



AND

North-Carolina State Gazette.

Care are the plans of fair delightful Peace,
Unwar'd by party rage, to live like Brothers.

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Interesting Letter.

THE CLOSE OF THE SESSION.

The following extract of a letter from Washington, dated the 3d instant, to the Editor of the Richmond Enquirer, affords so complete and interesting a view of the proceedings of Congress, for a few of the last days of the Session, that gratified in being able to present it to our readers.

"The Bank has gone to its 'long home.' You are aware, perhaps, that the Petition of its Directors to continue its corporate powers for certain purposes (for a short period) was referred in the H. of R. to a committee of 9.—The same subject was likewise moved and referred to a committee of the Senate. The last have not yet met on it—but it seems that there is no doubt of their reporting against the petition. The Committee of the H. of R. had a meeting yesterday, and there were 5 against, and 3 in favor of it—among the former is the chairman (Mr. Porter of N. York) who delivered that very luminous speech, which has been some time since published, against the constitutionality of the Bank.—The petition, therefore, will not fail to be rejected. After all, where are those frightful consequences that were predicted from the downfall of the bank; the loss of credit, and the ruin of the merchants and of the State Banks? Not a single bank has been shaken as yet; and as to the merchants a few of them have perhaps availed themselves of this very convenient pretext, for declaring bankruptcy, springing from very different causes; but the injury to society is infinitely less than was predicted by the advocates of the institution. Letters have been this day received from Baltimore and Philadelphia, declaring that the State Banks stand on as firm foundations as ever; and that a very inconsiderable inconvenience has been experienced by the mercantile class. Why then were these frightful anticipations of distress; these terrific spectacles of bankruptcy and ruin exhibited to our view? The motive is obvious—to strike a panic into the breast of Congress and conjure them into a renovation of the Charter. On this point it must be confessed, that the late Loan to the U. S. which operated as an inducement upon the government to continue the Bank, subtracted from the pressure upon individuals. The more the U. S. had, the less individuals could have. The sum of \$2,750,000 which was loaned to the Treasury of the U. S. would have been otherwise distributed amongst the individuals (by discounts) and consequently increased the number of the importunate petitioners for the renewal of the charter. This consequence was not certainly foreseen by the Secretary of the Treasury; nor does it contribute to reconcile us at all to the loan; but it unquestionably produced its effect on the fate of the Bank.

The Committee, appointed on the subject, have made their Report to the H. of R. on the affair of Gen. Wilkinson. The Report and Documents have been ordered to be printed; and a motion was made by Mr. Pearson (the Chairman) that they should be transmitted to the President of the U. S.—Mr. Eppes opposed this motion with considerable force. He demanded why the House should shrink from the responsibility which they had courted—why they did not express their own opinions, and come at least to some sort of Resolution on the facts reported to them? Why they had not the independence & firmness to speak for themselves? Were they to serve in the mere capacity of a Committee or Court of Enquiry for the President? When the subject was first moved in the House, it had been urged that they had a right to enquire into it for their own satisfaction and use—and why did they now shrink from it? For his own part he moved, that the Report should be referred to a committee of the whole house—which motion, however, was lost.—And, by a subsequent decision, the papers were ordered to be transmitted to the President. The Committee appointed to enquire into the causes of the mortality at Terre au Boeuf presented likewise their Report, which was ordered to take the same direction. There is certainly great justice in the reasons assigned by Mr. Eppes—and besides let us ask, in what an awkward situation does this coarse place the President of the U. States? The whole responsibility is adroitly shifted to his shoulders. He is to collate the evidence—he is to draw

the inferences—he is to act on them. Suppose the President is seriously of opinion, that this evidence has been incorrectly stated; that Gen. W. has not had a fair opportunity of rebutting it before the Committee; N. Y. suppose a variety of circumstances which might render a President conscientiously indisposed to come to any decision at all, either for or against Gen. W. upon the evidence thus laid before him; what then? Although he may, for these reasons, suppose that the Report is utterly irrelevant to prove the guilt or the innocence of Gen. Wilkinson, yet his failing to act upon it will be tortured by the very liberal opponents, either into a disrespect for the appeal of Congress, his apprehension to meet the responsibility of a decision, or his determination to take sides with Gen. W.—Without meaning to express any opinion on the points at issue, it must be confessed that the personal enemies of Gen. W. have flown to the most ungenerous means of prejudicing the minds of the members. Against him Mr. Daniel Cox, a partner in the house of Daniel Clarke, took care to disseminate among them the pamphlet, of which Clarke has been the putative father—but which Cox declared before the committee had been written by himself, Edward Livingston and two other persons, from the notes and matter furnished by Mr. Clarke. The vindication of Gen. W. which has been spoken of in the public prints, has not yet appeared entire from the Press. I have seen the 2d volume, which scans the charge of his connexion with A. Burr, the Appendix to the 4th Vol. (containing merely some documents on the causes of the mortality at Terre au Boeuf) and a pamphlet entitled "A brief examination of Testimony to vindicate the character of General James Wilkinson, against the imputation of a sinister connexion with the Spanish government for purposes hostile to his own country; with a glance of several topics of Minor Importance."—These, I suspect are all the parts which have issued from the Press—they have been confined, as yet, to a very small circle indeed; and I have not had any opportunity of examining them with attention.

Joel Barlow, Esq. has been appointed Minister to France.

What miserable tales have been in circulation in the federal papers, respecting certain accounts of this gentleman with the United States and the balances which it was said still remained due to the Government. The fact is, that Mr. B. has never drawn himself very large sums from the Treasury of the United States. He was indeed the agent of Messrs. Humphries and J. L. Donaldson, for disbursing considerable sums, under the treaty with Algiers; but his accounts with these persons have been settled—and their own accounts with the treasury have been closed, except perhaps a comparatively small sum which remains due from the Estate of Mr. D. The Comptroller has given a certificate on this subject, which is said to have been completely satisfactory—that Mr. B. did not appear indebted on either to the U. States.—On this subject I will barely say that many mistakes seem to prevail in the public mind, with regard to balances, which may appear out-standing on the books of the Treasury. The accounts may be settled in fact by the agents of the government—yet it will sometimes occur, that from the absence of Vouchers, which are to be strictly executed according to the forms of the office, the account is not closed on the Treasury Book, and the balance still appears to be due.

The case of Mr. Timothy Pickens ought at least to have furnished an instructive lesson to the Federalists on this subject, though the case of Mr. Barlow is a much more favorable one than his. Barlow is a man of fine and liberal talents—his letters to the Privileged Orders, to the People of Predmont, and to the Citizens of the United States, exhibit a large fund of ideas on the principles of government, the benefits of our confederated republic, and the rights and laws of neutrals—his attachments too, to the United States, and his knowledge of the situation and manners of France, will conspire to give him the disposition and the means of furthering the views and supporting the rights of his country. This subject is an interesting one—but I have time barely to touch it at present.

The defalcation which has been charged to Mr. Barlow, recalls to my mind

a Bill which has been introduced by Mr. Eppes, and is now pending before the House of Representatives for increasing the accountability of public agents.—The Officers within the U. States are to make Quarterly Returns, and if they fail to adjust their accounts within three months thereafter, the Comptroller is to direct suits to be instituted; and whether the officer gains or loses his suit, he is to be cast in the Costs. Such as are not within the U. States, are, of course, to be entitled to longer indulgence.—The Bill may still be taken up and passed, during the present session.

George Jefferson, Esq. (of Richmond) a worthy and an honorable man, has been nominated our Consul to Lisbon—he richest consulate perhaps in Europe. David Balie Warden, Esq. has been nominated as Consul-General to France.

As returns of the Census have not been received from some of the States, on account of there not being time enough it is said for the Marshals' Assistants to make them—a bill has passed both houses of Congress, allowing the Assistants 3 months longer to make their returns, and to the Marshals 4 months. This bill passed the Senate only last night.

But I now approach a topic, to which it is impossible for me to do adequate justice. In what way shall I express my own feelings, or the sensation it has diffused around me? Those at a distance can have no idea of it—had any one have predicted to me that I should have witnessed such scenes, I should have laughed at the folly of the prophet.—The collective wisdom of the nation, as some have fondly termed the Congress of the U. S. degenerating into a spouting club or a Bazaar-garden! The spectacle has been distressing beyond any description. I have seen men whose locks were bleached by the hand of time, and whose names are enrolled upon the revolutionary denouncing these proceedings with all the fire and vivacity of youthful feeling! I have seen the first men of the nation lift up their hands in astonishment and wonder. Go to the opposition and ask them for the cause—ask them why they have disgraced their country. They are the sole authors of the scenes which I am about to lay before you. The subject is by far the most important one, which has occurred on the theatre of Congress during the present winter; but I must attempt to reduce it into as small a compass as is consistent with the due comprehension of it.

On Friday (the 22d ult.) the bill from the Committee of Foreign Relations, was taken up in the House of Representatives in the Committee of the Whole. This bill originally consisted of but one section; exempting such vessels and property as belonged to American citizens, from the operation of the Non-Intercomerce system, as might leave a British port, prior to the 2d of February. Mr. Eppes moved the committee to add two new sections; the object of which was, to declare the Non Importation system really in force on the 2d of February, to give it efficacy by making a proclamation of the President the only evidence of the cessation of British violation on our neutral rights, and to open the door of conciliation to G. Britain, after the 2d of February.—These two new sections were agreed to by the committee. The first section, I have uniformly thought erroneous, as being likely to break up the whole engagement and thus putting us once more at sea embarrassed between two belligerents, and plundered and insulted by both—and as likely to prevent an arrangement with G. Britain by thus preventing one taking place with France. It is moreover obvious, that this section will increase the difficulty of preventing smuggling—and that the collectors must keep a very good look out, lest vessels which had left a British port long after the 2d of February, should come into our ports under the pretence of being blown off by a head wind for a considerable time, or of coming last from some other than a British port, as for instance, the Brazils, though they may say they had sailed from G. Britain prior to the 2d of February.—Much, however, has been said on the other side.

We do not wish to relax the system in favor of G. Britain—but of our own citizens, who have vested their property in Great-Britain. And would it not be a peculiar hardship on them, to snatch this property from them, without having given them notice of the risks which they ran and the penalties which they incurred? They were unapprised of the proclamation, when their goods were

bought and shipped. And, besides, is it not important for us to draw home between 30 and 50 millions of American property, which in the distant event of a war, may be necessary to furnish the resources for carrying it on? The relaxation is no breach of the faith, we have pledged to France; because as the goods are already exported, the market for British manufactures is not thereby extended—not an atom of goods more is drawn from the ware-houses.—But who sees not, that the two last sections of the bill are of vital importance?—What a disgraceful spectacle should we have exhibited without them? A law upon our statute-book, lumbering like a dead carcass, without spirit or efficiency, unexecuted and despised—a whole system which we have adopted as a temporary refuge for our rights, set at naught—for lawyers of eminence have pronounced, that the law does not take effect till May next; and at all events, the fangs of the lawyers would have torn it to pieces; its ambiguities would have been used to destroy it, and the courts by pronouncing different decisions, or no decisions at all, would once more have exposed us to the most distressing situation in which any nation can stand—a nation without the spirit to execute its most reasonable laws.—The finger of scorn, would have been pointed at us from all directions. From the weakness and the want of faith, which would have grown out of this humiliating situation the republican party were anxious to rid us.—They saw the necessity of acting—but they were met in the tenth by a party, who read in his system, the means of opposition to British encroachment, and who, rather than put forth a finger against her, would cancel contracts and relax the majesty of the laws. The tricks and expedients to which they have resorted, to thwart them, were not less disgraceful than the ends which they contemplated.

On Monday, when the House met, after transacting some business of minor importance, they took up this bill supplemental to the law of May, with those amendments which had been reported from the committee of the whole. The two first sections passed off without much debate; some amendments were proposed but miscarried. The 3d section being before the House, Mr. Quincy rose to address the chair. It is an unusual thing to speak to the merits of the bill on an insulated section—but the plan of the gentlemen was fixed.—They were determined to oppose it at every step of the progress; that they might spin out the time and finally delay the passage of the bill. Mr. Quincy is by no means an orator. He is a slow man. He cons over his speeches with all the assiduity of a school boy—and when the chain escapes him, he pauses and repeats and labours to get hold again of the thread he has lost. Hence he is a very hesitating speaker—a quality, by the bye, which Mr. Fox thought is the very death of eloquence. Even if such a man could conceive easily enough, he is always delivered, as a witty Physician said of Mr. Quincy, with a few spas. The embargo is crushed in the very act of producing it into the world. Yet Mr. Quincy, must play the orator, because it is his taste, but in truth his flounders and furbelows are so much dressed up and starched that they look as stiff and formal as the ruffs that colored the necks in the good old days of Queen Bess. And when the imagination labors, things work backwards, and a prodigy is produced to exercise our disgust. Yet it was in this strain of elaborate paratition, that the Hon. Josiah Quincy addressed us for a considerable time—the burthen of his song was, that Napoleon Bonaparte was a dishonest tyrant, who had broken his faith with us; that we were not bound by the engagement, and that the restrictive system was far more injurious to ourselves than to Great-Britain. As to the Proclamation of November why the President was excusable merely for issuing it, rather a different language, from that strong sense of approbation and vote of thanks which was expressed by these Gentlemen, on the arrangement with Mr. Erskine!

Let Mr. Quincy however pass off the stage. On the next day (Tuesday) the pert and flip-pant Barent Gardener comes before us. He is an easy speaker, one of those extempore Gentlemen, who can make you as good a speech off-hand, as if he were to think a week. It is a light and crude sort of syllabus and froth. He will speak you a whole day "by the Shrewsbury Clock"—he launches forth into every sort of digression, and puts the same empty idea into every variety of form. Such a

man is, therefore, of great use to his party when they wish to play off the temporising game—he spins out the time of the House while he is spinning out his own threads. After Mr. Gardener had been puffing off an hour or two, one of his federal friends arose and moved an adjournment. The motion was negatived. A few moments after, the motion was repeated. The whole plan of tactics was now fairly disclosed. The House was to adjourn. Mr. Gardener was to continue the next day, wasting the time of the House.—Some of the other long winded partizans were to take up the cudgels, a stand was to be made at every step, amendment after amendment was to be moved, and speech after speech was to be uttered, until the time of the session was nearly exhausted. When the bill should pass the House of Representatives it was to go to the Senate; and it is a rule in this body, that every bill is to be read on three successive days, unless this rule should be suspended by an unanimous vote. The Republicans began to see the plan of operations, they saw it still more distinctly, when they found the motion for adjournment continually pressed upon them, when they saw the lamps of the House lighted up, and Gardener at last concluding at an advanced hour of the night with reading a string of amendments, which he said it was his resolution to move, in succession. The Republicans felt the necessity of firmness; they saw, that the honor of the nation and the majesty of the law hung upon them, and that they could not be foiled, without inflicting a vital wound on the prosperity, perhaps the faith of the nation; they therefore resisted every motion for adjournment, though they continued to sit in silence, permitting the storm of debate to rage around them.

The storm was soon converted into a peal of laughter, when Mr. Knickerbaker (a young federal member from New York) arose, evidently under the strong impression of Bacchus or Brandy. His expressions were so ludicrous, his arguments were so queer, that sleep shook her leaden wing and the whole house excepting the grave movers on the federal bench, were convulsed with laughter. Yet must I do the Orator justice! There was an honest fervor in his manner, a simplicity of feeling, which charmed me. Every time he put his hand to his heart, he touched mine. I would vouch for the honesty of that man, and would freely trust my life to his keeping. I will not fatigue you by enumerating the names of the federal orators who succeeded, for like the humble heroes whose deaths are recorded in the lines of Homer and Virgil, I remember scarcely more than their names. Nor will I dwell longer on the incidents of that night.—Most of the federalists seceded from the house.—A few only remained to spin out the time, and delay the question. Over and over was it announced from the chair, that there was no quorum (72) and then, the few straggling members in the lobby, were on the watch for an adjournment, would be dragged in to make out the number, the federalists speaking all the while to the clock, not to the ears of the House. At length the quorum vanished—a motion was made to request the attendance of the absent members, some of them pleaded indisposition, some positively refused obedience to the rule, a few attended, but at last about half after 4 o'clock in the morning, the quorum was gone and the House were obliged to rise. I left the House with disgust.—"Is this, said I, the Congress of the United States. Are these the successors of those illustrious men, who declared the Independence of the United States, Gardener and Lyon, and such as would arrest the very wheels of the government to promote their own little purposes! The Congress of the United States, a mere debating intriguing club! where a low, little opposition can overthrow the grand principle of the republic—That the majority shall decide and govern!"

The next day the same scene was repeated, until about 4, the house adjourned to meet at 6 in the evening. When the house assembled, Mr. John Randolph, who had taken no share in the debate, arose to move the postponement of the question till the next day. It was clear that his motives and views were the same as those of the federalists—he wished for delay—delay was destruction to the bill. His motion was opposed by Johnson (of Kentucky) and Eppes. I shall pass over the scene which ensued between Randolph and Eppes. Delicacy, at this time, forbids an exposition, nor shall I dwell on the conduct of Mr. Randolph towards the House, whom he abused as puppets, and when he called upon the Speaker to leave the chair, as the House had abandoned all its honor. Their expressions of indignation it would ill befit me to describe. The hoary head retorted the insinuation, and the old Revolutionary Heroes despised the empty declamation. Towards day, however, after amendments of every variety of hue had been offered and debated by the opposition, there appeared to be no other resource than to move the previous question, that is "shall the main question now be put?" The federalists, true to their system, rose to debate, a point of order was made, whether there could be a debate. The Speaker said, "that on one former occasion, he was of opinion that there could not, but an appeal had been taken to the House, and they had reversed it—that in the second case, the same circumstance had happened, and he should therefore conceive himself bound by these two votes of the House, until otherwise instructed by them." An appeal was taken to the House and they decided that no debate ought to take place. The main question was put without further debate and the bill was ordered to a third reading—it was accordingly read the third time, and the Speaker having said, that by the late decision of the House, there could be no debate, it was finally passed about 5 in the morning—Ayes 66 Nays 12.

When the House again met on Tuesday about 1 o'clock, John Randolph moved to amend the Journal by inserting "Debate being precluded by the decision, &c. &c." He said, he wished to shew to the good people of the United States, that the freedom of debate had been