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FROM THE VERMONT JOURNAL.

—
Mr. ELLIOT,

—
TO HIS CONSTITUENTS.

LETTER IV.

The manner in which the amendment to the constitution was carried through both Houses of Congress was not less extraordinary than the measure itself. It affords an instructive and even an awful lesson; and the future preservation of the constitution demands that this gloomy scene should be committed to the contemplation of posterity. To record the proceedings upon that occasion, I consider a sacred duty which I owe to my country—and in doing it I shall betray no trust, I shall not act the part of an informer. I disdain all connection with the little band of republican aristocrats and demagogues; to me they have never disclosed the arcana of their political system! they have treated me as they treat all the northern Members of Congress, with neglect, if not with contempt; and all the important facts contained in this letter have long been the subject of general conversation at the seat of government.

Mr. Butler, a republican Senator from South Carolina, who warmly opposed the amendment, in a letter to the legislature of that state, observed, that he had not seen long in Senate since his last election before he perceived a combination among certain large states, to favour in itself and dangerous in its consequences to the rights of other states—into this combination they have drawn some of the small states—they hold evening meetings to decide what shall prevail in Senate, and no proposition can succeed which does not come from one of their party, &c.—Notwithstanding the respectability of Mr. Butler's character, and his long tried patriotism, let us hope, for the honor of our country and the cause of liberty, that the warmth of his feelings in relation to a particular measure, led him to give too deep a colouring to this melancholy picture. Would to God I were not under the necessity of confirming his statement, so far as relates to the amendment; but that confirmation is inseparably connected with the justification of my own conduct.

The resolution which was sent from the house to the senate, contemplated no alteration of the constitution other than the mere discrimination of the votes. It was soon found that the private sentiments of several of the oldest and most respectable members of the senate were hostile to the measure. Some of them, however, were instructed to vote in its favor, and it was hoped that the others would yield to the popular sentiment in the states they represented. The minority constantly called for the consideration of the resolution from the house, but the majority for several weeks, refused to suffer it to be considered. The business was not yet sufficiently matured in "evening meetings." Of the final caucus on the subject I was informed. A letter from one of these members who are by some called leading ones, to another member of the senate, notifying an evening meeting of the friends of the amendment, to devise ways and means for carrying it into effect at all events, in some form or other, was put into my hands, by the gentleman to whom it was directed. At this caucus the business was concluded by adding to the amendment, that provision, which I afterwards opposed, and it was also determined to take the question the next day, before the senate should rise. Here let it be remarked, that there had not been any regular debate upon the main question in senate, and that the additional proposition, in substance, had already been rejected, when proposed by a federal member. Two or three republican members, dictated in caucus as the *one qui non* of their voting for the amendment, this important addition, and one of them afterwards observed publicly in my presence, that he had not only dictated it in caucus, but had given the leading republicans in the house to understand that the fate of the amendment depended on its adoption, in that very form, as his *via* would be put upon it should it be sent back to the senate. Thus it was virtually determined, in one of these evening meetings, that the representatives of the people, themselves, should sanction an alteration of the constitution in the precise form dictated by two or three men, and that everyone who opposed it should be denounced as a federalist and apostate. The republicans were told, by a language too unequivocal to be misunderstood, that this was the arrangement, and that upon their conformity or opposition, depended their future popularity.

An unwavering and venerable republican member from Massachusetts exclaimed at the bar, when an adjournment was denied at the usual hour, *I cannot and will not be dragged along in this manner*, and left the house with indignation. As the question, however, was not taken that

day, as we had repeatedly been told it should be, in consequence of the ardent opposition which myself and others deemed it our duty to make, by protracting the debate to a late hour at night, that gentleman, however, recorded his vote in opposition to the measure. A very respectable democratic member from a middle state declared, that were the amendment in the precise form in which he wished it, he would never vote for it while it was attempted to carry it by such means. As almost every member of the majority who expressed his opinion disapproved of the additional proposition, it must be evident to every candid republican, from the simple statement of facts which I have made, that the amendment, in its present form, was carried through both houses by the undue influence of a few individuals, and by the combined operations of intrigue and terror. I was of opinion that we ought not to disgrace ourselves by such course of conduct, and that, however desirable the amendment might be in some form or other, we ought to wait till it could be adopted in a fair and truly-republican manner.

Connected with this subject, my conduct with respect to the nomination of President and Vice-President requires explanation. Early in the session it was determined by the self-chosen few who undertake to direct the public sentiment, that Governor Clinton should be the next Vice-President, and that gentleman was informed that the unanimous voice of the members was in his favour, when not ten of them had been consulted. Some difficulty being afterwards apprehended from the Pennsylvania delegation, a sub-caucus was held, and the representatives of that state reconciled to the measure; a general caucus was then called to ratify what the few had accomplished. To such a state of things as Mr. Butler observed, with respect to the amendment, I could not and would not submit. It is perfectly proper that any number of individuals, of the same political sentiments, should meet together and discuss any subject of general concern, with a view to promote an union of sentiment and action; but that members of the legislature, as such, should undertake to influence and dictate to the people in their elections, is hostile to the very genius of republicanism. Let it not be understood that there were any objections on my part to the personal or political character of Mr. Clinton—but my conduct was influenced by various considerations, which it is unnecessary to detail to the public.

JAMES ELLIOT.

From the Richmond Enquirer.

POLITICS.

THE people of the United States of America possess, or at least suppose that they possess, some political blessings peculiar to themselves. Not to mention the structure of their government, which will be variously estimated among political theorists, and which it would be unseasonable now to discuss, they consider themselves as singularly fortunate in their territorial position, and in the administration of their public affairs. In addition to the kindness of nature, in severing them by a wide ocean, from the everlasting agitations and hostilities of the old continent, they find themselves seated in a region which supplies them, directly or indirectly, with all the necessities and luxuries of life in the greatest profusion, and which provides for the extension and permanency of their happiness by an almost indefinite increase of their numbers. They find themselves at peace with all the world (except the feeble and most contemptible of the piratical states of Barbary) with the prospect of its long continuance. With the great powers of Europe they stand connected by relations which are likely long to preserve the present state of amity and beneficial intercourse. Nothing but necessity will drive the United States into war; and there is good ground to believe, that every enlightened nation will pause and consider maturely the points of variance, before they provoke this necessity into action. The acquisition of Louisiana confers the sovereignty of a vastly extended territory, and the exclusive commerce of the greatest river of North America. Spain has wisely withdrawn her objections to the cession of this country, and has now only to adjust questions concerning limits which the government of the United States will always be disposed to discuss on liberal and amicable terms. The wisdom of contracting for the purchase of this immense country, particularly when the previous extent of the United States is considered, has indeed been denied by many persons whose opinions are entitled to great respect. But the evils to be apprehended from this measure are distant contingents, and by judicious management may probably be avoided; while those which were to be feared from Louisiana remaining in the hands of France, or being wrested from her by conquest, were numerous, great, imminent and unavoidable.

Besides the circumstances of national prosperity already mentioned, the United States have done and are now doing much towards conciliating and securing the friendship of the tribes of Indians settled and occupying territories of great extent within their jurisdiction. By treating these people with justice and mildness by respecting their customs and prejudices, by accommodating their wants, and especially by introducing among them the arts of civilized life from natural enemies they are converted into friends, and are rapidly laying aside the ferociousness which belongs to the savage state. The triumph of justice and humanity over violence and fraud is now become so conspicuous, as to be acknowledged by every observer of public affairs. What was formerly too often obtained from the Indians by war, bloodshed & rapine, is now amicably yielded through the medium of negotiation, and all parties participate in the blessings of the improvement.

The opulence, power and resources, of the people of the United States, increase as rapidly as their numbers. Comparatively only a small portion of their territory is cleared of the forest-trees with which it was originally overspread, the chief part is still reserved for the enterprise and diligence of such as are inclined to improve their circumstances and form establishments for their children. How long will be the term before this extensive region ceases to afford room for the multiplication of its inhabitants? And how numerous and powerful will be the community (unless civil discord should rear its direful crest) which is destined to behold this vast surface occupied and cultivated by all the arts and improvements of an enlightened people?

The national expenditure of the United States, so far from increasing at every step of their prosperity, is either stationary or in a course of diminution. The great mass of public wealth, instead of being lavished in the prosecution of incessant wars, such as vex and exhaust most other nations, is here converted into the means of advancing the improvement and happiness of the community. The eye of philanthropy must dwell with rapture on the prospect of a country whose whole energy is steadily and faithfully devoted to the acceleration of its progress in that course which leads to the highest elevation of public felicity.

No new burthens are laid on the people in this favored country. Instead of torturing invention to devise plans of taxation, and exhausting all the sources of revenue, the government has relinquished many duties which had been found inconvenient and unpopular, and still finds the national income adequate to the expenditure. The debt of the nation is undergoing extinguishment with a rapidity and steadiness unprecedented any where else, and in the present course will soon be entirely redeemed. May not the whole world be challenged to point out a nation where the public affairs are proceeding in such a train? And ought not the friend of mankind devoutly to return thanks to heaven that there is at least one spot on the globe where MAN IS TRUE TO HIMSELF AND WHERE HE SUCCESSFULLY VINDICATES HIS RIGHT, HIS DIGNITY AND HIS HIGH DESTINATION?

Latest Foreign Intelligence.

Received via Charleston.

From Greenwich papers to March 26.

LONDON, March 19.

The channel fleet consisting of 19 sail of the line, sailed from Toulon on the 17th, to resume her station off Brest.

Lord Gardner is arrived in town, and will soon take the command of the channel fleet. The safety of a great part of the Mediterranean convoy, (every ship of which was stated in the *Monitor* to have been captured or destroyed) is now confirmed beyond a doubt. In addition to the information which we have already laid before our readers, upon this subject, we are now enabled to state that a letter has been received by Sir Richard Strachan, from capt. Farquhar, who so gallantly defended the Acheron bomb against so superior a force. The letter is dated from Malaga, into which place he was carried on board the Hortense. He states, that the whole number of the ships belonging to the convoy which were captured, were only three, all of which were sunk. All our information indeed on this subject tends to corroborate the report that only three of the Mediterranean convoy has fallen into the hands of the enemy. It certainly would be a waste of time to make any comments upon the gross falsehoods of the official statements of the *Monitor*. They are now so notoriously destitute of truth, that they cannot even answer the purpose of imposing upon the people of France. The Fisgard frigate, which sailed from Gibraltar on the first intelligence of a capture of a part of the convoy, is at present employed in blockading the Hortense in Malaga.

Dispatches were yesterday received from Admiral Russel, stating that the Dutch Be-

in the Texel had changed its position; from which it is inferred by some, that it will probably soon put to sea. We are sorry we cannot concur in this opinion. The Dutch fleet, we have reason to believe, is not in a condition to put to sea, much less to contend with a superior British squadron.

Accounts are said to have been received from Gibraltar, which leave no doubt of the Toulon fleet having again put to sea, and of Lord Nelson being in pursuit of it. His Lordship, it is said, passed the Straits of Messina on the 5th of February, with a fair wind, having received intimation of the enemy having been off Cape Faro, three days before, standing to the southward. The last official accounts from the Noble Admiral, are dated about the 1st of February, at which time he remained at anchor off Faro, windbound.

It is said to be intended by the Irish Government, immediately to have two encampments formed on a very extensive scale; the one at Cork, the other on the Curragh of Kildare.

The disposition of our force on the Doulogne station, with the appearance of the enemy's preparations, are thus described by an officer belonging to the squadron, dated yesterday's evening: "Ships at anchor off Doulogne on the 11th inst. *Léopard*, *Trusty*, *Leona*, *Marcassin*, *Arab*, *Epy*, *Rouffour*, *Utile*, *Happy*, 18 gun brig, and two cutters. The *Immortelle* and *Melpomene* frigates have sailed with sealed orders to the westward. The former is relieved off Boulogne by the *Nageissus*; and the latter of Havre by the *Clansome*; they are now gone, it is hoped on a successful cruise. 26 brigs and 29 luggers came out from the harbour of Boulogne and anchored in the road on the 9th, where they now remain. The masts-heads of their vessels in the harbours of Boulogne, Vimereux and Ambletuse, are very thick indeed. There are also a great number at Etaples, watched by the *Autumn*, *Manly*, *Flamer*, *Piercer*, *Biter* and *Wrangler*. The encampments are still very numerous along the coast."

A recent letter from Constantinople says, "The conduct of Gen. Brune, preceding his departure from hence, subjected both himself and his government to the utmost contempt. After repeatedly announcing his intention to set off, and as often seizing every pretence to justify his stay, in hopes that the fears of the Porte would induce the recognition of the new Emperor, he left Pera on the 13th December, but halted at Kastron at the head of the harbour of Constantinople, where he continued in expectation of some overtures from the government, till the 22d, when he proceeded on his journey by land to Vienna.

The Russian influence here, or I might say, the Russian government in Turkey, is more absolute than ever, and this vast empire may really be considered as Russian province. Great-Britain is but little thought of, and Austria less, although an immediate neighbour. The Turks, either through confidence in the support of Russia, or thro' fear of its power, seem to confine to her all their considerations and attention."

March 20.

The state of Ireland.—The *Dublin Evening Post* of Saturday last, has the following observations on this subject:—

"The misrepresentations which have crept into some of the London papers, respecting the present state of this country, and the reflections cast upon the county of Kerry, in particular, call loudly for reflection. There are none but poisoned and unprincipled minds, who would convey to one country false opinions of the other. The country alluded to, as well as every other part of this kingdom, is now, happily, free from every political delusion; the very embers, as it were, of disaffection, are totally extinguished; and whatever may appear among us, of particular atrocities, are well known not to arise from political motives, but from ignorant prejudices respecting matters of private concernment."

Yesterday intelligence was received at the Admiralty, brought by the *Johanna Frederica*, of Altona, which left Malaga on the 16th ult. stating that a French frigate had arrived at that port with the crews of two British ships of war, and merchant brig, captured by her and another French frigate; that the two British ships of war sunk after the action, which lasted near four hours, and that the above brig was the only merchant vessel of the convoy from Malta known to have been taken by the French frigates, the rest having escaped during the action.

Two Gottenburgh mails arrived yesterday, the contents of which are wholly unimportant. The letters from Petersburg by this conveyance are dated Feb. 11-23, at which time Mr. Novosiltzoff had not reached that city.

A Russian messenger also arrived yesterday with dispatches of great importance, relative to the present arrangements between the courts of London and Petersburg.

We are happy to announce the arrival yesterday in Dove-roads, of five homeward bound East-Indians.

GREENWICH, March 26.

According to accounts from Naples it ap-