

The Daily Sentinel.

VOL. II.

THE SENTINEL.

W. E. PELL, PROPRIETOR.

From the Charleston Courier.

1776 A.D. 1867.

To-day ninety-one years ago, the then thirteen colonies, including those now Southern States, Maryland, Virginia, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina, by their Representatives in the Congress of the United States of America, assembled, abdicated their allegiance to the British Crown, dissolved all political connection between Great Britain and themselves, and declared themselves free and independent States.

Relying upon the protection of the Divine Providence and pledging to each other in this cause, their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor, they entered that long and earnest contest which terminated in the full acknowledgment of their independence.

On the 3d September, 1776, the treaty of peace was definitely signed by which most of the colonies, as a nation, but each of them, was declared to be a free, sovereign and independent State.

The words of the first article are as follows:

"Article I. His Britannic Majesty acknowledges the said United States, viz: New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia, to be free, sovereign and independent States; that he treats with them as such; and for himself, his heirs and successors, relinquishes all claims to the government, property and territorial rights of the same and every part thereof."

These States, thus separate and equally sovereign, appointed deputies to meet in Philadelphia in May, 1776, for the purpose of framing a Constitution, in the words, of the instructions to those from South Carolina, "adequate to the actual situation and future good government of the Confederate States."

This was framed, and upon being ratified and confirmed by nine of the States, each for itself, on the 29th of May, 1776, became the Constitution of the States so ratifying, and from that day to this, is the only legal bond of Union, under which justice is to be established, domestic tranquility ensured, the common defense provided, the general welfare promoted, and the blessings of liberty secured to the people of every State, and to their posterity.

The whole intent and meaning of this article in the Constitution was clearly to protect the States in their respective Republican forms of Government against violence, either foreign or domestic.

The events in which we are surrounded are in sad contrast with the principles which this day commemoration.

When George Washington, on the 17th of September, 1777, transmitted to the Legislatures of the respective States for their ratification or rejection, the Constitution which their Representatives had framed, he commended it as that which would promote the lasting welfare of the country and secure to "those who smoke," "Peace and weal."

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Under that Constitution we may yet be a free, united and happy people. But, when it shall be set aside, the pillars of the temple will be removed and the crumbling edifice will become a memorial of freedom, overthrown by faction.

There is scarcely a Commonwealth, which since 1789, has not revised, altered and changed its Constitution, and it was never before entertained by the wildest utterances of a mad philosophy that these should be submitted to Congress for its approval or judgment.

The idea is too utterly without foundation for argument. It is only noticed because it is for the first time seriously advanced and pressed upon a party in the country who possess at present practically the reins of government.

If any thing can arouse the land to a knowledge of the dangers which threaten its liberties and menace our whole structure of Government, it should be a doctrine like this so boldly and defiantly announced.

It is true the Constitution as it stands, shall *guarantee* to every State a republican form of government. But the meaning of the provision is well known.—At the time of its adoption, the country was just passing from a monarchy to a republican form of government. The States were about uniting for their mutual protection. Great fears were entertained from the intrigues and designs of foreign and antagonistic powers. The clause was inserted by which Congress, as the Representative of all the States, should stand pledged to guarantee to each the preservation of its Republican form of government, and preserve them from any attempts at monarchy or overthrow. It was intended for the protection, and not the subversion, of the States, or of their then acknowledged republican governments.

As the resolution originally stood, it read,

"That a Republican Constitution and its existing laws ought to be guaranteed to each State."

The debate which ensued in July, 1787, Mr. Wilson, of Pennsylvania, said, "The object is merely to secure the States against dangerous commotions, insurrections and rebellions."

Col. Mason said the General Government should have the right to suppress rebellion against particular States, otherwise it must remain a passive spectator of its own subversion.

Mr. Gorham said that "an enterprising citizen might erect the standard of monarchy in a particular State; might gather together partisans from all quarters; might extend his views from State to State, and threaten to establish a tyranny over the whole, and the General Government be compelled to remain an inactive witness of its own destruction." Mr. Carroll thought some such provision essential, and that every State ought to wish for it.

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They all concurred in the language of the Massachusetts ratification, "that all powers not expressly delegated by the aforesaid Constitution are reserved to the several States, to be by them exercised." So jealous were the founders of the Republic, to quote from the same source, "to remove the fear and quiet the apprehensions of the good people of the Commonwealths and more effectually guard against an undue administration of the Federal Government."

And to day verifies that these fears were not groundless. It is now claimed for the Federal Government that no powers are reserved to the States or to be by them exercised, but that "the Government is a consolidated nationality and is independent of the States."

The Washington Chronicle, the leading organ at the seat of Government of the controlling party of the country, on the very eve of the anniversary of the principles of our independence, announces this without the slightest disguise as the cardinal error, which the Constitution of 1789 is interpreted.

It arranges the statesmen who formed the Constitution, and under whose guidance the affairs of the country were so successfully conducted for over three-quarters of a century.

It asserts that the earlier statesmen were remiss in their duty, in not having exercised the *oversight and supervisory power* of the nation over the States. Had this been done, the nation would have been rendered homogeneous.

This Government is a consolidated nationality, not a league or confederation. It was created by the people, and is independent of the States. It must compel the States to have republican forms of government, and guarantee them when made, and it follows, as a necessity, that the form guaranteed cannot be changed without permission of the governors.

In other words, that under this latter phrase, no State can change or amend its Constitution, in the slightest degree, without having first obtained the consent and sanction of Congress thereto.

Maryland was one of the original thirteen States, which united in the Declaration of Independence, and which formed the Constitution and formed the Union under which we are living. It has never been out of the Union. Its Convention, as that of New York and other States, is now in session, revising its fundamental law. And now begins the past unbroken history of the Republic from its infancy to the present moment. It is finally announced that this must be submitted to the supervision of the Congress, at Washington, or else is without effect.

In more direct terms, that party controls Constitution and Government, and has effectively destroyed both. Referring to the State Constitution now being enacted at Annapolis, the Chronicle says: "We are satisfied it will be pronounced non-republican in form, and as there was no permission given to Maryland to change the form of Government guaranteed in 1776, and several changes have been made since that time, we submit to the guarantee for authority to go into operation, we expect that self-styled free, sovereign and independent State, to be proclaimed to be a state of constitutional anarchy." And the novel doctrine of heretofore acclaimed, unassisted and unaided of power, applies equally to New York, Massachusetts and to every other State, of whatever sect.

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