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FROM THE N. Y. MERCANTILE ADVERTISER.

Letter from Dr. Mitchill to Judge Spencer, on the fortifications erecting at New-York.

NEW YORK, October 9.

DEAR SIR—With pleasure I offer you a brief account of the fortifications undertaken by the war department for the defence of New York. In the beginning of April last a sentiment was expressed in an answer to the concurrent resolutions of our state legislature, by myself and my colleague gen. Smith, that out of the money appropriated by congress for the general defence, New York should largely participate. I am happy to assure you that the confidence we reposed in the executive has not been disappointed. Gen. Dearborn has directed a great deal of work to be done.—A foundation is laid for much more—and I have no doubt, that eventually our city will be placed, not only in a respectable, but a formidable state of defence.

The chief engineer, who planned these fortifications, and who actually superintends their construction, is col. J. Williams, the learned and ingenious director of the military academy at West Point, and president of the American Military Philosophical Society. The high professional talents displayed by this gentleman in projecting the works, have been very ably seconded by capt. Whiley in carrying them into operation. I shall describe them as they appeared on my last visit to them a few days ago.—On a subject to which I have long devoted myself, and which I view with more than ordinary solicitude, I have taken as much care as I could to avoid mistakes.—It is a subject of congratulation that all these structures are composed of permanent and durable materials, and will descend in good order to our successors.

I. GOVERNOR'S ISLAND.

1. Fort Columbus is now finished excepting one barrack just ready to be covered, and the opening in the covert way opposite the gate, purposely left for the conveyance of materials. It consists of four bastions, three curtains and an attached casemated ravelin with two retired flanks, the whole capable of mounting 97 guns, and might without inconvenience bring half its force at one instant against any passing ship, while it completely commands the East river. It is a work composed of a walled rampart 8 feet in thickness at the base diminishing by its slope to 6 feet at the line of the cordon, with counter forts of 5 feet in depth, at the distance of 18 feet from each other, surmounted by a solid brick parapet of 10 feet in thickness; the ditch is about 40 feet wide with a walled counterscarp, a walled covert way and sodded glacis extending to the water's edge. This has a very beautiful appearance from the city, and is highly ornamental to the harbor.

2 At a point of the island extending westward to the very edge of the channel a permanent foundation of solid masonry has been placed on a bed of rocks, which till now much endangered the navigation at the entrance of East river as this point was totally submerged except at very low water; on this foundation is erecting a castle, being 3-4 of a circle of 200 feet in diameter, which is designed to be casemated with bomb proof arches, and to cover two tier of heavy metal. The lower tier, will consist of 26 French 36 pounders, about equal to the English 42 pounders. The second tier will consist of 39 twenty four pounders, and the terrace over the bomb proof will form a barbette battery upon which 45 COLUMBIADS,* carrying a fifty pound shot, are to be placed.

This casemated castle will be about 40 feet high, mounted with 100 guns. It consists of 13 arches of 30 feet span, 3 feet in thickness, and 24 feet in length. The cross walls which are piers to the arches, are 7 feet thick between the arches, and 12 at the termination of the segment. The guns are to be mounted in such a manner, that the centre of the motion will be immediately under the muzzle of the gun, so that although the angle of fire is 548, the mouth of the gun occupies always the same place, which permits the throat of the embrazure to be so small, that a shot could not pass between the gun and its side, and the line of fire cross at 20 feet distance. The interior of the circle is open to the Heavens, and the apertures for the smoke amount to 144 square feet in the rear, besides the facility of the smokes spreading along the gallery or occupying the superior space, the height between the platforms being 12 feet; but the muzzle extending beyond the throat of the embrazure, which is smaller than the port hole of a ship, not much can return. In this respect it must be confessed that the probable inconvenience of the smoke does not amount to the tenth of a ship's decks, since there are more than ten times the space and apertures for it to spread in, and escape thro'. The walls of the castle are spread 8 feet thick on the ground tier, they will be seven feet thick on the next tier, there being a recess of one fort for the joists of the second floor to lie upon, and in the mass of the wall, arches are turned over each pair of embrazures, so that if it were possible to batter a breach into the lower tier, the upper one would rest upon those arches, and exhibit the appearance of a bridge, composed of very solid piers, the outside cut work of the wall is laid in what is called Flemish bond, and each stone is dove tailed in such a manner, that no one can be dislocated without being first broken to pieces; over each embrazure is a flat arch of remarkable neatness and strength, the first platform will be ready to receive its guns at the close of this season.

This account of the Castle may be closed by observing that within its walls is an inexhaustible well of the finest water, from which all the shipping of New York, might be watered with ease.

II. BEDLOW'S ISLAND.

The front wall of the mortar battery which commands all the channel and anchoring ground to the full distance that a shell can be sent, is nearly up to the intended height; the form given to this front is irregular, on account of the position of the island, and the irregular shape of its bank; but it has been calculated to have the greatest sides of the angles perpendicular to the line of approach, and the shorter sides to flank them. This battery will be on the level of the ditch of a star front in its rear, which not only will command it, but will command and protect Ellis's island. The excavations for this work are made, and the mason work will be carried on at the opening of the spring, in the mean time the work will go on until the severity of the winter puts a stop to it.

III. ELLIS'S OR OYSTER ISLAND.

The old wooden parapet is taken down at Ellis's island, and the platform for a gun battery is completed, there only remains to wall up the parapet, when it will be ready to receive its cannon.

IV. CITY OF NEW-YORK.

1. A foundation is preparing by encompassing with a polygon of blocks a space of two hundred feet diameter in a S. W. direction off the flag staff of the old battery, the blocks will form seven sides of an octagon, two sides on the town side being made into one, the blocks are nearly all sunk, and they will be worked up above high water mark before winter, so as to be perfectly safe from the ice; within the space that will be enclosed, a foundation will be laid, and castle erected similar to that of Governor's island already described.

2. Off Hubert street a foundation is already laid for a circular battery of about twenty guns in one tier—which will cross fire with the one last described so as to render it impossible for an enemy's ship to lie off the town in the North river, in like manner as the batteries before described will make it impossible for any attack to be made on the east river, so that even if it were to be allowed that all these batteries could be passed, the city of New York would be safe, while the enemy at the same hazard would have to pass back again.

V. The height of *Red Hook* and the *Narrows* may be contemplated as scites for fortifications, to be erected as soon as arrangements can be made. I might easily prolong my communication, by informing you of the laboratory, magazine and arsenal, now building under the direction of col. Williams, at the place where th Kingsbridge and Bloomingdale roads eparate, about two miles and a half fron the city hall. It would be pleasing to me to describe the naval force stationed by Mr. secretary Smith in the harbor, under the command of the gallant commodore Rogers. And the task would be no less agreeable to make known to you, the various and important measurs adopted in pursuance of the laws of the commonwealth, for the public safety by governor Tomkins. But a detailed enumeration of these several matters would lead me far beyond my limits. I, therefore, conclude by expressing my fervent wishes for your health and prosperity.

SAMUEL L. MITCHILL.

To the hon. Amros Spencer.

* This gun is a new invention cast at Foxall's foundery, on the Potomac. It is different from the English carronade, and has been proved to carry a shot at the distance of 600 yards through a breast-work thicker than the sides of a ship of the line, with the addition of 8 feet of earth and faschines behind it.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON,
President of the United States.

To those characters whose lives have been distinguished by an adherence to virtuous and patriotic principles, and whose endeavors to establish, on a just basis, the public and private rights of individuals have entitled them to the appellation of "the benefactors of mankind," the plaudits of their fellow-citizens, on their retiring from the scene of political labors, have frequently been expressed.

In correspondence with a practice which appears consonant to propriety and justice. We the members of "The Baltimore Baptist Association," convented by appointment in the city of Washington, embrace this opportunity of expressing our sense of your numerous and important services in the cause of civil and religious liberty, and in promoting the welfare and happiness of the people of the United States. In reviewing the acts of your public life, our minds are forcibly impressed with the recollection that you were the author of the Declaration of Independence; an instrument in which we recognize the vindication of our rights, the declaration of our wrongs, and the objects for which government is instituted. Since your accession to the first office in the union, the tendency of your measures has been to advance the prosperity of the nation. We have been relieved from the pressure of unnecessary taxes: our national debt has been greatly diminished; we have been secured in the enjoyment of our political rights; and in the language of the prophet we may exclaim, "Every man has sat under his vine and under his fig tree, and none to make him afraid."

Whilst the European world is agitated and shaken to its centre; whilst the ambition of contending empires causes rivers of human blood to flow, and the peaceful field of the husbandman is converted into a scene where only the din of arms is heard; whilst the labors of the artisan are suspended, and the implements of industry are exchanged for the weapons of destruction; it has been the constant aim of your administration to preserve and endure to us the blessings of peace; a state best calculated for the mild progress of our holy Religion, and for the happiness of man. It is to be lamented that, in the prosecution of this laudable design, the injustice of the principal belligerent powers has for a time, suspended our usual pursuits, and subjected our commerce to the capacity of those invaders of our rights.

We consider, it proper, in the capacity of a religious body, to express our feeling of gratitude and sentiment of approbation, for your exertions and services in behalf of religious liberty within your own state. The friends of piety must ever remember that the act passed by the Virginia legislature in 1786, for the establishment of religious freedom, emanated from you; they must admire the principles on which this law is founded, and the manner in which, by it, the rights of conscience, *the first and most essential of our rights*, are illustrated. The active influence, of your virtuous labors could not, it is true, be felt without the limits of your native state; but *the cause of religious freedom is a common cause*, and for your efforts in behalf of any part of the community in this respect the rest must be impressed with grateful and sympathetic feelings.

On retiring from that high situation which you have filled with so much dignity and credit to yourself and advantage to your country, it is proper for us to express our approbation of the reasons which influence you to this determination. They evince that attachment to the principles of republicanism, and that regard to the liberties of the people which have uniformly characterised your public life. May this example be venerated by succeeding rulers, and considered as a model for their imitation; so that our republic may continue in purity to the latest ages. And when you have ceased to act on the stage of human life, may you receive the approbation of the great Head of the Church, and finally obtain a seat in the mansions of everlasting life through the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ!

Signed by order and in the behalf of the Association, this fifteenth day of October, one thousand eight hundred and eight.

OBADIAH B. BROWN, Moderator.
JOHN WELSH, Clerk.

To the members of the Baltimore Baptist Association.

I received with great pleasure the friendly address of the Baltimore Baptist Association, and am sensible how much I am indebted to the kind dispositions which dictated it.

In our early struggles for liberty, religious freedom could not fail to become a primary object: all men felt the right, and a just animation to obtain it was excited in all. I was one only among the many who befriended its establishment, and am entitled but in common with others to a portion of that approbation which follows the fulfilment of a duty.

Excited by wrongs to reject a foreign government which directed our concerns according to its own interests, and not ours, the principles which justified us were obvious to all understandings; they were imprinted in the breast of every human being; and Providence was pleased to direct the issue of our contest in favour of that side where justice was. Since this happy separation, our nation has wisely avoided entangling itself in the system of European interests, has taken no side between its rival power, attached itself to none of its ever-changing confederacies. Their peace is desirable; and you do me justice in saying that to preserve and ensure this, has been the constant aim of my administration; the difficulties which involve it however are now at their ultimate term, and what will be their issue, time alone will disclose. But be it what it may, a recollection of our former vassalages in religion and civil government, will unite the zeal of every heart, and the energy of every hand, to preserve that independence in both which, under the favor of Heaven, a disinterested sacrifice of private interest will now maintain.

I am happy in your approbation of my reasons for determining to retire from a station in which the favor of my fellow-citizens has so long continued and supported me: and I return your kind prayers with supplications to the same Almighty Being for your future welfare and that of our beloved country.

TH: JEFFERSON.

Oct. 17.

FROM THE WASHINGTON MONITOR.

Dispatches from Mr. Pinkney, our minister at London, which arrived at New-York in the British Packet Lord Chesterfield, reached the Department of State yesterday.

We understand that the relations between the British government and that of the United States remains much in the same situation that they did at the time of the St. Michael's leaving England. Mr. Pinkney had, however, in a manner which reflects great credit upon himself and lustre upon our government, presented to Mr. Canning a memorial, which places the subject of the orders in council and the embargo upon such a basis as to leave Great Britain devoid of any just cause for the continuance of the former. In obedience to his instructions, it is said he has urged in an amicable and very respectful though firm manner, the propriety of the abrogation of those orders, on the ground, that as they were issued on the supposition that the United States had not resisted the French decree, and the American government having proposed to enforce the embargo against France if she will not abrogate her decrees, and to annul its operation against the British if they will repeal their orders, there no longer remains any cause for the existence of their orders of council. At any rate with regard to the United States.

Mr. Pinkney, we understand, has very ably and conclusively combated the idea that the United States did not resist the Berlin decree. He represented that gen. Armstrong, our minister at Paris, had demanded an explanation from the French government as soon as the decree made its appearance, and had received assurance that it was not meant to apply to America; and that for twelve months afterwards no condemnation had taken place under the Berlin decree, the first case being that of the Horizon, which was not known in England when the orders of council were decided upon; and that the American government, as soon as it had understood the French were proceeding to act upon the decree against the United States, opposed the encroachment by the embargo.

The British Cabinet had taken the memorial into consideration and an answer was expected by Mr. Pinkney in the course of a few days. By the return of the Hope, which, from her being a swift sailer, may be expected in a very few days, our government will be made fully acquainted with the result, so that on the meeting of Congress, if not before, we shall be enabled to inform the public of the final determination of the British government, upon which will depend in a great measure the future dispositions of our own. The probability is in favor of an amicable adjustment of differences.

FROM THE LEXINGTON REPORTER.

We have been frequently told by a number of persons, that Britain *never will* abandon the right of impressment. We are of opinion that Britain will abandon that pretended right, and acknowledge our laws of naturalization.

We have not formed this opinion from superficial circumstances, but from notorious and acknowledged facts—from the history of the preceding conduct of Britain.

Britain declared her determination to hanging Hancock, Adams and Washington, and all the leading *rebels* or opposers of taxation—but her threats were never executed.

Britain declared that she would never acknowledge our independence—but she did acknowledge it by the treaty of 1783.

Britain declared she never would renounce the title of *king of France;* her honor was gone forever—but necessity compelled her to *sneak* out of it.

Britain declared she would never abandon the Bourbon family; yet she acknowledged Bonaparte as emperor.

The truth is, Britain is not governed by a single spark of honor or principle. She would abandon the *Spanish patriots* to morrow, was France to offer the *make or right* of a single pound of coffee, just as she did the poor French emigrant, who was sent to meditated death at Quiberoon.

And let congress only declare that no naturalized citizen shall *import* or *export* directly or indirectly, under the most rigorous penalties, and we shall be somewhat disappointed should not the doctrine of *impressment* be abandoned.

Extract of a letter from an American gentleman at Malta, dated 16th July, 1808.

"I have just seen a circular from T. Lear, Esq. to our consul here, dated Algiers, 20th June, the subject of which is, that the Dey has formally made known to all the consuls at Algiers, that the ports of the Regency of Tunis are blockaded by his cruisers, and that all vessels found attempting to enter, will be captured and considered good prizes."

"We are authorised," says the Charleston Courier, "to say, that certain accounts have been received in this city stating, that gen. *Charles Cotesworth Pinckney*, of this state, will be supported by the federal republicans throughout the several states, at the ensuing election, as President of the United States."

MURDER.

Shocking.—We learn that on Thursday evening, Mr. *Poindexter*, who was lately married, and who had resided near the Great Bridge, was shot through the head during the time he, in company with his wife, were at tea. It is said, this horrid act was perpetrated by one of his own negroes. *Nor. Her.*

TECHNICAL FUN.

The following letter was sent to a *watchmaker* by a printer, in consequence of which the *balance* between them was accurately *regulated.*

"SIR, It having become necessary to *wind up* a large number of out-standing accounts to prevent my *running down* in business, by *advancing* the small sum you owe me without *loss of time* you will assist in *keeping me in motion.*