

THE TARBOROUGH PRESS.

Whole No. 1298.

Tarborough, Edgecombe County, N. C. Saturday, July 26 1851.

Vol. XIV. No. 30.

The Tarboro' Press,

BY GEORGE HOWARD.

Is published weekly at Two Dollars per year if paid in advance—or, Two Dollars and Fifty Cents at the expiration of the subscription year. Advertisements not exceeding a square will be inserted at ONE DOLLAR the first insertion, and 25 Cents for every succeeding one. Longer ones at that rate per square. Court Orders and Judicial advertisements 25 per cent. higher.

MISCELLANY.

FOR THE TARBORO' PRESS.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Tarborough, July 5th, 1851.

DEAR SIR: By a resolution unanimously adopted by the "Edgecombe Division of the Sons of Temperance," we were constituted a committee to express to you the pleasure and gratification, they experienced during the delivery of your Address on yesterday, and are authorised by them to request a copy of the same for publication—which we now do.

Agreeing in sentiment with our Division in regard to the merits of your Address, we beg leave to add our personal solicitations, and hope that you will comply with our request.

With sentiments of very high esteem we are yours in "L. P. F."

L. D. Pender,

F. M. Parker,

R. H. Winborne,

Committee.

WM. H. JOHNSTON ESQ.,

Tarboro', N. C.

Tarboro', July 8th, 1851.

GENTLEMEN: Your note of the fifth, requesting in behalf of the Division a copy of my Address for publication, was duly received.

Although I feel that the Division has placed far too high an estimate upon the merits of the Address, yet as they have expressed it to be their desire to have it published, and as I wish always to oblige them whenever I can conveniently do so, it is at their disposal.

Please present to the Division my hearty thanks for the high honor they have done me, and accept for yourselves the expression of my highest consideration.

Yours in L. P. & F.

Wm. H. Johnston.

Messrs. L. D. Pender, F. M. Parker, R. H. Winborne.

ADDRESS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: It is good that we have met here to-day. It is good that laying aside the cares of ordinary business, we have assembled to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the fourth day of July 1776. When I see around me so many come together to do honor to the memory of those illustrious men who subscribed their names to the immortal Declaration which we have just heard, I feel that the same noble spirit which burned in the hearts of the heroes of '76, transmitted through two generations, still glows with the same intensity in the souls of their descendants. Especially when I see the ladies, whose mothers in the dark and perilous times of the revolutionary struggle, with a generous devotion to their country's cause, and a proud defiance of their country's foes, ever encouraged their fathers, their brothers, their husbands and their lovers to risk their lives, their fortunes, their all in defence of their country's rights, animating by their presence on this occasion, those who are here assembled to celebrate their fathers' and their mothers' patriotism, I feel that that ardent love of liberty which then neither oppression could tame or power subdue, can never become extinct in the bosoms of Americans.

Well may we honor their memory. Well may we thus testify our joy and gratitude, that counting all things else, even their lives and fortunes, light in comparison with liberty, they for its sake encountered the dangers and endured the toils and privations of a long and almost hopeless war. For they have left us as a heritage a land more blessed than any the sun ever shone on. Whether we regard its vast extent, its immense resources by land and water, its mighty rivers, its large inland seas, its productive soil, its mineral wealth, its numerous and growing population, the fame of whose indomitable en-

ergy and industry is co-extensive with the earth's limits, its wonderful progress and skill in science, in art, in commerce, agriculture, manufactures, in a word in every thing which can contribute to render a nation powerful and prosperous, and above all its political institutions, founded on the broad basis of liberty and equality, from which flow the almost perfect freedom and happiness which its citizens enjoy, it presents on every side and in every view, with one important exception an aspect of beauty and felicity which must be a source of honest pride and sincere gratification to every patriotic citizen.

And this is productive not only of joy and pride, but also of admiration, of wonder when we reflect that two hundred and fifty years ago this country great as we now see it, was a vast wilderness, inhabited only by savage men and wild beasts. Nought but the fierce yell of the Indian as he engaged in deadly contest with his foe; or the wild cry of the brute tenant of the woods could be heard throughout its unbounded forests. Those Indians, those forests and beasts of prey have almost totally disappeared before the rapidly advancing march of civilized men.

But it has cost great labors and privations, as it does to accomplish every thing that is really grand and noble, to bring this country to its present lofty height of power and prosperity. To describe how it has been done, with the prospects of its still further advancement and the obstacles in the way thereto, will be the subject of the present discourse.

The first settlers of this country were induced to emigrate hither from various motives. Some were mere adventurers in search of wealth; others fled from religious persecution, hoping to find here religious freedom. The Puritans who settled New England, were of that stern and rugged sect, which in the civil war in England of 1640, subdued the power of Charles 1st and brought him to the scaffold. The most of them were from Britain. Britain was then the most free and enlightened nation on earth. They brought over with them her institutions, the most valuable of which was the common law, not then freed, it is true, from the slavish trammels of the feudal system, but indeed more deeply imbued with the spirit of real liberty, than any other system of law in the world. All therefore of liberty and enlightenment which the civilized world possessed they introduced and established in the wilds of America. The mere fact too of their giving up all the comforts and endearing associations of home, where many of them were living in affluence for an inhospitable shore, the residence of barbarians and brutes, where they could reasonably but expect to encounter perils and hardships, evinces the native stern determination and independence of their characters. The dangers which they here encountered, the labors and sufferings which they underwent, the unceasing vigilance and activity which were necessarily called into exercise against the insidious arts and the midnight attacks of their Indian foes and the depredations of wild beasts gave that character increased tone and vigor.

Thus from the time of their first settlement they were accustomed to the exercise of practical liberty. During their entire existence as Colonies, although they admitted that they were mere dependencies of the British Crown, and the British Government claimed over them supreme authority, they enjoyed all the rights and immunities of free men, at least so far as regarded their merely local affairs. It was fortunate for them that in their infancy, although England claimed the right of regulating their domestic concerns, and especially of taxing them with or without their consent, she never endeavored to exert it. Then in their weakness they might have submitted, and we this day instead of being citizens of the most free and one of the most powerful and enlightened nations on earth, might have been degraded subjects of the British Crown. But the British Government only required that the laws enacted by the colonial Legislatures should not be repugnant to the laws and customs of England. The revenue which might then have been derived from the Colonies was too small in comparison with the sum which they,

if they had been taxed, might have justly demanded for defence against their enemies, and the Government was quite content to allow them the power of self-government in consideration of being free from the expense of protecting them.

Thus all circumstances were favorable to the growth and permanent establishment of a spirit of genuine liberty among the Americans. The independent character of the original settlers, the motives from which many of them came hither, the hardy lives they led after their settlement here, the fact that they came from England, bringing with them her free institutions and above all the fact that they always actually governed themselves, were all calculated to plant and foster in their bosoms that lofty independence of spirit, and that unquenchable love of liberty which blazed forth with so intense a brightness in the revolutionary struggle.

Accordingly when after the French war, the British Parliament, thinking that as the Colonies had now become quite prosperous, they could yield a considerable revenue, passed the famous or rather infamous stamp act, imposing a duty on all paper that might be used for certain purposes in the Colonies, a spirit of universal indignation was aroused. They protested against it as being a wanton violation of the rights which they held under the British Constitution. They were free-born subjects of the British Crown. The charters which had been granted them, had declared that they should have and possess all the rights, franchises and immunities of subjects born within the realm of England. It was a long settled principle of the British Constitution, they said, that there should be no taxation without representation. In this endeavor of the British Government to tax them without their consent, they saw the danger of becoming victims of arbitrary power. They foresaw themselves and their children slaves, their country drained of her resources to support the ambitious projects of the British Government. They resisted until the 4th of July 1776 to preserve the rights they claimed under the British Constitution; from that day, seeing that England was determined to enslave them, and could not be turned from her resolution by fear or love, by forcible resistance or humble petition, they struggled to become independent States. On that day, they through their delegates in Congress assembled, after stating the grievances which had brought them to this step, declared themselves absolved from all connection with the British Government, and in support of that Declaration pledged to one another their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honors. And through seven years of danger and toil and hardships, with a moral heroism unsurpassed in the history of the world, they succeeded in making that declaration good.

In all the events of that momentous period we discern the pure and exalted patriotism and consummate wisdom of the American statesmen. They saw that union among the States was essential to the success of their cause. In order to secure such union, an efficient General Government was necessary. Accordingly immediately after the Declaration of Independence they took steps to establish such a Government. The Congress adopted the articles of Confederation which formed a sort of Constitution of Government, but it was not until 1781, the very year in which the last battle of the Revolution was fought, that they were ratified by all the States. It was in spite of distracted counsels and jarring interests and opinions, that our independence was achieved.

It was found however that the Government thus established was exceedingly defective. The Congress could exercise no power which was not expressly granted, however necessary other powers might be to carry the granted powers into effect. It could not enforce the laws which it might enact. It could pass laws, it was left to the States to enforce them. The Government had no Judges, no Executive. Nor had it power, nor ought it to have had power to use violent measures in order to compel the States to enforce its laws.

This was therefore an exceedingly imperfect Government, liable to be driven

to the usurpation of powers in order to maintain itself, or to become extinct through mere weakness. After having experienced for several years all the disorders incident to Governments incapable of enforcing their laws, the States took measures to form a more perfect Government. They elected delegates to a Convention which met in 1787, and, after much excited controversy, adopted the Constitution under which, somewhat modified however since then, we now live. Several times before its adoption the Convention were at the point of breaking up in despair and disgust. And after its adoption, it met with strong opposition in the States, when presented to them for ratification. It was at first rejected by this State, and was not finally approved until after the Government formed under it had gone into actual operation. So difficult was it to form the Government under which we now live! How grateful ought we to be to the eminent men, by whose wisdom, moderation and mutual concessions the Union was established and all the evils of intestine discord avoided!

How noble a spectacle was here presented to the view of the world. A people of thirteen separate States just freed from the yoke of a despotic Government, when the love of liberty is too apt to degenerate into licentiousness, divided in opinions and interests, distracted in councils, with a heavy public debt weighing upon them, and without a revenue to meet it, with perfect calmness, without disorder, without violence, send delegates to a Convention to form a General Government, and after its formation, although many of them are dissatisfied, and consider themselves aggrieved, yet acquiesce in the will of the majority without a single act of violent resistance! We challenge the world to show us another such example of self sacrificing moderation and exalted patriotism. Greece nor Rome nor Italy nor England, boasted lands of liberty, can do it. France a few years afterwards, when she subverted her monarchical, instead of establishing in its place a stable Republican form, as she doubtless intended, ran into the most extravagant excesses, and formed one of the most tyrannical and cruel Governments that the world has ever seen. But the Americans of '87 had learned from actual exercise in what true liberty really consisted, that it was not in the license of doing whatever one pleases, but in submitting to the will of the majority constitutionally expressed and they acted accordingly.

It was the object of the Convention to vest in the General Government only those powers which were of a general nature, which concerned merely the common interests of the nation, while it should reserve to the States all which regarded their merely local affairs. The States had too long exercised the power of self-government to be willing to yield all legislative powers to Congress. It is certain that this Government thus constituted is in theory the most perfect one in the world, I may say, that ever was devised by man, and if the balance could only be preserved in practice between the powers conceded to it and those reserved to the States might long endure to bless those under it with its benefits and the world with its example. Under it, and as the wisest men of our country have believed, through the force and energy which the free spirit that pervades it, and the Union established by it has given us as a nation, has our country attained its present lofty rank among the nations of the earth. Through the stormy period of the French Revolution, and the destructive wars which followed it, that for twenty years convulsed all Europe and filled the wise and good of all nations with anxiety and alarm, when the Statesmen who controlled our affairs were obliged to exercise the utmost caution and moderation in order to preserve our neutrality, through the last war with Britain and the war with Mexico, which we were obliged to wage in defence of our National rights, through all the bitter and excited controversies which have taken place between the different parties, sometimes sectional of the Union, as that between the Republicans and Federalists from 1797 to 1801, between the Government and South Carolina about twenty years ago, and the one which now exists between the North and

South on the subject of slavery, the Union has passed safely, and has grown in stature and strength, until it has become the admiration of the world. It is not wonderful therefore that the people should regard the Union with the profoundest veneration. They would submit to many sacrifices, before they could endure to see so fair a fabric, created by the toils and sufferings and privations of the heroes of the revolution, consecrated by their blood, and endeared by the many glorious successes which they have met with, since its establishment, overthrown and demolished. That broad, national, patriotic spirit, which comprehends the whole Union, created, as it was, by our common grievances, when in a colonial state, and our common labors amidst the dangers of the Revolution, and fostered by our common glories since we have become an independent nation must suffer many a rude shock from the wrongs and indignities of an unprincipled majority, before it can be utterly extinguished. For the man who can think on Bunker Hill and Yorktown, and the many other brilliant fields of the Revolution, of the war of 1812, and the Mexican war, without feeling his heart pervaded with a patriotic glow of joy and gratitude and honest pride and love for the Union in whose cause so many noble victories were achieved, is indeed callous to those lofty emotions which form the chief pleasure of man, and the chief ornament of human nature.

But that the administration of the General Government has not been conducted in strict accordance with the spirit of the Constitution, and with a due regard to that equality of rights which subsists, and should be rigorously and sacredly observed between all the members of the Confederacy we regard as certain. It is necessary that the Constitution be strictly construed, otherwise it is worthless, of no more value than so much blank paper. This is necessary in order to preserve a just equality among the States. But the course of Congress evinces that it is disposed to absorb much of the power which, the framers of the Constitution evidently designed, should be reserved to the States. Whether this disposition will influence its conduct so far as to lead to a dissolution of the Union, cannot yet be foreseen. But one thing is certain. The majority of the Southern people, should so deplorable an event occur, cannot, if they act considerately in future, justly bear any part of the blame of having produced it. They have always been strict constructionists, they have opposed all schemes which tended to an undue enlargement of the powers of Congress. They have always been strongly attached to the Union, have always been ready to pour out their money and their blood like water in its defence. They are strongly attached to the Union now as it would exist under a strict construction of the Constitution, with all the rights guaranteed to them by it faithfully enforced. But if the Government or the Northern people habitually disregard these rights, by distortion of the plain meaning of the Constitution seek plausible pretexts to violate them, as we have too good reason to apprehend it will, and thus endeavor to degrade the Southern States from that position of equality which it was designed that all the States should occupy, they cannot remain in it. Whatever may be the issue therefore of the present agitation, whether it subside as we hope, and leave the Union strengthened and its citizens every where more disposed to mutual concession, or whether it result in dissolution, the blame of the agitation in the first place or the dissolution, should it occur, cannot justly be attributed to the South. We contend in self defence, for the preservation of our Constitutional rights. And should ever the necessity of disunion occur, which God avert! the land of Washington, and Jefferson, and Calhoun, and Jackson, and a host of others, whom the South has produced to serve the Union in the council and the field, will rise with one hand and heart and voice to effect it.

But great caution should be exercised in this matter. Too many important interests both of this country and the world are staked on this question to justify a hasty decision. We should patiently and faithfully explore the whole ground and be