

BRITISH INTRIGUE.

The following message was received from the President of the United States, by the House of Representatives on the 12th of January.

I lay before congress copies of certain documents which remain in the department of state. They prove that at a recent period, while the United States, notwithstanding the wrongs sustained by them, ceased not to observe the laws of peace and tranquility towards Great Britain, and in the midst of amicable professions and negotiations on the part of the British government thro' its minister, a secret agent of that government was employed in certain states, more especially at the seat of government in Massachusetts, in fomenting disaffection to the constituted authorities of the nation; and in intrigues with the disaffected for the purpose of bringing about resistance to the laws—and eventually, in concert with a British force, destroying the Union, and forming the eastern part thereof into a political connexion with G. B.

In addition to the effect which such a discovery of such a procedure ought to have on the public councils, it will not fail to render more dear to the hearts of all good citizens that happy Union of these states, which, under Divine Providence, is the guaranty of their liberties, their safety, their tranquility & their prosperity.

MR. JOHN HENRY TO MR. MONROE.

Washed Philadelphia Feb. 20 1812.

Sir—Much observation and experience has convinced me, that the injuries and insults with which the United States have been so long and so frequently visited, and which cause their present embarrassments, have been owing to an opinion entertained by foreign states, that in any measure tending to wound their pride or provoke their hostility, the government of this country could never induce a great majority of its citizens to concur. And as many of the evils which flow from the influence of this opinion on the policy of foreign nations, may be removed by any act that can produce unanimity among all parties in America—I voluntarily tender you, on this subject, such means, as I possess, towards promoting so desirable and important an object, which if accomplished cannot fail to extinguish perhaps forever, those expectations abroad, which may protract indefinitely an accommodation of existing differences, and check the progress of industry and prosperity in this rising empire.

I have the honor to transmit herewith the documents and correspondence relating to an important mission in which I was employed by Sir James Craig, the late Governor general of the British provinces in North America, in the winter of the year 1809.

The publication of these papers will demonstrate a fact not less valuable than the good already proposed; it will prove that no reliance ought to be placed on the professions of good faith of an administration, which by a series of disastrous events, has fallen into such hands as a Castlereagh a Wellesley, or a Liverpool—I should rather say into the hands of the stupid subalterns, to whom the pleasures and the indulgence of those ministers have consigned it.

In contributing to the good of the U. S. by an exposition which cannot, (I think,) fail to solve and melt all division and disunion among its citizens, I flatter myself with the fond expectation that when it is made in England, it will add one great motive to the many that already exist, to induce that nation to withdraw its confidence from men, whose political career is a fruitful source of injury and embarrassment in America—of injustice and misery in Ireland—of distress and apprehension in England—and contempt every where. In making this communication to you Sir, I deem it incumbent on me distinctly and unequivocally to state, that I adopt no party views;—that I have not changed any of my political opinions that I neither seek nor desire the patronage nor countenance of any government, nor of any party, and that in addition the motives already expressed I am influenced by a just resentment of the perfidy and dishonor of those who first violated the conditions upon which I received their confidence; who have injured me and disappointed the expectations of my friends, and left me no choice but between a degrading acquiescence in injustice, and a retaliation which is necessary to secure to me my own respect.

This wound will be felt where it is merited; and if Sir James Craig still live, his share of the pain will excite no sympathy among those who are at all in the secret of our connection.

No. 1.

Mr. Ryland, Secretary to Sir James Craig, late Governor general of the British provinces in North America, to Mr. Henry.

Application to undertake the mission to the United States.

[Most secret and confidential.]

Quebec, 26th Jan. 1809.

Dear Sir—The extraordinary situation of things at this time in the neighboring states has suggested to the Governor in Chief the idea of employing you on a secret and confidential mission to Boston, provided an arrangement can be made to meet the important end in view, without throwing an absolute obstacle in the way of your professional pursuits. The information and political observations heretofore received from you were transmitted by his Excellency to the Secretary of State who has expressed his particular approval of them, and there is no doubt that your able execution of such a mission as I have above suggested would give you a claim not only on the Governor General but on his Majesty's ministers which might eventually contribute to your advantage. You will have the goodness therefore to acquaint me for his Excellency's information, whether you could make it convenient to engage in a mission of this nature, and what pecuniary assistance, would be requisite to enable you to undertake it without injury to yourself.

At present it is only necessary for me to add, that the Governor would furnish you with a cypher for carrying on your correspondence, and that in case the leading party in any of the states wished to open a communication with this government, their views might be communicated through you.

I am, with great truth and regard, my dear Sir, your most faithful, humble servant.

(Signed) HERMAN W. RYLAND.
John Henry, Esq.

No. 2.

General instructions from Sir J. H. Craig, to Mr. Henry, respecting his secret mission.

His Excellency the Governor in Chief's instructions to Mr. Henry, Feb. 1810.

[Most secret and confidential.]

Quebec, 6 February 1809.

Sir—As you have so readily undertaken the service which I have suggested to you, as being likely to be attended with much benefit to the public interests, I am to request that with your earliest convenience you will proceed to Boston.

The principal object that I recommend to your attention is the endeavour to obtain the most accurate information of the true state of affairs in that part of the union, which, from its wealth, the number of its inhabitants, and the known intelligence and ability of several of its leading men, must naturally possess a very considerable influence over, and will indeed probably lead the other Eastern States of America in the part they may take at this important crisis.

I shall not pretend to point out to you the mode by which you will be most likely to obtain this important information: your own judgement and the connections which you may have in the town must be your guide.

I think it however necessary to put you on your guard against the sanguineness of an aspiring party; the federalists as I understand have at all times, discovered a leaning to this disposition and their being under its particular influence at this moment is the more to be expected from their having no ill founded ground for their hopes of being nearer the attainment of their object than they have been for some years past.

In the general terms which I have made use of describing the object which I recommend to your attention, it is scarcely necessary I should observe, I include the state of the public opinion both with regard to their internal politics and to the probability of a war with England; the comparative strength of the two great parties into which the country is divided, and the views and designs of that which may ultimately prevail.

It has been supposed that if the Federalists of the Eastern States should be successful in obtaining that decided influence which may enable them to direct the public opinion, it is not improbable, that rather than submit to a continuance of the difficulties and distress to which they are now subject, they will exert that influence to bring about a separation from the general union. The earliest information on this subject may be of great consequence to our government, as it may also be, that it should be informed how far in such an event they would look up to England for assistance or be disposed to enter into a connection with us.

Although it would be highly inexpedient that you should in any manner appear as an avowed agent, yet if you could contrive to obtain an intimacy with any of the leading party, it may not be improper that you should insinuate, though with great caution, that if they should wish to enter into any communication with our government through me you are authorised to receive any such, and will safely transmit it to me. And as it may not be impossible that they should require some document by which they may be assured, that you are really in the situation in which you represent yourself, I enclose a credential to be produced in that view; but I most particularly enjoin and direct, that you do not make any use of this paper, unless a desire to that purpose should be expressed, and unless you see good ground for expecting that the doing so may lead to a more confidential communication, than you can otherwise look for.

In passing through the state of Vermont, you will of course exert your endeavors to procure all the information that the short stay you will probably make there will admit of, you will use your own discretion as to delaying your journey, with this view, more or less, in proportion to your prospects of obtaining any information of consequence.

I request to hear from you as frequently as possible, and as letters directed to me might excite suspicion it may be as well that you put them under cover to Mr. ———— and as even the addressing letters always to the same person might attract notice, I recommend your sometimes addressing your packet to the Chief Justice here, or occasionally though seldom to Mr. Ryland, but never with the addition of his official description.

I am, Sir, your most obedient humble servant.

J. H. CRAIG.

No. 3.

Credentials from Sir James Craig to Mr. Henry, Feb. 1809.

(Copy) (REAL)
The bearer Mr. John Henry is employed by me, and full confidence may be placed in him for any communication which any person may wish to make to me in the business committed to him. In faith of which I have given him this under my hand and seal at Quebec the 6th day of February 1809.

(Signed) J. H. CRAIG.

No. IV.

Mr. Henry's letters to Sir James Craig, written whilst employed on a mission to Boston.

Answer to the letter of Mr. Secretary Ryland proposing the mission, &c. &c.

(No. 1.) Montreal, Jan. 31, 1809.

I have to acknowledge the favor of your letter of the 28th inst. written by the desire of his excellency the governor in chief; and hasten to express, through you, to his excellency my readiness to comply with his wishes.

I need not add how very flattering it is to receive from his excellency the assurance of the approbation of his majesty's secretary of state for the very humble services that I may have rendered.

If the nature of the service in which I am to be engaged will require no other disbursements than for my individual expenses, I do not apprehend that these can exceed my private resources.

I shall be ready to take my departure before my instructions can be made out.

I have the honor to be, &c.

J. Hy.

H. W. Ryland Secretary &c. &c.

No. 2.

To his excellency the Governor general, &c. in answer to his letter of instructions.

Montreal, Feb. 10, 1809.

Sir—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your excellency's letter of instructions, the letter of credence, and the cypher for carrying on my correspondence. I have bestowed much pains upon the cypher, and am notwithstanding this deficient in some point which might enable me to understand it clearly. I have compared the exemplification of the cypher, and find a difference in the results; and as the present moment seems favorable to the interference of his majesty's government in the measures pursued by the federal party in the northern states, and more especially as the assembly of Massachusetts is now in session, I think it better to set forward immediately, than wait for any further explanation of the means of carrying on a secret correspondence, which the frequency of safe private conveyances to Canada, will render almost wholly unnecessary. Should it however be necessary at any time, I take leave to suggest that the index alone furnishes a very safe and simple mode. In it there is a number for every letter in the alphabet, and particular numbers for particular phrases: so that when I do not find in the index the particular word I want, I can spell it with the figures which stand opposite to the letters. For example, if I want to say that "troops at Albany," I find under the letter "T" that number 16 stands for "troops," and a number 125 for "Albany." The intervening words "are at" I supply by figures corresponding with the letters in these words.

It will be necessary to provide against accidents by addressing the letters Mr. ——— of Montreal, with a small mark on the corner of the envelope which he will understand. When he receives it, he will then address the inclosure to your excellency and send it from Montreal by mail. I will be careful not to address your excellency in the body of the letter nor sign my name to any of them. They will be merely designated by the initials A. B.

If this mode should in any respect appear exceptionable, your excellency will have the goodness to order a more particular explanation of the card. It would reach me in safety enclosed to Boston.

I have the honor to be, &c.

No. 3.

Burlington, Vermont, Feb. 14, 1809.

Sir—I have remained here two days in order fully to ascertain the progress of the arrangements heretofore made, for organising an efficient opposition to the general government, as well as to become acquainted with the opinions of the leading people, relative to the measures of that party which has the ascendancy in the national councils.

On the subject of the Embargo laws here seems but one opinion: namely, that they are unnecessary, oppressive and unconstitutional. It must be also observed that the execution of them is so injurious as to attract towards the officers of government the enmity of the people, which is of course transferable to the government itself; so that in case the state of Massachusetts should take any bold step towards resisting the execution of these laws, it is highly probable that it may calculate upon the hearty co-operation of the people of Vermont.

I learn that the Governor of this state is now visiting the towns in the northern section of it; and makes no secret of his determination, as commander in chief of the militia, to refuse obedience to any command from the general government which can tend to interrupt the good understanding that prevails between the citizens of Vermont and his majesty's subjects in Canada. It is further intimated, that, in case of a war, he will use his influence to preserve the state neutral, and resist, with all the force he can command, any attempt to make it a party. I need not add, that if these resolutions are carried into effect, the state of Ver-

mont may be considered as an ally of G. B. To what extent the sentiments which prevail in this quarter exist in the neighboring states, or even in the eastern section of this state, I am not able to conjecture. I only can say, with certainty, that the leading men of the federal party act in concert; and therefore, infer, that a common sentiment pervades the whole body throughout New-England.

I have seen a letter from a gentleman now at Washington to his correspondent in this place, and as its contents may serve to throw some light on passing events there, I shall send either the original or copy with dispatch. The writer of the letter is a man of character and veracity; and whether competent or not to form correct opinions himself, is probably within the reach of all the knowledge that can be obtained by the party to which he belongs. It appears by his statement that there is a very formidable majority in Congress on the side of the administration, notwithstanding which, there is every reason to hope, that the northern states in their distinct capacity will unite and resist by force a war with G. B. In what mode this resistance will first show itself, is probably not yet determined upon; and may in some measure depend upon the release that the leading men may place upon assurances of support from his majesty's representative in Canada; and as I shall be on the spot to tender this whenever the moment arrives that it can be done with effect—there is no doubt that all the measures may be made subordinate to the intentions of his majesty's government. Great pains are taken by the men of talents and intelligence to confirm the fears of the common people, as to concurrence of the southern democrats in the projects of France; and every thing tends to encourage the belief that the dissolution of the confederacy will be accelerated by the spirit which now actuates both political parties.

I am, &c.

A. B.

No. 4.

Windsor, Vermont, Feb. 19, 1809.

Sir—My last (No. 3.) was written at Burlington, the principal town in the northern part on the state of Vermont. I am now at the principal town in the eastern section.

The fallacy of men's opinions, when they act under the influence of sensibility, and are strongly excited by those hopes which always animate a rising party, led me to doubt the correctness of the opinions which I received in the northern section of this state, which, from its contiguity to Canada and necessary intercourse with Montreal, has a stronger interest in promoting a good understanding with his majesty's government. Therefore, since my departure from Burlington, I have sought every favorable occasion of conversing with the democrats on the probable result of the policy adopted by the general government. The difference of opinion is thus expressed.

The federal party declare, that in the event of a war, the state of Vermont will treat separately for itself with G. B.; and support to the utmost the stipulations in which it may enter without any regard to the policy of the general government. The democrats on the other hand assert, that, in such a case as the contemplated, the people would be nearly divided into equal numbers—one of which would support the government if it could be done without involving the people in a civil war; but at all events would risk every thing in preference to a coalition with G. B. This difference of opinion is not to be wholly ascribed to the prejudices of party. The people in the eastern section of Vermont are not excited upon by the same hopes and fears as those on the borders of the British colony. These are not dependent upon Montreal for the sale of their produce, nor the supply of foreign commodities. They are not apprehensive of any serious dangers or inconvenience from a state of war; and although they admit that the governor, council and three-fourths of the representation in Congress are of the federal party, yet they do not believe that the state would stand alone and resist the national government. They do not however deny, that should the state of Vermont continue to be represented as it is at present, it would in all probability unite with the neighboring states, in any serious plan of resistance to a war, which it might seem expedient to adopt.

This I think is the safer opinion for you to rely on; if indeed reliance ought to be placed on any measure depending upon the will of the rabble, which is ever changing and must ever be marked with ignorance, caprice and inconsistency. As the crisis approaches, the difficulty of deciding upon an hazardous alternative will increase; and unfortunately there is not in Vermont any man of commanding talents, capable of attracting general confidence; of infusing into the people his own spirit; and amidst the confusion of conflicting opinions, dangers and commotion, competent to lead in the path of duty or safety. The Governor is an industrious, prudent man, and has more personal influence than any other; but his abilities are not suited to the situation in which a civil war would place him.

I am, &c.

A. B.

No. 5.

Amherst, New Hampshire, Feb. 23, 1809.

Sir—A gentleman going direct to Canada, offers a safe and favorable opportunity of giving you some further account of my progress. I will not make any use of the post office, when I can avoid it; because private occasions supersede the necessity of writing in cypher; and the contempt of secrecy and principle, which forms part of the morals of the subaltern officers of a democracy, would incline them to break a seal with the same indif-