

Convention—Virginia.

MR. JEFFERSON'S LETTER.

We are favored, says the Richmond Enquirer, of April 1, with the following letter addressed to a gentleman of this city. The importance of its subject, and the character of its author, will entitle it to the most profound attention:

Monticello, April 19, 1824.

DEAR SIR—I received in due time your favor of the 12th, requesting my opinion on the proposition to call a convention for amending the constitution of the state. That this should not be perfect cannot be a subject of wonder, when it is considered that ours was not only the first, of the American states, but the first nation in the world, at least within the records of history, which peaceably, by its wise men, formed on free deliberation, a constitution of government for itself, and deposited it in writing among their archives, ready and open to the appeal of every citizen. The other states, who successively formed for themselves also, had the benefit of our outline, and have made on it doubtless successive improvements. One, in the very outset, and which has been adopted in every subsequent constitution, was to lay its foundation in the authority of the nation. To our convention no special authority had been delegated by the people to form a permanent constitution, over which their successors in legislation should have no power of alteration. They had been elected for the ordinary purposes of legislation only, and at a time when the establishment of a new government had not been proposed or contemplated. Although, therefore, they gave to this act the title of constitution, yet it could be no more than an act of legislature, subject, as their other acts were, to alteration by their successors. It has been said indeed, that the acquiescence of the people has supplied the want of original power. But it is a dangerous lesson to say to them, "when ever your functionaries exercise unlawful authority over you, if you do not go into actual resistance, it will be deemed acquiescence and confirmation." Besides, no authority has yet decided whether the resistance must be instantaneous? When the right to resist ceases? or whether it has yet ceased? Of the 24 states now organized, 23 have disapproved our doctrine and example, and have deemed the formal authority of their people a necessary foundation for a constitution.

Another defect which has been corrected by most of the other states is, that the basis of our constitution is in opposition to the principle of equal political rights, refusing to all but freeholders any participation in the natural right of self-government. It is believed, for example, that a very great majority of the militia on whom the burthen of military duty was imposed in the late war, were men unrepresented in the legislature which imposed this burthen on them. However nature may, by mental or physical qualifications, have marked infants and the weaker sex for the protection, rather than the direction of government, yet among the men who either pay, or fight for their country, no line of right can be drawn. The exclusion of a majority of our freemen from the right of representation is merely arbitrary, and an usurpation of the minority over the majority. For it is believed that the non-freeholders compose the majority of our free, adult male citizens.

And even among our citizens who participate in the representative privilege, the equality of political rights is entirely prostrated by our constitution. Upon what principle of right or reason can any one justify the giving to every citizen of Warwick as much weight in the government as to twenty-two equal citizens of Loudoun? And similar inequality among the other counties? If these fundamental principles are of no importance in actual government, then no principles are important, and it is as well to rely on the dispositions, good or ill, of any administrator, as on the provisions of a constitution.

I shall not enter into details of smaller defects; although, others there doubtless are, the reformation of some of which might greatly lessen the expenses of government, improve its organization, and add to the wisdom of its administration in all its parts. But these things I leave to others, not permitting myself to take sides in the political questions of the day. I willingly acquiesce in the institutions of my country, perfect or imperfect, and think it a duty to leave their modifications to those who are to live under them, and are to participate of the good or evil they may produce. The present generation have the same right of self-government which the past one has exercised for itself; and, in the full vigour of body and mind, are more

able to judge for themselves than those who are sinking under the wane of both. If the sense of our citizens on the question of a convention can be fairly and fully taken, its result will, I am sure, be wise and salutary; and far from arrogating the office of advice, no one will more passively acquiesce in it than myself. Retiring, therefore, to the tranquillity called for by increasing years and debility, I wish not to intermeddle in this question; and to my prayers for the general good, I have only to add assurances to yourself of my greatest esteem and respect.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

PAYING OFF.

It is presumed that not less than 100,000 dollars have been paid to the seamen of the Franklin 74, on her return from a three years' cruise; consequently each man received a considerable sum. It is an old adage, that seamen get their money like horses and spend it like asses; and although of late years the character of the sailor has undergone some alteration, that is, they are a more reflective and prudent class of beings than they formerly were, yet they still retain a smack of their old generous, careless, indifferent manner. This has been exemplified in the conduct of the crew of the Franklin.

Before the Purser was prepared to pay them off, they raised the wind on shore for a few days by borrowing tens to repay twenties, and they carried stuff sail through the city.

The first luxury and curiosity of a sailor on shore is a ride on horseback or in a carriage, and no animal on earth is more awkward than a sailor mounted. They lashed their horses with a small bit of a rope, clinging forcibly by the mane at the same time, with their heads nearly on the pommel of the saddle, and thus their horses went kicking and plunging up Broadway. Several tattered barouches, filled with the frail sisterhood from Corlaers Hook, dressed in tawdry crapes, bespangled and crowned with artificial flowers, with their sailor friends, drove through our fashionable streets, hailing every thing on the way. The hacks have had a harvest. One sailor would take possession of a coach. "Where shall I go," said the coachman. "Any where, every where—bear up for the Franklin." "She is over at the navy yard," said the whip. "Well, lay your course for her, you lubber—keep her N. N. E. you shark."

A jolly tar had just chartered one of Cooper's handsome hacks, and had mounted the box with the driver, at the Park gate, when he was hailed by a messmate, "Ho! ship ahoy—where are you bound to?" "To the Hook," "Heave too, and take me on board." "You may go below in the cabin, but, d—n me, if you come on deck." "Let down your companion ladder." The steps were let down and in stepped honest Jack, who roared out, "Heap her hell."

They have also honored the pit of the theatre with their presence in tolerable numbers, and tolerably in for it. "O that's excellent!"—"that's fine," said one, in applauding a sentiment of the play; and, when Parker danced a sailor's hornpipe, in character, their cheers were enthusiastic. "I know him," said one: "It's Jack Crawley, turned player-man; he's danced that a hundred times on our gun-deck Saturday night. Hallo, Jack, don't you know us?"

Thus enjoying themselves, and affording merriment to others, these gallant sons of freedom are tasting for awhile the joys of being released from confinement and rigid discipline; and, when relieved from their loose cash, which soon must be the case, they enter for another cruise, gaily singing, "When my money's all gone, what I gained in the wars."

N. Y. Evening Post.

Corn in Ohio.—Extract of a letter dated Cincinnati, Aug. 23, 1824:—"Any quantity of Corn may be had at eight cents per bushel, deliverable in town as soon as it is fit to pull, say in two or three weeks, as it is very forward and the crop more abundant than was ever known."

Brantome, in his well known Memoirs, gives the following sketch of Anne de Montmorency, Constable of France, and a distinguished chief in the war of the League:

"Every morning," says the historian, "whether he was at home or in the army, on a march, or in camp, he never neglected to recite or hear his paternosters. But it was a saying among the soldiers, 'Take care of the paternosters of Monsieur the Constable, for whilst he was murthering them over, he would throw in by way of penance, as the occasion of discipline or war demanded, a Hail Mary that fellow on the next three passes me that other through the pikes, being me hither that man and shoot him before my face; cut me in pieces all those persons who are so audacious as to defend the steeples against the King, burn me that village, set fire to all the country for a quarter of a league round; and all this he would utter and have done with the least interrupt on to his devotions, which he would have thought it a sin to defer another hour, so tender was his conscience.'"

The history of the civil wars of England furnish very many instances of like tenderness of conscience, and scrupulous recital of prayers, on the part of military commanders. The Russian generals and soldiers perform their devotions with punctilious regularity in the midst of the most ferocious havoc of war.

[Nat. Gaz.

INTELLIGENCE.

FOREIGN.

FROM LATE LONDON PAPERS.

War in Africa.—The last accounts received from Cape Coast Castle state, that the Fantees had separated from the British troops, and had several skirmishes with the Ashantees. One of the London papers says, it is generally believed, in the first military circles, that the question of the expediency of preserving our possessions in Western Africa, at the expense of increasing the army, has at length been determined in the affirmative. The reinforcements, however, will be raised in a manner the least objectionable to those who are advocates for abandoning the scene of so much recent disaster. Two black regiments are to be levied, which will prevent the expense and delay of recruiting in this country.

Two white regiments are at the same time intended to be formed from convicts, in the same manner as the 60th was first raised, which will strengthen the white population in our African possessions. These four regiments, with the increased strength of the second West India regiment, and Royal African Colonial Corps, will, it is supposed, prove sufficient to make such a demonstration against the Ashantees, and our other enemies, as shall obtain a settled peace, and prevent a recurrence of such reverses as have been lately experienced. Of this force Major General Turner takes the command; Col. Sutherland second in command; and Major Chisholm will retain the important post of Cape Coast Castle.

IMPORTANT FROM SPAIN.

PHILADELPHIA, SEPT. 18.

Captain Butler, of the ship Thalia, arrived at this port yesterday from the Island of Sicily, and 36 days from Gibraltar, states that on the 7th of August, he was informed by a respectable inhabitant of Gibraltar, that a reunion of 4 or 500 of the banished Constitutionalists, who had been secreted along the coasts, had landed at Tarifa on the 4th of August, where they were amicably received and joined by the Garrison, and have since been joined by a large number of persons from the interior. His informant could not say whether these persons had committed any act of desperation, or whether it was a part of a general plan of insurrection.

General O'Donnell, who was at Algeiras, had sent two companies on the 5th to reconnoitre in the neighborhood of Tarifa, who, on their arrival there, immediately joined the insurgents. He had arrested thirty individuals at Algeiras, suspected of being connected with the captors of Tarifa, and ordered them for Cueta. The insurgents at Tarifa having received intimation of it, fitted out a boat, and captured the vessel that was carrying the prisoners to Cueta.

Two French frigates and a Spanish schooner of war, had been cannonading Tarifa on the 7th, but the wind blowing fresh from the west, and the current setting strong through the gut, they could not hold to windward, and bore up for Algeiras, where they anchored about 6, P. M.

One report says 500, another 1000, French troops had advanced upon Tarifa, from the neighborhood of Cadiz.

A body of 200 Exiles, who had been living on board different craft, in the harbor of Gibraltar, for several months past, left there on the night of the 7th, in small vessels, for the purpose of attempting a descent something similar to that of Tarifa, somewhere in the neighborhood of Malaga. Capt. B. left Gibraltar at six o'clock in the evening of the 8th, at which time the wind was fresh from the east, but the two French frigates in Algeiras road showed no disposition to get under way when he passed them. At 10, P. M. off the point of Gaufmes, 4 miles east of Tarifa, saw the flashes and heard the report of a sharp skirmish of musquetry, a tower of Gaufmes, which lasted about five minutes.

At 11, being abreast of Tarifa, and two miles from the town, saw and heard a cannonading on the hills back of the town, and could plainly see the course of his balls or rockets, which appeared to be all fired in one direction, viz. diagonally across and towards the back of the town, as the moon was at the full, and shone very bright, and could distinguish objects on shore tolerably well, which enabled him to remark that the island and town of Tarifa were perfectly quiet, the firing being confined to three small hills, apparently about one mile back of the town, from which he concluded that the Constitutionalists had not only kept possession of the island and town, but made good their footing on the main.

At half past 11, the firing ceased, with the exception of a single gun at long intervals, and at thirty minutes past midnight, the cannonading recommenced, and continued to increase in violence, until half past 2, A. M. when it became tremendous; and in the short interval of the cannonade, heavy and continued volleys of musquetry could be plainly heard, as the wind was east, and Tarifa bore east. I could hear the firing until 3, A. M. at which time it was lost in the distance.

The last Mail from Madrid, had brought accounts of a quarrel and affray between the Spanish and French troops in that city, in which many lives had been lost. The Spanish troops in the neighborhood

of Algeiras were much dissatisfied, owing to the badness of their clothing and pay.

FROM GIBRALTAR.

Files of the Gibraltar Chronicle have reached us, to the 24th July, in which we find an extract of a letter copied from the Augsburg Gazette, dated Alexandria, May the 1st, stating that the Sublime Porte had, at the request of the Viceroy of Egypt, confided the pacification of Greece to that prince, who had agreed to pay the whole expense of the expedition. In consequence of this, steps, it is said, had been taken to accomplish the object, by conferring unlimited powers on Ibrahim Pacha, who was to open the campaign by offering safety and protection to the inhabitants, if they returned to their former vassalage; but if they obstinately "reject equitable propositions," they will be exterminated. Ten frigates had been sent by the Porte to assist in this humane business, to which the Viceroy had added 35 other vessels, which were to convey 35,000 troops to the Morea, two-thirds of which had been trained after the European system. This letter is said to be official, and to have been sent to the Augsburg Gazette by the agent of Mehemet Ali, residing at Trieste.

Whether this statement be true or false, it appears by letters from Smyrna, that the Turks under the Captain Pacha, true to their system of extermination, drenched themselves in blood at every place where they touched, on their arrival in the Dardanelles. To stimulate them to these acts of barbarity, the government is stated to have withheld from them their food and pay, calculating that they would thus enter more warmly into a contest where abundance of plunder was to be obtained, than if their hands were full. Accordingly, on entering the Melenia they put to the sword all the Christians above eight years of age, and acted these scenes of carnage in all the hamlets within a circuit of 10 leagues. But this was light, continues the writer, "compared with Pergamos, where 10,000 Christians were brutally massacred in 38 hours."

These disgraceful and barbarous proceedings, it is added, produced an effect which was naturally to be expected. After glutting himself with the blood of the inhabitants of Melenia and Pergamos, and plundering their dwellings, the Captain Pacha steered to the Thermaic Gulph to attack the Isle of Sciathos, where, it appears, the Greeks were expecting him. Being ignorant of their measures, he fired more than 7000 guns, and then landed a numerous corps. An action immediately took place, in which the Patriots attacked the Turks with such fury, that the Pacha alone escaped in a gondola. On reaching his vessel, he sailed for Salonica, where he was represented to be in the greatest embarrassment, the contingents which he sacrificed, being composed of Turks recruited in the environs of Cassandria, Naoussa and Macedonia.

It is always a source of gratification to find, that notwithstanding the details of horrid cruelties committed by the Turks that so frequently reach us, they are accompanied by accounts of resistance and bravery on the part of the Greeks which afford ground to hope that they will finally succeed in securing independence.

[N. Y. Eve. Post.

Ambiguous Explanation.—The following laconic correspondence has recently got abroad among the upper circles, to the great annoyance of a female of high fashion who is known to be the subject of it; the words we have put in italics are underscored in the originals:—

"Lord — is given to understand that Sir W — has affirmed in a public company, that Lady — was a person of doubtful character. Lord — requests to be informed whether Sir W — did make such assertion, and if he did, begs to ask for an explanation. The bearer will wait his answer."

ANSWER. "Saturday, July 17.

"Sir W — does not recollect to have used the expression referred to respecting the character of Lady —, nor does he think it likely he should, as he does not know any female in the circle of fashion of whose character there can be less doubt."

London paper.

DOMESTIC.

From the (Harrisburg) Pennsylvanian, Sept. 11.

ROBBERS AND MURDERERS.

We are indebted to the politeness of a friend, for being able to publish the following information, received from a gentleman of respectability residing at Big Flat, in the state of New York. The letter from which we take our extracts, is dated September 1, 1824.

Last week as one of the Tuscarora tribe of Indians, by the name of Douglas, who had been in Bath jail, for passing counterfeit money, and been bailed out, was passing a Mr. Ives, to whom he had passed the money, a fight ensued between them, when Douglas drew a dirk and stabbed Ives three times, so that he died in ten minutes. Douglas fled to the woods and immediate pursuit was made by the Sheriff and posse. During the pursuit a cave was discovered, which contained two boxes, a bed, and chairs—a trunk was also afterwards found, which contained silks, seven watches, 352 dollars counterfeit money. The Sheriff, after this, proceeded to search the house of a man by the name of Mayberry, where he found fifty-one watches hid under a floor—a bloody shirt was found up stairs, concealed among some dried pumpkins—

two cravats were also found, concealed in an under bed, one of which was cut in two or three places, but in such a manner, that when the cravat was folded up it made but one cut. A silver watch was also found, marked with the same letters as the shirts and cravats. The day after this, the search being still continued, 1000 dollars of good money was found concealed behind Mayberry's chimney, and subsequently another chest was discovered, containing valuable silks and other goods, to the amount, as is supposed, of six hundred dollars.

The following persons have been committed to jail. Mayberry's family, William B. Jones, Griff Jones, James Jones, a man by the name of Wallace, another by the name of Hathway, one by the name of Cole, and another by the name of Helmer Cole. Douglas had not been caught when the letter was written.

POISON BY MUSHROOMS.

Five or six persons, composing the family of Mr. George Barnard, of Hartford, Conn. were poisoned by eating mushrooms at breakfast. One of them, a lad named James Seymour, 14 years of age, expired on the second day, and a child of Mr. B's was dangerously ill. So deleterious were the effects of this vegetable, that a cat which subsequently licked the platters in which it had been served up, expired in a short time after. The species of plant used in this instance, is denominated the *white mushroom*, which is well known to be a deadly poison.

Recovery from a Thunder Stroke.

The following extract of a letter from a gentleman at Bellbrook, in the state of Ohio, to his friend in this city, dated August 24, gives a vivid sketch of a distressing scene, with an account of a successful attempt to resuscitate a person apparently killed by lightning, which may induce others hereafter placed in similar situations to use like exertions:

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"I have now only time to give you a brief sketch of a melancholy occurrence which took place on Friday last about 3 o'clock. A few minutes after I had been seated in a front room (with a couple of strangers, who had called for shelter during a light shower of rain) a sharp flash of lightning appeared, accompanied with loud thunder, though apparently at a distance. In two minutes after, a general tremendous blaze appeared—to every one whose eyes were towards the street, balls of liquid fire were seen falling on the earth, which, for a moment, destroyed the power of vision. The explosion, which was apparently at the same time with the flash, raised me quite erect. Fearing the consequence, I ran to a room in which my wife lay sick on opening the door, my eyes were blinded with smoke, and with a strong sulphurous vapor. Seeing no fire, I supposed the store was struck, and that the gunpowder had exploded. When I got near the store, I was met by one crying 'yonder! yonder!' pointing towards the East end of the North porch. I then turned my course and ran with my eyes elevated, expecting every step to meet with a column of flame, until I almost trod upon the lifeless body of my son William. I took him instantly in my arms, and ran out from the smoke and dust which still remained, to the open air, turned up his face to the rain for a moment, then returned to the porch. Blessed be God, who gave me thought and presence of mind! In less than ten minutes after the shock, I had a vein opened in each of my son's arms, his feet and hands in warm salt water, and bathed his face with camphorated spirits. The moment of the application of the last, he gave the first signs of returning life, when his lungs gave a faint heave for air, though at first without effect. It was at 12 or 1 o'clock at night before his lungs were sufficiently inflated to give respiration any thing like its natural order. During this process no pen can describe the misery which he endured. It could only be expressed by the contortions of his face and limbs, and his feeble attempts to utter groans. But thanks be to God, he is now so far recovered as partly to exercise his reason, although he is very weak and has generally a high fever—a natural consequence of such a case. The house is much shattered and torn; the kitchen utensils, boards, and stones, hurled in every direction."

Congressional Register.—Messrs. Gales and Seaton, editors of the National Intelligencer, have announced their intention of publishing a register of Debates in Congress, to begin with the next session, and to contain a report of the speeches on topics of public interest, in both houses. It is to be published in the octavo form, super royal, as fast as materials are afforded for half a sheet, and to be forwarded to subscribers, in sheets by mail, or retained until the volume is finished, at their option. The subscription price for the next session, and for each of the subsequent short sessions, will be three dollars, and for the long sessions, six dollars. It is computed that the short sessions will afford a volume of five hundred pages, and the others, one of a thousand pages. A work of this kind will be extremely useful, and we hope the publishers will receive sufficient encouragement to induce them promptly to prosecute it. N. Y. Gaz.