General Advertiser

REPUBLICAN STAR AND

VOL. XXIV. EASTON, (MD.) TUESDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 5, 1822. NO. 11....1199.

Printed and published, every Tuesday Morning

BY THOMAS PERRIN SMITH,

Publisher of the Laws of the Union.

TERMS.

The terms are *Two Dollars* and *Fifty Cents* per Annum, payable half yearly, in advance.—No paper can be discontinued, until the same is paid for.

Advertisements are inserted three weeks for One Dollar, and continued weekly for Twenty five Cents per square.

FROM THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

THE NEWBERG LETTERS.

[CONTINUED FROM LAST TUESDAY'S STAR.]

"These letters are from the pen of the late Governeur Morris, of New York. They will serve to illustrate the following paragraph, to be found in Mr. Marshall's 5th vol. (p. 348) referred to in the marginal note, as "Strictures on the conduct of administration, with a view of parties."

Among these strictures the author observes, it was alleged 'That the ultimate object of all this was to prepare the way for a change from the present republican form of government to that of monarchy, of which the English constitution was to be the model. So many of the friends of monarchy were in the Legislature, that aided by the corrupt squad of paper-dealers who were at their devotion, they made a majority in both houses. The republican party, even when united with the anti-federalists, continued a minority.'

These observations have reference to the state of party about the year 1792. Mr. Gordon's history of the war had then got into circulation, and in the 4th vol. of that work (p. 354) where the author is noticing the discontents of the army on the subject of their pay and rations, we find these passages:

'General McDougall and Colonels Brooks and Ogden, were chosen a committee to wait on Congress. While the business was pending certain public creditors and others at Philadelphia, were contriving how to employ the army for the establishing of continental funds. The financier, Mr. Robert Morris, or rather Mr. Governeur Morris, is suspected to have been at the bottom of this scheme: the latter is allowed to be a man of great abilities, but is thought to be one of the most dangerous upon the continent. Officers and soldiers were to be thrown into such a paroxysm of rage and resentment, as should drive them into an attempt to compel Congress to comply with their own demands, and those of the public creditors, who are to arm and join them. Letters were sent to certain military persons, in whom the greatest confidence was placed, so that affairs might be in readiness. Meanwhile reports were propagated in Philadelphia, that dangerous combinations were forming in the army; whereas the troops were apparently extremely quiet, not withstanding their temper was very irritable on account of their long protracted sufferings.—At length, upon the arrival of a particular gentleman in camp, from Philadelphia, about the 8th of March, such sentiments as the following were immediately and industriously circulated—that it was universally expected that the army would not disband till they had obtained justice—that the public creditors looked up to them for redress of their grievances, would afford them every aid, and even join them in the field if necessary—that some of the members of Congress wished that the measure might take effect, in order to compel the public, particularly the delinquent states, to do justice,' &c.

This was the preparation for the Newberg letter, which made its appearance on the 10th of March. The 'particular gentleman' whose arrival in camp, about the 8th of March was the concerted signal for action, we have it not in our power to state with confidence. Whoever he was, he had no doubt been led to believe by the master-spirit in this transaction, that his influence with General Greene would secure the co-operation of the southern army.

As Gordon was not in possession of evidence to support his charge against Mr. Morris, the accusation appears to have died away and been forgotten, as Mr. Morris afterwards occupied a very high standing in Gen. Washington's confidence. But in the passages quoted, we have the evidence that there was an indistinct rumor afloat, of a conspiracy having been set on foot to combine the powers of the army and the public creditors, to establish a despotic government, or at least to usurp powers never conceded by the people. And hence, too, we have the ground upon which the republican party founded the charges against their antagonists, which are mentioned by Mr. Marshall; and the causes which awakened their apprehension, when they saw the whole phalanx of public creditors wedded to the administration by the operation of the funding act."

Extracts from Marshall's Life of Washington.

"TO THE OFFICERS OF THE ARMY.

"Gentlemen: A fellow soldier, whose interest and affections bind him strongly to you, whose past sufferings have been as great, and whose future fortune may be as desperate as yours, would beg leave to address you.

"Age has its claims, and rank is not without its pretensions to advise: but, though unsupported by both, he flatters himself, that the plain language of sincerity and experience will neither be unheard nor unregarded.

"Like many of you he loved private life, and left it with regret. He left it, determined to retire from the field, with the necessity that called him to it, and not until then—not until the enemies of his country, the slaves of power, and the hirelings of injustice, were compelled to abandon their schemes, and acknowledge America as terrible in arms as she had been humble in remonstrance. With this object in view, he has long shared in your toils and mingled in your dangers. He has felt the cold hand of poverty without a murmur, and has seen the insolence of wealth without a sigh—but, too much under the direction of his wishes, and sometimes weak enough to mistake desire for opinion, he has, until lately, very lately, believed in the justice of his country. He hoped, that as the clouds of adversity scattered, and as the sunshine of peace and better fortune broke in upon us, the coldness and severity of government would relax, and that more than justice, that gratitude, would blaze forth upon those hands which had upheld her, in the darkest stages of her passage, from impending servitude to acknowledged independence. But faith has its limits, as well as temper, and there are points beyond which neither can be stretched, without sinking into cowardice or plunging into credulity. This, my friends, I conceive to be your situation. Hurried to the very verge of both, another step would ruin you forever. To be tame and unprovoked, when injuries press hard upon you, is more than weakness; but to look up for kinder usage, without one manly effort of your own, would fix your character, and shew the world how richly you deserve those chains you broke. To guard against this evil, let us take a review of the ground upon which we now stand, and from thence carry our thoughts forward for a moment, into the unexplored field of expedient.

"After a pursuit of seven long years, the object for which we set out is at length brought within our reach—yes, my friends, that suffering courage of yours was active once—it has conducted the United States of America through a doubtful and a bloody war. It has placed her in the chair of independence, and peace returns again to bless—whom?—a country willing to redress your wrongs, cherish your worth, and reward your services? a country courting your return to private life, with tears of gratitude, & smiles of admiration, longing to divide with you that independency which your gallantry has given, & those riches which your wounds have preserved? Or is it rather a country that tramples upon your rights, disdains your cries, and insults your distresses? Have you not more than once suggested your wishes, and made known your wants to Congress? wants and wishes which gratitude and policy should have anticipated rather than evaded; and have you not lately, in the meek language of entreating memorials, begged from their justice what you could no longer expect from their favour? How have you been answered? Let the letter which you are called to consider to morrow reply.

"If this, then, be your treatment while the swords you wear are necessary for the defence of America, what have you to expect from peace, when your voice shall sink, and your strength dissipate by division? when those very swords, the instruments and companions of your glory, shall be taken from your sides, and no remaining mark of military distinction left but your wants, infirmities, and scars? Can you then consent to be the only sufferers by this revolution, and, retiring from the field, grow old in poverty, wretchedness, and contempt? Can you consent to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honour? If you can, go—and carry with you the jest of tories and the scorn of whigs—the ridicule, and what is worse, the pity of the world. Go, starve, and be forgotten! But if your spirit should revolt at this—if you have sense enough to discover, & spirit enough to oppose tyranny, under whatever garb it may assume, whether it be the plain coat of republicanism, or the splendid robe of royalty; if you have yet learned to discriminate between a people and a cause, between men and principles, awake, attend to your situation, and redress yourselves. If the present moment be lost, every future effort is in vain; and your threats then will be as empty as your entreaties now.

"I would advise you, therefore, to come to some final opinion upon what you can bear, and what you will suffer. If your determination be in any proportion to your wrongs, carry your appeal from the justice, to the fears of government. Change the milk and water style of your last memorial; assume a bolder tone—decent, but lively, spirited and determined, and suspect the man who would advise to more moderation and longer forbearance. Let two or three men, who can feel as well as write, be appointed to draw up your LAST REMONSTRANCE; for I would no longer give it the sueing, soft, unsuccessful epithet of memorial. Let it be represented, in language that will neither dishonor you by its rudeness, nor betray you by its fears, what has been promised by Congress, and what has been performed—how long and how patiently you have suffered—how little you have asked, and how much of that little has been denied. Tell them that, though you were the first, and would wish to be the last, to encounter danger, though despair itself can never drive you into dishonor, it may drive you from the field: that the wound often irritated, & never healed, may at length become incurable; and that the slightest mark of indignity from Cangress now, must operate like the grave, and part you forever: that, in any political event, the army has its alternative. If peace, that nothing shall separate you from your arms but death: if war, that, courting the auspices, and inviting the directions of your illustrious leader, you will retire to some unsettled country, smile in your turn, and "mock when their fear cometh on." But, let it represent, also, that, should they comply with the request of your late memorial, it would make you more happy, and them more respectable. That, while war should continue, you would follow their standard into the field, and when it came to an end, you would withdraw into the shade of private life, and give the world another subject of wonder and applause—an army victorious over its enemies—victorious over itself."

On the 15th, the convention of officers assembled, and General Gates* took the chair. The commander in chief then addressed them in the following terms:

"GENTLEMEN: By an anonymous summons an attempt has been made to convene you together. How inconsistent with the rules of propriety, how unmilitary, and how subversive of all order and discipline, let the good sense of the army decide.

"In the moment of this summons, another anonymous production was sent into circulation, addressed more to the feelings and passions than to the judgment of the army. The author of the piece is entitled to much credit for the goodness of his pen: and I could wish he had as much credit for the rectitude of his heart; for as men see through different optics, and are induced by the reflecting faculties of the mind, to use different means to attain the same end, the author of the address should have had more charity than to mark for suspicion the man who should recommend moderation and longer forbearance; or, in other words, who should not think as he thinks, and act as he advises. But he had another plan in view, in which candor and liberality of sentiment, regard to justice and love of country, have no part: and he was right to insinuate the darkest suspicion to effect the blackest design. That the address was drawn with great art, and is designed to answer the most insidious purposes; that it is calculated to impress the mind with an idea of premeditated injustice in the sovereign power of the United States, and rouse all those resentments which must unavoidably flow from such a belief; that the secret mover of this scheme, whoever he may be, intended to take advantage of the passions, while they were warmed by the recollection of past distresses, without giving time for cool, debberative thinking, and that composure of mind which is so necessary to give dignity and stability to measures; is rendered too obvious by the mode of conducting the business, to need other proof than reference to the proceedings.

"Thus much, gentlemen, I have thought it incumbent on me to observe to you, to show upon what principles I opposed the irregular and hasty meeting which was proposed to have been held on Tuesday last, and not because I wanted a disposition to give you every opportunity, consistent with your own honor, and the dignity of the army, to make known your grievances. If my conduct heretofore has not evinced to you, that I have been a faithful friend to the army, my declaration of it at this time would be equally unavailing and improper. But as I was among the first who embarked in the cause of our common country; as I have never left your side one moment, but when called from you on public duty; as I have been the constant companion and witness of your distress, and not among the last to feel and acknowledge your merits; as I have ever considered my own military reputation as inseparably connected with that of the army; as my heart has ever expanded with joy when I have heard its praises, and my indignation has arisen when the mouth of detraction has been opened against it; it can scarcely be supposed at this last stage of the war, that I am indifferent to its interests. But how are they to be promoted? the way is plain, says the anonymous addresser! If war continues, remove into the unsettled country; there establish yourselves, and leave an ungrateful country to defend itself!—But who are they to defend? our wives, our children, our farms and other property which we leave behind us? or in this state of hostile seperation, are we to take the two first, (the latter cannot be removed) to perish in a wilderness, with hunger, cold and nakedness?

"If peace takes place never sheath your sword," says he, "until you have obtained full and ample justice." This dreadful alternative of either deserting our country in the extremest hour of her distress, or turning our arms against it, which is the apparent object, unless congress can be compelled into instant compliance, has something so shocking in it, that humanity revolts at the idea. My God! what can this writer have in view, by recommending such measures? can he be a friend to the army? can he be a friend to his country? rather is he not an insidious foe; some emissary, perhaps, from New York, plotting the ruin of both, by sowing the seeds of discord, and separation between the civil and military powers of the continent? and what a compliment does he pay to our understandings, when he recommends measures, in either alternative, impracticable in their nature? But here gentlemen, I will drop the curtain, because it would be as imprudent in me to assign my reasons for this opinion, as it would be insulting to your conception to suppose you stood in need of them. A moment's reflection will convince every dispassionate mind of the physical impossibility of carrying either proposal into execution. There might, gentlemen, be an impropriety in my taking notice, in this address to you, of an anonymous production—but the manner in which the performance has been introduced to the army; the effect it was intended to have, together with some other circumstances, will amply justify my observation on the tendency of that writing.

"With respect to the advice given by the author, to suspect the man who shall recommend moderate measures and longer forbearance, I spurn it, as every man who regards that liberty and reveres that justice for which we contend, undoubtedly must; for, if men are to be precluded from offering their sentiments on a matter which may involve the most serious and alarming consequences that can invite the consideration of mankind, reason is of no use to us. The freedom of speech may be taken away, and dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter. I cannot, in justice to my own belief, and what I have great reason to conceive is the intention of Congress, conclude this address without giving it as my decided opinion, that the honorable body entertain exalted sentiments of the services of the army, and, from a full conviction of its merits and sufferings, will do it complete justice. That their endeavours to discover and establish funds for this purpose have been unwearied, and will not cease until they have succeeded, I have not a doubt.

"But, like all other large bodies, where there is a variety of different interests to reconcile, their determinations are slow. Why then should we distrust them? and in consequence of that distrust adopt measures which may cast a shade over that glory which has been so justly acquired, and tarnish the reputation of an army which is celebrated through all Europe for its fortitude and patriotism? And for what is this done? To bring the object we seek nearer? No; most certainly, in my opinion, it will cast it at a greater distance. For myself, (and I take no merit in giving the assurance, being induced to it from principles of gratitude, veracity, and justice, and a grateful sense of the confidence you have ever placed in me.) a recollection of the cheerful assistance and prompt obedience I have experienced from you, under every vicissitude of fortune, and the sincere affection I feel for an army I have so long had the honor to command, will oblige me to declare, in this public and solemn manner, that, in the attainment of complete justice for all your toils and dangers, and in the gratification of every wish, so far as may be done consistently with the great duty I owe my country, and those powers we are bound to respect, you may freely command my services, to the utmost extent of my abilities.

"While I give you these assurances, and pledge myself in the most unequivocal manner, to exert whatever abilities I am possessed of in your favor, let me entreat you, gentlemen, on your part, not to take any measures, which, viewed in the calm light of reason, will lessen the dignity, and sully the glory, you have hitherto maintained. Let me request you to rely on the plighted faith of your country, and place a full confidence in the purity of the intentions of Congress; that, previous to your dissolution as an army, they will cause all your accounts to be fairly liquidated, as directed in the resolutions which were published to you two days ago: and that they will adopt the most effectual measures in their power to render ample justice to you for your faithful and meritorious services. And let me conjure you, in the name of our common country, as you value your own sacred honor; as you respect the rights of humanity; and as you regard the military and national character of America; to express your utmost horror and detestation of the man, who wishes, under any specious pretences, to overturn the liberties of our country, and who wickedly attempts to open the flood-gates of civil discord, and deluge our rising empire in blood.

"By thus determining, and thus acting, you will pursue the plain and direct road to the attainment of your wishes; you will defeat the insidious designs of our enemies, who are compelled to resort from open force to secret artifice. You will give one more distinguished proof of unexampled patriotism and patient virtue, rising superior to the pressure of the most complicated sufferings; and you will, by the dignity of your conduct, afford occasion for posterity to say, when speaking of the glorious example you have exhibited to mankind—had this day been wanting the world had never seen the last stage of perfection to which human nature is capable of attaining."

These sentiments, from a person whom they had been accustomed to love, to reverence, and to obey; the solidity of whose judgment, and the sincerity of whose zeal for their interests were alike unquestioned, could not fail to be irresistible. No person was hardy enough to oppose the advice he had given; and the impression made was general and apparent. A resolution moved by General Knox, and seconded by Brigadier General Putnam, 'assuring him that the officers reciprocated his affectionate expressions with the greatest sincerity of which the human heart is capable,' was unanimously voted. On the motion of General Putnam, a committee, consisting of General Knox, Col. Brooks, and Captain Howard, was then appointed to prepare resolutions on the business before them, and to report in half an hour. The report of the committee being brought in and fully considered, the following resolutions were passed unanimously:

'Resolved, unanimously, that at the commencement of the present war, the officers of the American army engaged in the service of their country from the purest love and attachment to the rights and liberties of human nature; which motives still exist in the highest degree; and that no circumstances of distress or danger shall induce a conduct that may tend to sully the reputation and glory which they have acquired, at the price of their blood, and eight years faithful services.

'Resolved, unanimously, that the army continue to have an unshaken confidence in the justice of Congress and their country, and are fully convinced that the representatives of America will not disband or disperse the army until their accounts are liquidated, the balances accurately ascertained, and adequate funds established for payment; and in this arrangement, the officers expect that the half pay, or a commutation for it, should be efficaciously comprehended.

'Resolved, unanimously, that his excellency the Commander in Chief be requested to write to his excellency the President of Congress, earnestly entreating the most speedy decision of that honorable body upon the subject of our late address, which was forwarded by a committee of the army, some of whom are waiting upon Congress for the result. In the alternative of peace or war, this event would be highly satisfactory, and would produce immediate tranquility in the minds of the army, and prevent any further machinations of designing men, to sow discord between the civil and military powers of the United States.

'On motion, resolved, unanimously, that the officers of the American army view with abhorrence and reject with disdain, the infamous propositions contained in a late anonymous address to the officers of the army, and resent with indignation the secret attempts of some unknown person to collect the officers together, in a manner totally subversive of all discipline and good order.'

'Resolved, unanimously, that the thanks of the officers of the army be given to the committee who presented to Congress the late address of the army, for the wisdom and prudence with which they have conducted that business; and that a copy of the proceedings of this day be transmitted by the President to Major General M'Dougal; and that he be requested to continue his solicitations at Congress, until the objects of his mission are accomplished."

* By a resolution of the preceding year, the inquiry into his concuct had been dispensed with, and he had been restored to his command in the army.

FROM THE LIVERPOOL ADVERTISER, SEPT. 17.

When the most formidable army which Europe ever saw had perished beneath the rigours of a Russian winter, there was a general movement throughout Europe to throw off the military despotism to which Napoleon had subjected most of its continental states. At this critical moment, the Sovereigns of Europe sought to rouse the energies of their people, by assuming the language of patriotism: they spoke much of the rights, liberty and independence, which were only to be secured by the complete overthrow of the colossal power of France.—The people believed the flattering tale, and made unprecedented exertions, which were crowned with an unprecedented success. Napoleon was defeated—dethroned, and hurried into exile: the Bourbons re-ascended the throne of their ancestors, and the reign of legitimacy was re-established. The danger was past, and with the danger the promises which it had extorted were forgotten—the people petitioned and remonstrated, their petitions were treated with neglect and their remonstrances were met with edicts for repressing the licentiousness of the press, upon which so severe a restraint was imposed as to stifle every audible expression of their complaints. In France the Bourbon family openly advocated the slavish doctrine of the divine right of Kings, and some of its members manifested an undisguised predilection for the ancient despotism. Ferdinand, who was indebted to his people for preserving to him a kingdom which his own imbecility had thrown away, rewarded their attachment by destroying every liberal institution which had been established during his absence—by immuring in dungeons those who had fought and bled in his service, and by reinstating in all their unmitigated ferocity the terrors of the inquisition and the rigours of an absolute despotism.

The people of Holland and the Netherlands were mocked with the show of a representative government; and the Prussian Monarch, who had been the most lavish of his promises, did not make the slightest concessions to the wishes of his subjects, and his whole conduct has since been marked by an inveterate hostility to every extension of popular rights. Nor were the Sovereigns of Europe less unmindful of liberty in their collective capacity; the Congress of Vienna trampled without scruple, on the rights of the lesser states and were guilty of the most flagrant acts of injustice. The sudden appearance of Napoleon, who seated himself, as if by magic, on the throne of France, for a moment disconcerted their measures. The interruption, however was but temporary. The star of Napoleon set to rise no more, and the defeated Emperor threw himself upon the generosity of the English nation, whose government, actuated by a policy which will not do it credit in future ages, consigned him to spend the residue of his days on a barren rock, in the midst of a boundless ocean. It was not until this formidable Chieftain had been thus disposed of, that the Allied Sovereigns ventured so far to set public opinion at defiance, as to enter into a compact with each other; in which, under the guise of respect to the precepts of Jesus Christ, they pledged each other to the maintenance of legitimacy, and to put down, by their joint power, whoever might attempt to impugn it:—

That the maintenance of the legitimacy meant the preservation of the monarchical government, is too obvious to need a formal proof. Indeed the conduct of the Holy Alliance, in respect to Naples, furnishes the best commentary on the real meaning of this infamous treaty, which was evidently intended for the protection of arbitrary and despotic power, against the increasing light and liberality of the age; and we have no doubt that the Royal Congress, now about to assemble at Verona, has for its main object the furtherance of the same design. Spain and Portugal are no longer members of this conclave of Sovereigns—they have imposed restraints upon their Monarchs, which the enlightened members of the Holy Alliance consider to be inconsistent with the principles of legitimacy; and there can be no doubt that one of the most interesting problems they will have to solve, will be how this breach which has been made in the fortresses of despotism, may be most effectually repaired; or if this should be judged impracticable, how future attacks may be best prevented.

Whatever be the object of this Royal conference, it is certain that this country means to take a share in its deliberations. The Duke of Wellington is appointed as the Representative of the British Cabinet. We confess that this appointment is not satisfactory to us; we have a dislike to the appointment of military men on diplomatic missions, and we particularly object to the Noble Duke, on account of his evident leaning to the side of arbitrary power. He has always manifested a coldness and indifference to the cause of freedom, which, however it may fit him to be the instrument of power, does not eminently qualify him for interposing with effect to prevent the encroachments which, there is too much reason to believe, are meditating against the liberty and independence of other states. There are, indeed, strong grounds for apprehending that the British Cabinet would be indisposed to offer any energetic resistance to the most gross invasion of the rights of independent States, which should have for its object the suppression of what they would term revolutionary principles, though we believe that ministers would not dare avowedly to concur in such usurpation.

We observe that Mr. Canning, in a speech upon a late festive occasion, expressed himself adverse to any interference in the contest which is now going on between the governors and the governed. But if our neutrality is to be real, and not hollow & insincere, this country should use its utmost endeavors to prevent any other uninterested party from interfering in the contest. If the British Cabinet, from any sinister motive, declines to do this, it may fairly be charged with gross insincerity. It would give us great satisfaction to be able to state, that the Duke of Wellington was instructed to make a strong representation to the Congress, on the subject of the African Slave Trade: a traffic which has been carried on under the flags of France and Spain to an enormous extent. This is an offence against the common rights of human nature; it is one of the worst species of piracy; and we hope all vessels engaged in it will be put out of the protection of their national flag, and that every person assisting to carry on this most flagitious commerce, will be considered and treated as a pirate. Some decisive measure of this kind seems absolutely necessary to put an end to what an eminent British statesman once declared to be "one of the greatest practical evils that ever afflicted human nature."

Greece still continues to exhibit the interesting and sublime spectacle of a gallant and oppressed people contending, single handed, against an enemy infinitely superior in point of numbers and resources. We regret that we are not able to confirm the tidings of a signal victory, which it was rumoured that the Greeks had obtained over their oppressors. We should hail with inexpressible pleasure the occurrence of such an event, which would place the cause of this brave and interesting people out of the imminent jeopardy in which they seem at present to be placed. They have been abandoned by the Christian people of Europe to their only resources, courage and patriotism; and we trust that these will carry them triumphantly through the arduous contest, on the successful termination of which their very existence may be said to depend. The Greeks are contending not only for national independence but for freedom; and it is probable that their zeal for liberty may not be perfectly agreeable to their powerful neighbours. The Autocrat of Russia and the despotic Cabinet of Vienna, would hardly be able to tolerate the existence of liberty, even within the hallowed precincts of its ancient birth-place, and which was long, its "only home;" a territory which has been consecrated by the grave of the patriot, and rendered for ever illustrious as the cradle of poetry, and the favourite abode of genius, philosophy, and the arts.

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