



"Ours are the Plans of fair delightful Peace,
"Unwar'p'd by Party Rage to livelike Brothers."

Vol. III.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1801.

NO. 1

PEACE

Between Great-Britain and France.

The certain information of this most desirable and happy event ought to have reached the Editor of the Register in time for his last paper; but, owing, it is supposed, to some management in some of the Post-offices between Charleston and this place, the Editor's papers from that city, which contained the news, did not come to his hand, nor have they been since received. The following extracts are from the London Morning Post, which also ought to have come to hand in the Philadelphia papers by the Northern Mail on the Sunday evening before our last publication; but, however extraordinary it may appear, out of six or seven papers which we usually receive from Philadelphia, not one came.

LONDON, OCTOBER 2.

We have the pleasure at last to announce, that the Preliminaries of Peace are signed between France and Britain, contrary to the general expectation. We have already stated, that, about five or six weeks ago, the English Cabinet, desirous of drawing the negotiations to a conclusion, gave in a project as its ultimatum, resolved to make a peace on that basis, or break off the treaty within the month of September, that it might be ready to lay before the Parliament, at its meeting, a report of the efforts to put an end to the war. Eager hopes were entertained for the effect of this step, and the funds rose; but Buonaparte met it with coldness, made new demands, and occasioned delays, which destroyed the hopes of those who had been the most sanguine. Ministers continued to press him; the form of a preliminary treaty was sent off early last week to Paris, with an assurance, that unless it was acceded to, the negotiation must close. One half of the Cabinet Ministers had no expectation of success; peace was despaired of; and hence arose the many reports of the negotiation being broken, or on the point of a rupture. The general expectation was, that of peace there was no chance.

All the newspapers of yesterday morning, even those pretending to be in the confidence of Ministers, as well as those which really were so, having no hopes of peace, from the language held a few days ago, spoke of a rupture of the negotiation as inevitable.

Even the Cabinet Ministers, who still entertained some expectations of success, agreed a week ago that peace, or an attempt at invasion, must take place before Christmas. Under these circumstances, when we heard on Wednesday and Thursday, peace spoken of with confidence as being near at hand, we could not believe in so happy an event. The answer of the First Consul received on Wednesday, however, to the astonishment of all, closed with the proposals of our Government! A Cabinet Council was held, and an express sent off to his Majesty, whose sanction returned next afternoon. The silver box, never used since the Peace with America was signed, was sent to the Lord Chancellor at five o'clock for the Great Seal and his signature, and the content of all the other Cabinet Ministers being obtained, at seven o'clock Lord Hawkebury and M. Otto signed the preliminaries of peace in Downing-street; and his Lordship sent off the following letter to the Lord Mayor:

"To the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor.

Downing street, Oct. 2, at night.

MY LORD,

"I have great satisfaction in informing your Lordship, that Preliminaries of Peace between Great-Britain and France have been signed this evening, by myself on the part of his Majesty, and by M. Otto on the part of the French Government. I request your Lordship will have the goodness to make this intelligence immediately public in the city.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"HAWKSBURY."

Mr. Hunter, jun. the messenger, who carried the letter, reached the mansion-house about 8 o'clock; but his Lordship was at his country-house at Clapham. Mr. Hunter immediately proceeded thither, and remained at his Lordship's all night, returning to London with him early next morning. The intelligence, which had not transpired in any public circle on the preceding

night, burst round the whole town before nine o'clock in the morning. The Lord Mayor went in person to Lloyd's Coffee-house, and read the letter, which was afterwards posted at the bar, and stock exchange. To those places crowds flocked, and the greatest joy and agitation prevailed. The very men who a few days before declared peace could only be an armed truce, that war was less dangerous than peace with such an enemy, were now seen shaking hands smiling, and congratulating each other on the conclusion of the treaty?

The funds, the three per cents. which had been at 59 $\frac{1}{2}$ the preceding day, rose to 66; and the annuity, which had been at 8, rose to 18. At noon the following was published:

London Gazette Extraordinary.

Downing street, Oct. 2, 1801.

"Preliminaries of peace between his majesty and the French Republic were signed last night at Lord Hawkebury's office in Downing street, by the right honourable lord Hawkebury, one of his majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, on the part of his majesty, and by M. Otto, on the part of the French government."

The conditions of this treaty are not fully known. It is said that they guarantee the integrity of our three allies, Turkey, Portugal, and Naples. Of course Egypt will be evacuated both by French and English, and Madeira restored. France guarantees to those three of our allies their dominions; but it seems our allies the Stadtholder and king of Sardinia, as well as the French princes, are abandoned to their fate! The Pope's territories are to be evacuated; Malta is to be restored to its ancient knights. Minorca to be restored to Spain and Portugal, Porto Ferrajo evacuated. So, we gain nothing in the Mediterranean or in Europe, while France gains all Holland and the Netherlands, a large part of Germany, Switzerland, and two thirds of Italy. In the West-Indies the only conquest we are to keep is, as we are told, Trinidad. The Cape of Good-Hope, is to be made a free port, and Ceylon is to be ceded to this country. We shall give no opinion upon the conditions until they are better authenticated.

A copy of the treaty signed by Lord Hawkebury, was on Thursday night dispatched to Paris, where it will arrive this night; and the ratification is expected back on Monday night or Tuesday morning, when it will be ratified by the British government also, and published with hope in an extraordinary gazette. Ministers will feel the propriety of making it instantly and officially known, since the fate of so many men will be decided by the nature of the conditions. Parliament will be immediately summoned to meet within 14 days, for the dispatch of business, the preliminaries will be laid before it, its sanction obtained and in the midst of the general joy a loan will be raised to an unexampled extent, as government is known to be in want of an enormous sum of money. Parliament will then be adjourned to meet after Christmas, and receive the definitive treaty. In the mean time we understand Joseph Buonaparte is expected in London to have the éclat of negotiating and signing that treaty. But it will be rather an instrument of form, than of real importance, we presume, as the preliminary treaties between this country and France have usually been adopted for the definitive.

General Assembly.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

DEBATES

ON THE PENITENTIARY BILL.

Monday, Nov. 2.

The House went into a committee of the whole House on this bill, filled up most of the blanks, and discussed some of the system; but the principle of the measure was not touched. This, it is expected, will be examined on its second reading, which was fixed for Wednesday, but was on that day, on mo-

tion, further postponed to Monday the 7th. We shall therefore defer making use of any notes taken in the committee of the whole, until a view of the whole proceedings upon the bill are given.

ON THE Divorce and Alimony Bill.

Tuesday, Dec. 1.

The House having resolved itself into a committee of the whole on the above bill, Mr. Matthews in the chair, and the first section having been read,

Mr. COTTEN, who introduced the bill, said, he regretted, when the subject was before under consideration, he had not been permitted to bring forward the amendment he had mentioned, as he trusted it would have done away many of the objections which existed against the bill in its present form. He rose now to move the amendment, which he hoped would be adopted. [The amendment was read, and was in fact a new bill.]

Mr. E. ALEXANDER said, if the gentleman who proposed this amendment, would point out the advantages which it possessed over the original bill, to which it was proposed as a substitute, he supposed it would not be objected to. He had before him a printed copy of the bill which had been brought forward every session for five or six years past, and which had been taken from a law passed in the year '91 or '92, now in existence in the State of Pennsylvania; of which the bill now under consideration was a literal copy. This law, he believed, had been drawn by men of very superior talents, with great deliberation: He had attended to the reading of the proposed substitute, and could not see any great difference between the two bills: In all the substantial parts they were the same. They differed only in respect to arrangement; and instead of there being any superiority in the method, he thought the amendment rather worse in that respect than the original. He did indeed observe two things now in the amendment; the first was an extension of the ground on which divorces might be obtained, which he thought improper. The other objectionable part; only having heard it hastily read, he could not at that moment recollect. The clause limiting the duration of the act for two years, he would readily consent to; but as to the rest, the alteration proposed were rather for the worse, and the method of arrangement nothing so good as the original, he was in favour of retaining the original bill.

Mr. COTTEN was sorry the gentleman from Salisbury could see nothing in his amendment to approve. He thought the clause requiring the husband, at the same time that he petitioned for a divorce, to deliver in a Schedule of his property on oath, was an improvement on the original bill, which makes no provision of this kind; and a man, after he had obtained a divorce, might go into another part of the country, and take his property with him. He thought there were other improvements on the original bill; but they were before his house, and would be judged of. As to his abilities, they were not, to be sure, extraordinary, and he criticized made on his language by the gentleman last up, might be just; but though he had not had the benefit of so liberal an education as that gentleman, he hoped he was able to express himself so as to be understood.

Mr. ALEXANDER replied, that it was very far from him to censure the gentleman's motives or talents; he believed his motives pure, and had a very respectable opinion of his talents; but he did not think that a departure from the original phrasing of the bill had rendered it any better. He had reliance on the wisdom of the Legislature of Pennsylvania, though he did not observe any want of classical purity in the language of the substitute. The very clause which the mover had mentioned as an improvement to the bill, was the objectionable part which he had marked when the amendment was read, but which

had escaped his recollection when he last rose. It appeared to him that such a requisition would be too rigid and severe, and he thought it also unnecessary; since, in the original bill the Court had sufficient power given them to make such an allowance to the woman as they deemed proper, not exceeding one-third of the husband's income, and to call for a schedule of the man's property, if they deem it necessary; or, on refusal to do so, the suit would be dismissed.

Mr. COTTEN thought the provision he proposed was very different from that in the bill. If a designing man had married a woman with a handsome property, the wife in suing for redress could only recover one-third of it. This he did not think sufficient, where a man had married a woman's property, and not the woman.

The question being put on receiving the amendment, it was negatived. The committee then rose and reported the bill without amendment.

The House being resumed, and the first section of the bill read,

Mr. COTTEN observed, that as the committee of the whole had thought proper to reject the amendment which he had proposed to the bill, he had nothing more to say upon it. If any other gentleman, of greater talents than himself, would bring forward any amendments to the bill, they were at liberty to do so. He had an objection to the bill in its present form, and should vote against it, though he had no doubt it had been drawn by gentlemen of great abilities, both natural and acquired.

The bill being gone through, Mr. Alexander moved an additional section, limiting its duration to two years, which was agreed to.

Mr. W. W. JONES observed, that when the Legislature attempted to grant to any particular persons relief from unhappy connections which they may have formed; it ought to be careful that it did not plunge a greater number of persons in the deepest misery and distress. He believed if this bill were passed into a law it would have this effect. There is, said he, a numerous class of men, known by the name of fortune-hunters, which is chiefly composed of gamblers and persons of base characters. These men are always prepared to take every advantage in their power of innocent and deserving girls; and would doubtless lay hold of the advantages held out in this bill. It may be said, that these girls have parents to defend them against such designing men. But have we not many instances of the act of God depriving girls of their parents? And that frequently such girls are left with large fortunes, which are committed to the care of guardians; and these guardians are compelled, whenever their wards make a contract of marriage, to pay over their fortunes to their husbands? If this bill be passed, those men who have married for the purpose of obtaining fortunes, will no doubt place their property in such a situation that it cannot be come at by the friends of the wife; they may place it in the hands of a friend, and after a divorce is obtained, get possession of it again, and by that means become securely possessed of what they had so unwarrantably obtained. But it may be said, that a man may be compelled by a Court of Justice to administer such relief to the wife as the Court may think proper, not exceeding one-third part of his income; but granting that such part of the property be allowed the wife, if the husband be a gambler or spendthrift (as is likely to be the case) it is probable little of his property might be left. And if the property be expended, then the unfortunate wife is left in a situation which must affect the tender feelings of every man.

In other instances, the granting of a divorce to a wife, might defraud the Creditors of her husband. A larger property might be given than ought to be; and the wife having got one-third of the property in her own right, she will probably become a prey to some designing person; for there are not wanting men who would not hesitate to bear an imputation of leas-

dal, when they can gain considerably by the act; men who are always ready to take advantage of unsuspecting innocence.

There is another situation which places the measure in a very important point of view. Suppose a man dies, leaving a wife, for whom he had the most tender affection, and to whom he was willing to leave the care of his children and the disposal of his fortune; some infamous man might take advantage of her, for the sake of her money, and deprive the children of their just rights. He is immediately put in possession of her personal property; and by his influence over her, gets her to join in a conveyance of the land to a friend; who would immediately re-convey it to him. He has it then in his power not only to cheat the children, but the widow of her subsistence.

But this bill has been amended by limiting its duration to two years. In the course of this time, Mr. J. believed greater mischiefs would be committed under it, than would be remedied by the law. In his profession, as a lawyer, he had no doubt, were this bill to pass into a law, he should reap advantages from it; but whilst he continued a Legislator, in performing his public duty, he trusted he should always lose sight of his private interest. He hoped therefore the bill would not pass.

Mr. COTTEN said, it was true, he had introduced the bill; but it was from a belief that the necessary amendment would be made to it. He thought such a law wanted; but had objections to some parts of the present bill. He mentioned in particular that part which requires a residence only of one year in the State to entitle a man to sue for a divorce, which, he said, might encourage men in other States to come and reside a year in this State for the purpose. If the bill was not amended, he should vote against it.

Mr. BLOODWORTH believed there was little occasion to spend the time of the House on this bill. He thought the gentleman from Fayetteville had given some very substantial reasons against the passing of it. It would certainly open a door to the greatest villainy; advantages would be taken of the law, in spite of all the provisions against them, ruinous to the fair sex, depriving them of their fortunes and of their virtue in the most unwarrantable manner. He hoped gentlemen would seriously consider the consequences of passing this law, and that it would fall to the ground; he hoped such advantages would not be offered to speculators, to obtain fortunes at the expense of innocence and virtue.

The question on the bill's passing its second reading was then taken, and there appearing only 12 votes in favour of it, it was of course lost. Those in favour of the measure, were, Messrs. Alexander, Bradshaw, Collins, Guyther, Harwell, M'Lennan, Matthews, Moore, Robert Smith, Strudwick, Tatam, and J. G. Wright.

On the Bill for taking Lists of Taxable Property.

Same day as the foregoing.

The Bill "to fix a uniform time for taking the lists of taxable property throughout the State, and for enforcing the collection of taxes," being on its second reading, and the time of taking the list having been fixed for the last ten working days in April, in each year, and some other amendments made,

Mr. F. WALKER moved to amend the bill, in the part where it is directed "that every person failing to deliver in a list of his taxable property, shall pay a two-fold tax." He thought this provision ought not to extend to persons living out of the county. There was a great deal of property in this situation, Mr. W. observed, and the owners of it might have no knowledge of this law. The taxes ought to be equal to all, and if the State got a single tax paid, it was all that it contemplated. He hoped therefore such persons as lived out of the county might only be obliged to pay the single tax.