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FROM THE VERMONT JOURNAL.
MR. ELLIOT,
TO HIS CONSTITUENTS.
LETTER V.

THERE were several other questions of considerable consequence on which I differed from the majority of the republican party in Congress; but in all of them a number of the most respectable republicans, and in two or three of them all the members from the five New-England states, with one or two exceptions, united with me in opinion. In this review I shall only notice, and that briefly, the motion to enquire into the official conduct of Judge Chase, the resolution for abolishing the loan offices, the motion to extinguish the State Balances, and Mr. Randolph's Resolutions respecting the Georgia Claims. I was opposed to an inquisitorial investigation of the conduct of a public officer, upon the mere demand of a member in his place, without any specific accusation; but I submitted without a murmur to the decision of the majority, and voted for the impeachment, in the first instance, after the evidence was supported. I voted, in the first instance, in favor of discontinuing the office of commissioners of loans; but upon a farther examination, I began to fear that the measure might with propriety be constructed into a violation of public faith, and altered my vote. Most of the republican members from Massachusetts, like myself, altered their votes upon deliberate investigation, and the resolution was rejected by a small majority. Upon the motion to extinguish the state balances the members from the New-England states were united with the single exception of my colleague, Mr. Olin, to whose integrity and ability I shall always bear my feeble testimony; and the same was the case on the subject of the Georgia Claims, except that one member from Massachusetts did not vote upon the question. These questions were considered as involving the interests of the eastern states to the amount of several millions of dollars; those states being creditors to a large amount as it respected the state balances; and numbering among their citizens most of the honest claimants whom the United States had stipulated with Georgia, upon the cession of the Georgia Mississippi Territory, to compensate in a certain ratio for their claims upon that state. These subjects like all others of a local and complicated nature, have never been thoroughly investigated by the people at large; but as they have now become of national importance, I shall render my constituents an acceptable service, by detailing to them the information I possess upon the subject. This letter will be devoted to a general view of the subject of the state balances and the succeeding one to that of the Georgia Claims.

The State Balances, as they are called, result from circumstances immediately connected with our national independence. Innumerable were the difficulties which presented themselves in our councils during the revolutionary war; and the smiles of Providence alone could have enabled our fathers to surmount them. From peculiar circumstances, certain states contributed more, and others less, than their equitable proportion, towards the support of the common cause; and certain principles were prescribed by Congress for an ultimate equalization and settlement between the states. The resolution under consideration proposed the extinguishment of the balances due from several of the individual states to the United States, as appears by a report of the Commissioners appointed to adjust and finally to settle the demands of the several states for services rendered and supplies furnished during the United States in the late revolutionary war with Great-Britain. This report was made on the 5th of December, 1795. The whole amount of the balances due from the debtor states, and now proposed to be extinguished is 3,517,582 dollars. New-Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode-Island, New-Jersey, South-Carolina and Georgia are creditor states; New-York, Delaware and North-Carolina debtor states to a large amount; the other states but little interested in the question. The commissioners were men of integrity and talents, and their report met with a general acquiescence at the time when it was made. The state of New-York has actually paid a large sum towards her balance; and some of the other debtor states have expressly recognized the settlement. It is now proposed to extinguish the balances by a mere act of power; and Congress are almost equally divided on the question. Were it not that so large a number of representatives consider the states they represent as interested, and were it not that some men possess a wonderful faculty of making any question whatever a party one, this equal division of the national legislature on a subject so simple, would appear to a candid observer unaccountable. I cannot better illustrate the nature and merits of the settlement, and the irresistible strength of the arguments against the extinguishment, than by subjoining an extract from the able speech of Gen. Varnum, of Massachusetts, upon the resolution in question.

"The ordinance which passed the old Congress in 1787, authorising the settlement

of the accounts of the several states, against the United States, for services rendered and supplies furnished during the war, makes as ample and liberal provision for an allowance of all the accounts exhibited, as could possibly be expected, or even asked, by any of the parties to the settlement: it was founded on the principles of mutual compromise, and by the unanimous consent of all the states. By the conditions of the settlement agreed upon by that ordinance, the public faith of each state was solemnly pledged to all the other states, and the public faith of the U. States was solemnly pledged to each individual state, that the settlement and proportion of the debt allotted to each state, by the commissioners thus mutually agreed upon and chosen by all the states, should be final and conclusive. Soon after the establishment of the present government in the year 1788, a law was passed by Congress for facilitating the settlement, and for filling vacancies in the board agreeable to the principles of the ordinance of 1787, and so far as I have discovered by a recurrence to the journals, this law passed without any opposition. In 1800 Congress again assumed the consideration of the subject, and passed a law which recognized all the principles of the ordinance of 1787, and provided that a distribution of the whole expence should be made among the several states according to the first census under the present constitution. This law was also passed by the almost unanimous consent of the House, and in the Senate where the state sovereignties are more particularly represented, it appears by the journals to have passed without opposition. Thus sir, from the first agreement of 1787 to the final close of the settlement, all the states were unanimous in the mode prescribed for settlement, and stood most solemnly bound to each other to abide by it; and the public faith of the nation was, by the several acts of congress on the subject, most solemnly pledged to carry it into effect.

Can the legislature then relinquish these balances, without a violation of plighted public faith? And yet will they undertake to do it? Sir, it is a fundamental principle in the government of all civilized nations to pay the most sacred regard to plighted public faith. And sir, the friends of our government have derived much consolation from the idea, that the United States would never suffer their national character to be stained by a violation of this important national principle. Yet, sir, from what has taken place it has been believed that the United States would not be behind any nation on earth in the preservation of this public virtue. But if the resolution on the table should be passed into a law, this valuable principle will receive a wound which may lead to fatal consequences. I must be permitted to doubt the power of congress to extinguish these balances without the concurrence of all the states. The settlement having been made under a solemn agreement of all the states, where will you find a power vested in congress to alienate the interest which any individual state has acquired in the balance, in consequence of that agreement, and vest it in another state? No such power is expressed in the constitution, nor can I conceive it to be implied by any thing which is expressed in that instrument.

If then congress have no constitutional power to make the extinguishment, will not the transaction be considered an innovation on the rights of individual states, as well as a dereliction of the public faith?

A gentleman from New-York has said that the extinguishment could not be a violation of public faith, because congress has already given up a part of the debt. It seems to me that the gentleman's conclusion does not naturally follow the premises which he has stated, for if it could, under any circumstances be considered as a dereliction of public faith to extinguish these balances, it cannot at this time be considered the less so, merely on the ground of the legislature having heretofore fallen into an error on the subject. The fact is, that Congress did in 1799, pass a law for remitting the balances on condition, that each debtor state would pay into the treasury of the United States by a given period the amount of the sums which had been assumed by the United States, of their respective state debts prior to the settlement. But, sir, at the time of passing that law, and ever since I have considered it in the same point of light as I do the resolution before you, and therefore cannot admit that as a circumstance in favour of the resolution. That provision has now expired, without being embraced by any of the debtor states, except in that which has been done by the state of New-York, in forfiting her ports and harbors. If the state of Delaware had thought proper to have complied with this liberal provision, she might have been discharged from a debt of 600,000 dollars for 60,000 dollars, but it seems that she prefers a total extinction to a partial payment. If the balance should be extinguished on the principle that the settlement was unjust, which is the only ground taken in favor of their extinguishment, I am apprehensive that this is only to be a stepping stone to a more favorite object. I mean the extinguishment of the balances due to the creditor

states on the settlement; for although these balances have been funded by the United States, it is well known that the evidences of the debt in possession of the creditor states are not transferable, so that congress will have nothing to do to effect this part of the business, but to order payment to the creditor states on those balances to be stopped."

I shall conclude with observing that it is not probable that the debtor states will ever pay the full amount of their balances; nor is it probable that the creditor states will ever engage in a civil war to compel them to make payment. This situation of things furnishes, however, no argument in favor of the adoption of the monstrous principle, or rather perversion of all principle, that honest debts may be extinguished by a wanton act of power. Let the balances stand on record against the debtors until a sense of justice shall prevail over private interest, and induce them to make an honorable composition with their creditors. JAMES ELLIOT.

Late Foreign News.

LONDON, March 26.

The Catholic petition was yesterday presented to parliament by Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox; but did not, as was expected, give rise to any discussion. In the house of lords, Lord Auckland expressed a hope that the subject would be completely, coolly and dispassionately discussed; and Lord Hawkesbury announced his determination to oppose the prayer of the petition.

In the house of Commons Mr. Cartwright said he had been always in hopes that it would not be brought forward as long as an insurmountable objection to it existed. They who presented it knew this insurmountable objection existed, and he was surprised therefore, that they should bring it forward. This proceeding could serve no other purpose than exciting a ferment and agitation in the public mind that ought to be avoided if possible.

The discussion of the petition in the house of Commons was fixed for the 9th of May. No day has yet been fixed for its discussion in the house of lords.

We repeat the opinion we have more than once expressed, that the petition could not have been presented at a more unseasonable time; and we suggest one remark to the consideration of our readers, that compliance with the wishes of the Catholics must necessarily end in the repeal of the Test and all the acts that affect Protestant Dissenters.

Our first account, which some foreign advices inconsiderately contradicted, has been proved to be correct, and Buonaparte has added the title of King of Italy to that of Emperor of France. The Italian Consulta of State, and the Deputation of the Italian Republic headed by the Vice-President Melzi, proceeded in great state to the Thuilleries on the 18th, where Buonaparte received them seated on his Throne, and surrounded by the Princes of his House, and the great officers of state.

M. Melzi then addressed him in a short speech, in which he pronounced a condemnation of the Constitution which had been given to the Italian Republic—a constitution which he considered as the mere creation & creature of circumstances too feeble to be permanent or respectable. He then read in Italian the resolutions passed by the Consulta, in which, after declaring the Government of the Italian Republic an Hereditary Monarchy, on the same principles as those which constitute the government of the French Empire, they declare Napoleon Buonaparte King of Italy, and the throne hereditary in his direct and legitimate male descendants, natural or adoptive. They declare likewise that the Crown of Italy can only be united to the Crown of France in his person; and that no future Emperor of France shall at the same time be King of Italy. At the same time whilst they give him the right of resigning the crown and naming his successor during his life-time, they express their opinion that he cannot make use of it without compromising the safety, integrity and independence of the state, so long as the French armies shall occupy the kingdoms of Naples, the Russian armies Corfu, and the British Malta, and so long as the peninsula of Italy shall be menaced with being made every moment the field of battle of the greatest Powers in Europe.

Buonaparte accepting the proffered crown with great willingness, reminded the Consulta of the benefits he had conferred on them, and, acknowledging that the separation of the crowns of Italy and France might at present be fatal to the existence of the former, consented to keep the crown till the moment should arrive in which he should be able to place it on a younger head, who shall continue my work, and be ready to sacrifice his life to the happiness of the people, over whom Providence, the Constitution, and MY will shall have called him to reign."

Repeating from this mockery at the Thuilleries to his Senate, Buonaparte was there harangued by M. Talleyrand, who, in much the same style as the Duke of Buckingham harangued Richard the Third, enumerated the reasons and arguments that should induce

his Imperial Majesty graciously to accept the Italian Crown.

His Italian Majesty is immediately to repair to Milan to be crowned, and to give a definitive Constitution to his new kingdom. Piombino has been erected into a principality, and our dear sister Eliza, Princess Borghese, has been invested with the sovereignty of it, but as a fief of France. The ostensible motive for the erection of this new power in the heart of Italy, is to succour the French garrison in the Island of Elba, and to provision it when necessary.

April 5. The last Paris papers say, that an attempt is meditated against Gibraltar, in which case the Spaniards expect to be aided by a secret understanding with the garrison.

The French Ambassador M. Brune, previous to his departure from Constantinople, communicated to the Reis-Effendi the copy of a note, which the Minister Talleyrand had addressed to the Turkish Envoy at Paris. The note expresses astonishment at the refusal of the Porte to recognise the Emperor Napoleon, as France had at all times been the friend and faithful ally of the Ottoman Empire. Notice is also taken of the causes which have operated this refusal; stating among others that there exists in the Turkish ministry a faction, whose views and conduct are directly opposed to the true interests of the empire; that this faction had constantly evaded the advantageous propositions made on the part of France; and had sought by every means to strengthen the connection between the Porte and a certain power. It also states that the present conduct of the Porte, contradicts the general dignity of its character, in thus submitting, without cause, to a foreign dependence.

The answer to this communication was by no means satisfactory; the Reis-Effendi declared, that in refusing to recognise the Emperor Napoleon, the Turkish government had acceded to the wish of other powers.

GOTTENBURGH, March 14. Letters received from Lubek to day, confirm the accounts brought by the last post, that French troops occupy all the villages round that city, and that not a waggon or cart with goods is permitted to come out of it. The object of this it is said, is to stop all English commodities. Great fears are entertained, that it is not the only one, but that contributions will also be demanded.

March 29. The Boulogne flotilla have again began to venture into the outer roads. The day before yesterday about 150 of their gun-boats and large pramae made their appearance in the outer roads, where they practised some manœuvres, but took especial care to keep under the protection of their batteries. There appear to be 2000 vessels of different sizes in Boulogne harbor.

DEAL, March 28. L'Immortalite quitted her station lately at midnight, with sealed orders, and which orders were so sudden, that captain Owen was called out of bed, and the ships on the station ordered to supply him from their own stores with four months provision, and every other necessary. So much good speed was used on this occasion, that L'Immortalite sailed at day break. The generally received opinion here is, that this frigate is ordered to cruise in the track of the homeward bound Spanish galleons.

BOSTON, May 7.

By capt. Nash, from Halifax, we have been favored with the following account of the trial and condemnation of the brig Happy Couple, of New-York.

The Happy Couple, T. W. Story, master.
This case was lately argued and decided in the court of vice admiralty at Halifax, upon two very important points: The one concerning the armament of American vessels—the other respected the right of carrying contraband articles to those parts of St. Domingo under the dominion of what is now called the Empire of Hayti. The brig Happy Couple sailed from New-York in the month of October last, completely armed and fitted for war, with a cargo consisting chiefly of gun-powder, bound to the ports of Gonaives and Port-au-Prince. She had under convoy two schrs. the Dash and the Ann, both of which had also gun-powder on board, bound to the same ports. The three vessels sailed under the following instructions from their owners:

"The captains of both the schrs. have orders to follow your directions as to the route of the passage, and to obey such signals as you may, in the course thereof, give for their government, either in sailing, or in case of your and their having recourse to arms in defence of your persons and the property committed to your charge and the protection of your guns, which we consider so competent to the security of all your little squadron, that nothing but some unforeseen misfortune, or bad management in case of action, or separation (which we think, with care, is to be avoided) as to render the risk very small indeed; but in case the latter should happen, we have appointed Turk's island as the place of rendezvous, and that