defence, or profession of them.

Having fled from a state of persecution in England, and having been not without some cause of apprehension in the late administration here, I feel the greater satisfaction in the prospect of passing the remainder of my active life, when I naturally wish for repose, under your protection. Though I am arrived at the usual term of human life, it is now only that I can say I see nothing to fear from the hand of power, the government under which I live being for the first time truly favourable to me.—And though I think it has been evident that I have never been improperly swayed by the principle of fear, it is certainly a happiness to be out of the possibility of its influence, especially towards the close of life, enjoying a degree of peace and rest, previous to the state of more perfect rest from labour in the grave; with the hope of rising to a state of greater activity, security and happiness beyond it. This is all that any man can wish, or have in this world; and this, Sir, under your administration I enjoy.

With the most perfect attachment, and every good wish, I subscribe myself, not your subject, or your humble servant, but your sincere admirer.

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY,  
Northumberland, July, 1802.

## CONGRESS.

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Wednesday, Feb. 13.

Mr. Nicholson reported a bill for incorporating the Theatre association in the city of Washington. Referred.

Mr. Nicholson reported a bill providing for the settlement of sundry claims to public lands lying south of the state of Tennessee, which was referred.

Mr. Leib observed that an account of the most extraordinary nature had been recently laid before the house by the Navy department respecting the expences of the Marine Corps. It was indeed a phenomenon in accounts. It was of such a nature as required the interposition of the House, either to annihilate or reform the office of accountant of the navy.—The statement was a species of non descript, never seen before in the United States.—From it, it appeared that the public money had been expended in a most extravagant way without any efficient check. From it, it likewise appeared that the lieutenant colonel commandant had united in his person the office of quarter-master, forage-master, commissary and pay-master, without check or control. There was a high necessity, Dr. Leib said, when the government was looking to economical reforms, to attempt some reform in this department of expences. It was his opinion that the office of the accountant of the navy ought to be abolished, or, at any rate some salutary reform effected. He therefore moved the following resolution:

"That the committee of ways and means be instructed to enquire into the expediency of abolishing the office of accountant of the navy, to report by bill or otherwise."  
Mr. J. Clay said he had no objections to the passage of the resolution—but he would state for the information of the house, that the committee of ways and means had the subject, together with that presented by an enquiry into the expediency of abolishing the