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Political.

FROM THE CONNECTICUT MIRROR. THE WAR.

The people of this county are beginning to feel the effects of a war, determined upon by the orders of Bonaparte, declared to secure Mr. Madison's election, and carrying on for the protection of foreign vagrants, and British deserters. In some parts of our country, owing to the unfaithfulness of the last season, and the impossibility of transportation from the middle and southern to the northern states, provisions, particularly flour, are very scarce and dear. The people on the eastern coast of New England, in all directions, must daily experience a famine. Many of our great exports, bays, and rivers, are in a state of rigorous blockade, so that nothing can pass in or out but by permission of our enemy. Even the coasting vessels, and river craft, are not secure. All the external trade and navigation of the States of Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, by the blockade of the river Delaware, and the Chesapeake Bay, is destroyed, the towns on their borders, are threatened with being laid under contribution, or bombarded in case of refusal. Even the cities of Philadelphia, Baltimore, Annapolis, Norfolk, and Richmond, have been for some time in a state of apprehension, lest the squadron of the enemy should visit them with their cannon and rockets. And, the probability is, that within a short time, when the whole of the naval force which has been ordered to our shores shall have arrived, the whole extent of our coast will be laid at the mercy of the foe.

When this takes place, where is our defence? What means have we to annoy the enemy, or protect ourselves? Our armed ships cannot engage a fleet of 74's, not "in disguise." Privateering that boasted auxiliary to philosophical warfare, may enrich a Barney, and a few others of equally desperate patriotism; but our poor merchants will find but miserable consolation for the ruin which awaits them, and which will overtake many of them, in the reflection that the buccanniers of the country are enriched, while they are despoiled of their property by the abandoned policy of their own government.

Great clamor is making by those who brought the war on the country, because the British threaten our towns, capture our coasters, and employ Indians. It would have been extremely fortunate for the country, if these evils had been foreseen by the war-makers, at the time they exerted every power of body and mind to plunge us into the war. If it is cruel and unchristian in the Indians to scalp and tomahawk our people when they fall into their hands, who has exposed our people to be scalped and tomahawked? Did Mr. Madison and Mr. Monroe, and Mr. Gallatin, imagine, that when we wantonly attacked the British dominions, and threatened their inhabitants with fire and sword that those inhabitants, whether white, or copper coloured, would not resist us? Did not the authors of the war know, that Indians would scalp and tomahawk their enemies; and that if we made war upon them we must expect to be treated as they always treat their foes? While, therefore, we deplore the sufferings, and calamities of the miserable inhabitants of the frontiers, we wish them to remember, that they are indebted for all those calamities to the authors of the war—to Mr. Madison and his Cabinet. And they now fairly have it in their power to settle a very important question, viz. Are they satisfied to be butchered, merely that our administration may protect foreign vagrants, and British deserters?

With respect to the people on the sea coast, they may fairly indulge themselves in a similar train of reflections. The administration knew, when they forced Congress to declare war, that, if it was prosecuted for any length of time, our coast would be swept. They had every reason to expect, that if we attempted the conquest of Canada, Great Britain would find us something to do upon the Atlantic shore. If their vessels are captured, and their trade destroyed, they will have the satisfaction of recollecting, that they have been sacrificed at the orders of Bonaparte. If their towns are laid under contribution, or bombarded, it will be in vindication of the important national principle of protecting foreign vagrants, and British deserters. Are they not willing to have their houses burnt, and their families beggared, that John Armstrong may be, at some future day at the head of a military despotism, and that such men as Duane, Gray, &c. shall have the command of our armies, and be able to assist him in his ambitious projects. If the evils they suffer are not balanced by blessings of this sort, we know not how the account is to be settled, unless, indeed they shall at last be convinced, that it is best to change the character of our rulers.

N. B. We should like to know, if Mr. Stephen Girard, of Philadelphia does not feel a great attachment to the rights of foreign vagrants, and British deserters.

Qualifications for office.—A few years since, there was a Brigadier-General in the army of the United States, by the name of James Wilkinson—a vain-glorious braggart, something like one, now holding the same commission, by the name of Alexander Smyth. This man, Wilkinson, has long been believed by a multitude of well-informed people, to have been, whilst in the service of his country, in the pay of a foreign government. A great proportion of the people of the United States, have no doubt that

he was engaged with Burr in his conspiracy against Mr. Jefferson. The records of the treasury show, that he has squandered the public money in no small sums, both for his own convenience, and for other purposes. For some, or all these sins, he has been tried by a court martial, and half acquitted. Even the President, who does not appear generally to be a political snare, in his approval of the sentence, cast an indirect reproach upon him. No man of sense and integrity has any confidence in his qualifications for the service; and yet, the President of the United States has nominated him (and a majority of the Senate have ratified the nomination) to be a Major-General in the army.

Just as the revolutionary war was drawing to a close, in the year 1783, an anonymous letter was addressed to the army, then under the command of General Washington, representing in strong colours, and glowing language, the services and sufferings of the troops, charging the country with injustice and ingratitude in not remunerating those services, and calling upon the army, in the most direct terms, to secure by their arms, the rewards due to their successful exertions in the struggle for independence. The following is an extract from that letter:—

"If this, then, be your treatment while the swords you wear are necessary for the defence of America, what have you to expect from peace, when your voice shall sink, and your strength dissipate by division? when those very swords, the instruments and companions of your glory, shall be taken from your sides, and no remaining mark of military distinction left but your wants, infirmities, and scars? can you then consent to be the only sufferers by this revolution, and retiring from the field, grow old in poverty, wretchedness and contempt? can you consent to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honour? If you can—go—and carry with you the jest of Tories and the scorn of Whigs—the ridicule, and what is worse, the pity of the world. Go, starve, and be forgotten! but if your spirit should revolt at this; if you have sense enough to discover, and spirit enough to oppose tyranny under whatever garb it may assume; whether it be the plain coat of republicanism, or the splendid robe of royalty; if you have not yet learned to discriminate between a people and a cause, between men and principles—awake, attend to your situation, and redress yourselves. If the present moment be lost, every future effort is in vain; and your threats then will be as empty as your entreaties now.

"I would advise you, therefore, to come to some final opinion upon what you can bear, and what you will suffer. If your determination be in any proportion to your wrongs, carry your appeal from the justice, to the fears of government. Change the milk and water style of your last memorial; assume a bolder tone—deceit but lively, spirited and determined, and suspect the man who would advise to more moderation and longer forbearance."

This bold, and profligate attempt to turn the arms of the soldiers of independence, against the liberties of their country, and which was defeated only by the prudence, firmness, and integrity of General Washington, is not denied to have been made by JOHN ARMS FRONG, then an officer in the army, lately appointed a Brigadier-General, and then Secretary of War, by Mr. Madison. It would seem as if no President of the U. States, who had not a direct eye to the establishment of a despotism over the nation, could have selected a man to regulate the military department of our government, in a time of war, who had in such decisive language proved himself to be capable of attempting the most ambitious projects, by the most daring and profligate means. When the troops are all enlisted, he will have the oversight and direction of an army of fifty five thousand men—a body sufficient, at the close of the present war, to enable him to subvert the government, and place himself at the head of the country.

At the head of our treasury department, is a foreigner, a Frenchman in principle, and habit, cunning, plodding, and determined, commanding our money concerns, and extending his influence through every corner of the nation. He once had a deep agency in stirring up a desperate insurrection against the government. He has shewn a resolute devotion to that terrible nation, from which his ideas of law and government appear to have been imbibed. Should Gallatin and Armstrong unite their powers, and bend their arts and their force, against the freedom of the U. States, those liberties which were rescued from destruction by General Washington, in 1783, and in 1794, would probably stand but a poor chance for salvation in the hands of a Madison, or a Monroe.

In Philadelphia, there has been, for several years past, an illiterate Irishman, of the name of Duane. This man is distinguished, principally, by his impudence, vulgarity, and malice. As it respects his military character, it is believed that he has neither capacity, nor courage. Mr. Madison, since the rising of Congress, has nominated him an Adjutant-General. The only qualification, that we can conceive of his possessing, which it might be supposed would recommend him to this high office, is—the having most foully calumniated General Washington. This trait of character, unfortunately, has too often proved a sure passport to the good graces of Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison.

Another Irishman, by the name of Gray, who it is said is not naturalized, and whose habits since his short residence in this country, have been formed in the office of a Clerk of a court in the State of New York, has been nominated, by the President, Inspector-General. Here the mere circumstance of his birth place—a certificate of origin—IRELAND, must have been the happy cause of his promotion over the heads of the natives of our country.

Is it to be wondered at, that Federalists do not heartily support a war, which is entrusted to the management of such agents as these? It is in vain to tell us that the honour of the country calls for it. The honour of the country is tarnished by the administration. The disgrace of these appointments is too deep to be effaced. The honour of the country has sunk in the laps of Jefferson and Madison. Federalists will, as far as possible, keep themselves aloof from company which no honest or honorable man can join, without sacrificing his reputation. *Ibid.*

The editor of the National Intelligencer, in his paper of the 1st inst. says, "the legislature of Massachusetts, have been occupied, during a part of their late session, in an investigation of the subject of impressment; with which they have just as much to do as with the regulation of commerce, the declaration of war, or any other power or duty exclusively confided by the constitution to the general government." Truly, this is something new. We understand Mr. Gales's doctrine to be this. The Constitution has confided some subjects exclusively to the national government, and among them, the right of telling falsehoods as often as they please, on any subject that may be convenient; and whoever undertakes to expose them, by bringing out the truth, violates their exclusive privileges. We have long observed the Administration conducting in a manner, which seemed to imply that they viewed the right of propagating falsehood as a constitutional prerogative, but we did not expect to see it so plainly avowed, as it is here, in their cabinet Gazette.

Again—says Mr. Gales—"The enquires of the committee appointed by the Massachusetts legislature on this subject appear to have been directed to the number of impressments—as if it could make any difference in principle, whether one or an hundred had been impressed." If it makes no difference in point of principle, it makes an essential one in point of fact. Gales, and his fellow editors from foreign countries, as well as some of our own raising have published the celebrated number of 6257 often enough, and in figures large enough, to make us conclude they thought that numbers were of some importance. Now, however, when it appears, not only by the documents published by the government themselves, but by the testimony of a large number of the most considerable merchants and ship masters in one of the largest States in the Union, that no dependence can be placed on their assertions, that their stories of impressments are false and fraudulent, and calculated designedly, and solely to deceive, he gravely, and with a good degree of assurance, informs us, that numbers are of no importance. If these gentlemen can make this doctrine go down, in all cases, they have a latitude much more broad and boundless than we imagined. *Ibid.*

Extract of a letter from Col. E. P. Gaines, of the U. States' Army, to the Adjutant General of the U. States.

FORT MASSAC, January 20th, 1813.

GENERAL.—I had the honor to receive on yesterday your letter of the 16th of last month, soliciting my answer to the following questions, viz.

"Is there now published in the U. S. an elementary treatise, well adapted for the the discipline of the Militia?"

By what title is such treatise known? and if more than one, which is to be preferred?"

I answer, that I know of no 'Elementary Treatise,' which I consider to be 'well adapted for the discipline of the militia.'

The American Military Library, written by Lt. Col. Duane, contains much useful matter, and probably possesses more the character of the work sought for than any other. But it is too voluminous. It is defective in some respects and redundant in others. An experienced skillful officer, or the author, could, I think, with advantage rid it of one third of its contents, and could, by making some additions and corrections, render the residue of the work useful and valuable.

I am aware that I have already said as much as may be deemed strictly pertinent to the questions contained in your letter; but considering the great importance of the subject which produced these enquiries, I shall, I trust, be pardoned for the additional observations which I take the liberty through you to address to the honorable committee on Military Affairs.

I am fully persuaded that the discipline of the militia cannot be effected without a radical change in the militia laws. Even were you to put into the hands of every citizen the most complete system that human wisdom could devise much then would be wanting to prepare them for the field. You may mark out to them in the strongest colors which the pen or the pencil can trace or language portray, all the bearings of military science, yet the great secret and main spring to render them useful would still be wanting.

Obedience, implicit obedience, must be learned before men can be said to possess discipline,

or be prepared for war. This cannot be learned in the sweet social walks of domestic life. The ordinary operation of civil affairs, in our beloved country, is as deadly hostile to every principle of military discipline, as a complete military government would be to a democracy.

The militia system has long been the hobby-horse of our country. But it must be improved, or it must be laid aside altogether.

The militia has been created, and dandled in the lap of its indulgent mother until it has acquired, its true, great bodily strength; but like the Spoiled Child, it is deficient in every thing else calculated to make it formidable and respectable, in a military point of view.

I need not tell you that it is worse than useless to attempt to bring military discipline to the peaceful homes of the militia—No sir, the militia, to be useful, must be brought to the strong residence of military discipline and kept there until they know their duty.

Our gallant Navy has made itself respectable by its discipline; but this discipline was not acquired by attending a few days in the year the social thing called musiers, and reading now and then a treatise on military or naval tactics, whilst surrounded by all the fascinating allurements that wealth and a free and a happy country can present. Human nature must be completely changed before discipline can be acquired in this way. Our tars have learned on board their vessels how to do their duty—not was this the work of a few days or a few months only—but it occupied some years of steady perseverance, steady obedience.

A very popular general in the north west has as he imagines, made the important discovery that men may become soldiers without being made slaves. If this general meant that there is nothing slavish in passive obedience and strict subordination, according to the well established rules of regular service I cordially agree with him in opinion.

The regular soldier takes a solemn oath to do his duty, to obey the orders of the officer, set over him—he is placed in a situation which enables him to conform to these obligations—the militia man when he enters into actual service takes, or ought to take a similar oath—he engages to serve honestly and faithfully, and to obey the orders of the President and the orders of the officers set over him. But he often takes upon himself to evade every duty—he will not deign to be such a slave as to conform to the solemn obligations under which he had agreed to serve the public.

If the honest, faithful discharge of important constitutional duties must subject me to the epithet slave, cheerfully I accept it. I do not covet that liberty which is founded in disobedience, perjury and ruin to the vital interest of my country—and yet I am sure that even this general himself cannot feel a greater aversion to slavery or a more honest regard for national constitutional republican liberty than does the humble individual who now addresses you—Permit me however to add that these observations are not by any means intended to effect the just reputation of the general; which whom I have no personal acquaintance, & against whom I feel no sort of ill will—but on the contrary have long considered him as a man of much real worth.

I now take the liberty to suggest a system by which the militia of the U. States, may I think be rendered formidable and respectable. I have thought much upon the subject—but it is not without great confidence that I venture to offer the result of my reflections. The apprehension that I should subject myself to the charge of arrogance or madness, which has heretofore kept me silent, has at length given way to the persuasion that the present state of the country would form an apology for the liberty I take to offer my plan—and even should it be disapproved of it might nevertheless contain some useful hints.

Let Congress pass a law requiring from time to time such numbers of young unmarried men from each state, as Congress or the President may prescribe according to the strength or number of inhabitants of the states respectively, to be marched to the military posts on the frontiers and sea-coast. There to be organized and incorporated as much as possible with the regular army now in service—and to serve as regulars or regular militia for two or three years; a certain portion to be successively called out and relieved from time to time. This may be objected to as savoring too much of the French conscript system. There seems however to be no occasion for regarding particularly any existing system of either France or England or any other foreign nation. We must consult our political institutions and the genius of the American people.

In these respects we happily differ from all other parts of the globe—our military system may likewise differ from those of other countries. Let this system be adopted at first on a small scale, and I have no doubt that it will soon be found to be the most economical and efficient system of defence that can be devised, and I am firmly persuaded that it will only require one or two years experience to ensure to it the approbation of nine-tenths of the people of the United States, and in that time every other militia system will be seen to be useless, and will be abolished. I should have looked into the history of Republics in vain, not to be aware of the danger of large standing armies; but who can for a moment believe that such an army of regular militia, alternately going from and returning to the bosom of their friends in every part of the union, can be considered as dangerous to our Republic? No.