

... actually passed, and that Martineau has surrendered to the British forces.

(No. 9.)

Boston, March 15, 1809.

Sir—You will perceive from the accounts that will reach you in the public papers both from Washington and Massachusetts, that the federalists of the northern states have succeeded in making the Congress believe, that with such an opposition as they would make to the general government, a war must be confined to their own territory, and might be even too much for that government to sustain. The consequence is, that after all the parade and menaces with which the session commenced, it has been suffered to end without carrying into effect any of the plans of the administration, except interdiction of commercial intercourse with England and France—an event that was anticipated in my former letters.

Under what new circumstances the Congress will meet in May, will depend on the state elections and the changes that may in the mean time take place in Europe. With regard to Great Britain, she can scarce mistake her true policy in relation to America. If peace be the first object, every act which can irritate the maritime states ought to be avoided; because the prevailing disposition of these will generally be sufficient to keep the government from hazarding any hostile measure. If war between America and France be a grand desideratum, something more must be done: an indulgent conciliatory policy must be adopted, which will leave the democrats without a pretext for hostilities; and Bonaparte, whose passions are too hot for delay, will probably compel this government to decide whether of the two great belligerents is to be its enemy.

To bring about a separation of the states under distinct and separate governments is an affair of more uncertainty; and, however desirable, cannot be effected but by a series of acts, and long continued policy, tending to irritate the southern, and conciliate the northern people. The former are agricultural, the latter a commercial people. The mode of cherishing and depressing either is too obvious to require illustration. This, I am aware, is an object of much interest in Great Britain, as it would for ever secure the integrity of his Majesty's possessions on this continent, and make the two governments, of whatever number the present confederacy might form into, as useful, and as much subject to the influence of Great Britain as her colonies can be rendered. But it is an object only to be attained by slow and circumspect progression, and requires for its consummation more attention to the affairs which agitate and excite parties in this country, than Great Britain has yet bestowed upon it. An unpopular war; that is a war produced by the hatred and prejudices of one party, but against the consent of the other party, can alone produce a sudden separation of any section of this country from the common head.

At all events, it cannot be necessary to the preservation of peace that Great Britain should make any great concession at the present moment; more especially as the

more important changes that occur in Europe might render it inconvenient for her to adhere to any stipulations in favor of neutral maritime nations.

Although the non-intercourse law affords but a very partial relief to the people of this country from the evils of that entire suspension of commerce to which they have reluctantly submitted for some time past, I lament the repeal of the embargo; because it was calculated to accelerate the progress of these states towards a revolution that would have put an end to the only republic that remains to prove that a government, founded on political equality can exist in a season of trial and difficulty, or is calculated to insure either security or happiness to a people.

I am, &c. A. B.

(No. 10.)

Boston, March 29, 1809.

Sir—Since my letter of the 13th, nothing has occurred which I thought worthy of a communication.

The last weeks of this month and the first of April will be occupied in the election of governors and other executive officers in the New-England States.

The federal candidate in New-Hampshire is already elected by a majority of about 1000 votes. His competitor was a man of large fortune, extensive connexions and inoffensive manners. These account for the smallness of the majority.

In Connecticut, no change is necessary, none is to be apprehended.

In Rhode-Island, it is of no consequence of what party the governor is a member, as he has neither civil nor military powers, being merely president of the council.

In Massachusetts, it is certain that the federal candidate will succeed.

A few weeks will be sufficient in order to determine the relative strength of parties, and convince Mr. Madison that a war with Great Britain is not a measure upon which he dare venture. Since the plan of an organized opposition to the projects of Mr. Jefferson was put into operation, the whole of the New-England States have transferred their political power to his political enemies, and the reason that he has still so many adherents is, that those who consider the only true policy of America to consist in the cultivation of peace, have still great confidence, that nothing can force him (or his successor who acts up to his system or rather is governed by it) to consent to war. They consider all the menaces and "dreadful note of preparation" to be a mere finesse, intended only to obtain concession from England on cheap terms. From every sort of evidence, I confess I am myself of the same opinion; and am fully persuaded that the farce which has been acting at Washington will terminate in a full proof of the imbecillity and spiritless temper of the actors. A war attempted without the concurrence of both parties and the general consent of the northern states, which constitute the bone and muscle of the country, must commence without hope, and end in disgrace. It should, therefore, be the peculiar care of Great-Britain to foster divisions between the north and south; and by succeeding in this, she may carry into

effect her own projects in Europe, with a total disregard of the resentment of the democrats in this country.

I am, &c. A. B.

(No. 11.)

Boston, April 13, 1809.

Sir—I find Mr. R. a pamphlet entitled "Suppressed Documents" The notes and comments were written by the gentleman who has written "analysis," which I sent by a former conveyance. These works have greatly contributed to excite the fears of the men of talents and property; who now prefer the chance of maintaining their party by open rebellion and a final separation to an alliance with France, and a war with England. So that should government unexpectedly and contrary to all reasonable calculation, attempt to involve the country in a measure of that nature I am convinced (now that the elections have all terminated favorably) that none of the New-England States would be a party in it. But as I have repeatedly written, the General Government does not seriously entertain any such desire or intention. Had the majority in the New-England States continued to approve of the public measures, it is extremely probable that Great Britain would now have to choose between war and concession. But the aspect of things in this respect is changed; a war would produce an incurable alienation of the Eastern States, and bring the whole country in subordination to the interest of England, whose navy would prescribe and enforce the terms upon which the commercial states should carry and the agricultural states export their surplus produce. All this is as well known to the democrats as to the other party; therefore they will avoid a war, at least until the whole nation is unanimous for it. Still when we consider of what materials the government is formed, it is impossible to speak with any certainty of their measures. The past administration in every transaction presents to the mind only a muddy mixture of folly, weakness and duplicity. The spell by which the nations of Europe have been rendered inert and inefficient when they attempted to shake it off, has stretched its shadow across the Atlantic and made a majority of the people of the States alike blind to duty and to their true interest.

I am, &c. A. B.

(No. 12.) Boston, April 26, 1809.

Sir—Since my letter No. 11, I have had but little to communicate.

I have not yet been able to ascertain with sufficient accuracy the relative strength of the two parties in the legislative bodies in New-England.

In all these states, however, Governors have been elected out of the federal party, and even the southern papers indicate an unexpected augmentation of federal members in the next Congress.

The correspondence between Mr. Erskine and the Secretary of State at Washington, you will have seen before this can reach you. It has given much satisfaction to the federal party here; because it promises an exemption from the evil the most feared (a war with England) and justifies their partiality towards Great Britain which they maintain was founded upon a full conviction of her justice and sincere disposition to preserve peace. Even the democrats affect to be satisfied with it because they insist it proves the efficacy of the restrictive system of Mr. Jefferson.

But the great benefit that will probably result from it, will be that Bonaparte may be induced to force this country from her neutral position. Baffled in his attempts to exclude from this continent the manufactures of Great Britain, he will most likely confiscate all American property in his dominions and dependencies, and declare war. Nothing could more than this contribute to give influence and stability to the British party. The invidious occurrence of the rebellion would be forgotten in the resentment of the people against France; and they would soon be weaned from that attachment to her which is founded on the aid that was rendered to separate from the mother country.

While Great Britain waits for this natural, I might say necessary result of the negotiation, would it not be extremely inexpedient to conclude a treaty with the American government? Every sort of evidence and experience prove, that the democrats consider the political ascendancy in a great measure dependent upon the hostile spirit that they can keep alive towards Great Britain, and recent events demonstrate that their conduct will be predicated upon that conviction; it is therefore not to be expected that they meet with corresponding feelings a sincere disposition on the part of England to adjust all matters in dispute.

They are at heart mortified and disappointed to find that Great-Britain has been in advance of the French government in taking advantage of the provisional clauses of the

non-intercourse law; and if they show any spirit at the next session of Congress towards France, it will be only because they will find Bonaparte deaf to entreaty and insensible of past favors; or that they may think it safer to float with the tide of public feeling which will set strongly against him, unless he keep *pari passu* with England in a conciliatory policy.

When I began my letter, I intended to make some observations in relation to the boundary line.—(Here 10 or 12 lines of the manuscript are erased.)

I am, &c. A. B.

(No. 13.) Boston, May 5, 1809.

Sir—Although the recent changes that have occurred quiet all apprehensions of war, and consequently lessen all hope of a separation of the States, I think it necessary to transmit by the mail of each week a sketch of passing events.

On local politics I have nothing to add; and as the parade that is made in the National Intelligencer of the sincere disposition of Mr. Madison to preserve amicable relations with Great-Britain is in my opinion calculated to awaken vigilance and distrust rather than inspire confidence, I shall (having nothing more important to write about) take leave to examine his motives. I am not surprised at his conditional removal of the non-intercourse law with respect to Great-Britain, because it was made incumbent on him by the act of Congress; but the observation made on his friendly dispositions towards Great-Britain is a matter of no small astonishment. The whole tenor of his political Hedges & Co. is physically contradicted. His speech on the British treaty in 1795. His attempt to pass a law for the confiscation of "British debts" and British property. His commercial resolutions grounded apparently on an idea of making America useful as a market for France. His conduct as Secretary of State; all form an assemblage of probabilities tending to convince me at least that he does not seriously desire a treaty in which the rights and pretensions of Great-Britain would be fairly recognized. It seems impossible that he should at once direct himself of his habitual animosity, and that pride of opinion which his present situation enables him to indulge; but above all, that he should deceive his friends and supporters of the benefit of those prejudices which have been carefully fostered in the minds of the common people towards England, and which have so materially contributed to invigorate and augment the democratic party. Whatever his real motives may be, it is in this stage of the affair harmless enough to enquire into the cause of the apparent change. He probably acts under a conviction that in the present temper of the Eastern States a war could not fail to produce a dissolution of the union; or he may have profited by the mistakes of his predecessor, and is inclined to seize the present opportunity to prove to the world that he is determined to be the President of a nation, rather than the head of a faction; or he has probably gone thus far to remove the impression on the minds of many that he was under the influence of France in order that he may with a better grace and on more tenable grounds quarrel with Great Britain in the progress of negotiating a treaty. Whatever his motives may be, I am very certain his party will not support him in any manly and generous policy. Weak men are sure to temporize when great events call upon them for decision, and are sluggish and inert at the moment when the worst of evils is in action. This is the character of the democrats in the Northern States. Of those of the South I know but little.

I am, &c. A. B.

(No. 14.) Boston, May 25, 1809.

Sir—My last was under date of the 5th inst. The unexpected change that has taken place in consequence of Mr. Madison's prompt acceptance of the friendly proposals of Great Britain has in the feelings of political men in this country caused a temporary suspension of the conflict of parties; and they both regard him with equal wonder and distrust. They all ascribe his conduct to various motives, but none believe him to be in earnest.

The State of New-York has returned to the Assembly a majority of federal members. All this proves that an anticommercial faction cannot rule the Northern States. Two months ago the State of New-York was not ranked among the States that would adopt the policy of that of Massachusetts; and any favorable change was exceedingly problematical.

I beg leave to suggest that in the present state of things in this country my presence can contribute very little to the interest of Great Britain. If Mr. Erskine be sanctioned in all he has conceived, by his Majesty's Ministers, it is unnecessary for me, as indeed it would be unwarrantable to make any attempt to carry into effect the original purposes of my mission. While I think it to be my duty