

THE VIRGINIA STATESMAN.

VOL. II. NO. 7.

WHEELING, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1829.

WHOLE NO. 60.

Published every Wednesday morning, by JAMES GREEN, at the Virginia Statesman Office, No. 100 Main Street.

TERMS: Two dollars if paid in advance. Five dollars if not paid within six months. Or three dollars if not paid within the year. No subscription discontinued till all arrearages are paid, except at the discretion of the Editor. Advertisements inserted at the usual rates.

PRINTED BY JAMES GREEN, at the Virginia Statesman Office, No. 100 Main Street.

ROMANCE IN REAL LIFE.

We are indebted to a friend in England for the following interesting little narrative which strikingly illustrates the remark of Lord Byron, that "Truth is sometimes stranger than fiction." We have before us a story of the circumstances, and it is very beautifully alluded to in one of Mr. Hazlitt's Essays; but the following is a minute and, we may add, an authentic statement as it was drawn up by a gentleman who knew the parties and was long connected with the noble family to whom it relates:

"When the late Earl of Exeter was in his minority, he married a girl of the name and family of Vernon, of Humberly, Wiltshire, from whom he was afterwards divorced. After the separation had taken place, Lord Exeter, his uncle advised him (then the Hon. Mr. Cecil) to retire into the country for some time, and pass for a private gentleman. He complied with the request and took his course into a retired part of Shropshire. There fixing his residence for some time at an inn in the small village of Hodnet, he became liberal to an unexampled degree, to all about him. Some people in the neighborhood formed suspicious notions of him, surmising that he was a rogue in disguise, and accordingly obtained his company. Others took him for an Indian Nabob, or some eminent personage in disguise, and frequently he heard the rustics exclaim, "there goes the gentleman." Taking a dislike to his situation, he looked out for boarding at some farm house; but here again was difficulty. Few families cared to take him because he was too fine a gentleman. At last, in consideration of the liberal offers he made, a farmer agreed to fit him up a room. Here he continued under the name of Mr. Jones, for about two years, apparently contented with his retirement. He used occasionally to go to London for a short time, for the purpose, as the country people supposed, of collecting his rents, but in reality to resume the dignity and society of his station.

"During this sequestered life, time frequently hung heavy on his hands, & he purchased some land with the view of building upon it. The workmen were at first averse to undertake it, and he did not choose to oppose or expostulate with them, as it might tend to a discovery. But on his landlord's offering to pay a certain sum in advance, it was agreed that his design should be executed. About this time, too, he undertook the superintendence of the road, the management of the poor's rates, &c. all of which offices he filled with so much skill and discernment as surprised and astonished the neighborhood.

"He ventured also to pay his addresses to a young woman, a farmer's daughter, but was not attended to from motives of caution, not being known sufficiently to be trusted. The person at whose house he lived, being less scrupulous than the rest, permitted him to pay his addresses to his daughter, whose rustic beauty and modesty were admired. And although the maiden was placed in a humble lot, his lordship soon discovered that her virtues would one day shed a lustre on a more exalted station. On the farmer's return from his labor in the field, the Hon. Mr. Cecil (as Mr. Jones) made proposals of marriage, and craved the consent of the female's parents. "What!" exclaimed Mrs. Higgins, the farmer's wife, "marry our daughter to a fine gentleman, a stranger! No indeed." "But yes," replied her husband: "the gentleman has house and land and plenty of money, and there is no exception to his conduct." Consent being obtained, the match was made up, and in twelve months, by the aid of proper masters, this charming young country girl became an accomplished lady.

"Shortly after this event, the Right Hon. Brownlow Cecil, Earl of Exeter, died, & his nephew succeeded to his title and estates. This obliged him to leave his much loved retirement, and hasten to town. He took his wife along with him, but said nothing of her new honors and exalted station. In his way he called at several nobleman and gentleman's seats, and at length arrived at Burleigh House, the seat of his noble ancestors, near Stamford. The road was lined with gentlemen and tenants, assembled to welcome their new lord and lady. They entered in their carriage through the Gothic porch, which was hung round with flowers and evergreens, and passed up the avenue shaded by the old trees. "Oh," said she, "what a paradise is this!" The Earl could contain himself no longer, but exclaimed, "It is all thine, dear, and thou art Countess of Exeter!" She fell back in the carriage and fainted with joy. They arrived at the house, her ladyship being recovered, and were welcomed with every demonstration of respect and affection.

"Having settled his affairs to his satisfaction, he returned into Shropshire, disclosed his rank, and placed his father-in-law in the mansion, that he had built in the country, and settled upon him an annuity of five hundred pounds per annum. Afterwards he took the Countess to London, & introduced her to the fashionable world, where she was universally admired and esteemed."

HISTORICAL SCRAPS.

Julius Caesar fought 50 pitched battles, and killed one million and a half of men—(For whose good?) Manlius, who threw down the Gauls from the Capitol, had received 23 wounds, and taken two spoils, before he was 17 years of age. Dentatus fought 120 battles, was 30 times victorious in single combat, and received 45 wounds in front. He had among his trophies 70 bells, 8 mural, 3 obeliskal, and 13 civic crowns. Cato pleaded 400 causes, and gained them all. Cyrus knew the names of all the soldiers in his army; Lucius Scipio knew the names of all the Roman people. Chimeres could relate all he ever heard, in the same words. Julius Caesar wrote, read, dictated and listened to the conversation of his friends at the same time. A philosopher is mentioned by Pliny, who being struck with a stone, forgot his alphabet. A man reputed for his stupidity falling from his horse, and being trodden, became very remarkable for the sprightliness of his genius. The orator Carvius forgot his own name. Mithridates spoke to the ambassadors of 22 different nations without an interpreter. Julius Viator lived to an advanced old age, without water or using any kind of liquid nourishment. Crassus, grandfather of the Triumviratus, who was slain by the Parthians, never laughed. He had on this account, the surname of Angelatus.

CONSOLATORY REFLECTIONS ON DEFORMITY.

Deformities and imperfections of our bodies says Burton, in his Anatomy of Melancholly, as lameness, crookedness, deafness, blindness, be they innate or accidental, torture many men; yet this may comfort them, that those imperfections of the body do not a whit blemish the soul, or hinder the operations of it, but rather help & much increase it. Seldom, says Plutarch, honesty and beauty dwell together. How many deformed Kings, Princes, Emperors, could I reckon up, Philosophers, Orators? Hannibal but one eye, Appian, Claudius, Timoleon blind, Mulcennes, King of Bohemia, and Tresinus, the Prophet. The night hath its pleasure; and for the loss of that one sense, such men are commonly recompensed in the rest. Homer was blind; yet who made more accurate, lively, or better descriptions with both eyes? Democritus was blind; yet as Lucretius writes of him, he saw more than all Greece besides; as Plato concludes, when our bodily eyes are at worst, generally the eyes of our soul see best. Some divines and philosophers, have evirated themselves, and put out their eyes voluntarily, the better to contemplate; Augustus, Politanus, had a tetter in his nose, full some in company; yet no man more eloquent or pleasing in his works. Asop was crooked—Socrates purlind, long legged hairy—Democritus withered—Seneca lean and harsh, ugly to behold; yet show me so many flourishing wits; such divine spirits! Horace a little bear-eyed contemptible fellow; yet who so sententious and wise? Galba the emperor, was crooked backed; Epictetus lame; the great Alexander a little man of stature; Augustus Caesar of the same pitch; Agesilus despicable form; Uladisalus Cubitalis, that pigmy King of Poland, reigned and fought more victorious battles than any of his long shanked predecessors.

Virtue refuseth no stature; and commonly your great, vast bodies, and fine features are sottish, dull, and leaden spirits. What's in them? What in Otus and Ephyialtes, (Neptune's son in "Homer,") nine acres long! What in Maximinus, Ajax, Caligula, and the rest of those great Zanzummins, or giganthal Anakims, vast barbarous lubbers? A little diamond is worth more than a rocky mountain, which made Alexander Aphrodisianus positively conclude, the lesser the wiser, because the soul was much contracted in such a body.

Beards.—Among all nations, beards have at various times been subjected to the caprice of fashion.

The Greeks wore their beards until the reign of Alexander, as likewise, the Romans until the four hundred and fifty fourth year of Rome.

It was Scipio Africanus, who introduced the custom of shaving every day. A number of the Emperors followed his example; but Adrian resumed his fashion of wearing the beard, and his successors retained it until Constantine. It appeared again in the time of Heraclius; and all the Greek Emperors preserved their beards.

The Goths and the Franks wore but one mustachio.

Cloidian ordered all his subjects to suffer their beards to grow. Peter the great caused his nobles to be shaved.

The eastern ecclesiastics never shaved; on the contrary, the clergy in the west always did. All the ancient philosophers wore long beards. Moses forbade the Israelites "to mar the corners of their beards."

In some countries the beard is considered as a mark of grief; while, in others, shaving indicates the same.

A flowing beard is considered honorable in the east, and no greater insult can be offered than plucking by the beard.

The constant necessity of shaving is certainly troublesome & could any means be discovered to prevent it, it would certainly be a very valuable acquisition. I have wished a hundred times it were fashionable to wear the beard here as in Turkey.—What oceans of lather, what cartloads of soap, what cargoes of razors would be saved! But then the ladies, dear souls, how should our lips meet theirs! They would scarce like the brush of a bushy face, and so we must even be compelled to scrape and cut our woe-begone phizzes.

Parity of elections.—I was reading Governor Van Buren's message to my uncle Toby, and when I had got through that part where he speaks of the evil effects of employing money at our elections, the old gentleman smiled and related the following anecdote:—"It puts me in mind," said he, "of a young clergyman I once knew; many years since, who preached an eloquent sermon, in the course of which he took occasion to remark on the impropriety of spending the evenings of the Sabbath in social visits—a custom as he said, very common among young men. You remember the sermon, Trim?" "O yes, your honor, perfectly well," said the corporal, "and the clergyman too; he was a sedate looking man, and wore spectacles." "Well, as I was saying, (continued my uncle) he had been preaching against the evil, of going to see the girls on Sunday evening—when after service he took me by the arm—come, says he, let us go to the Deacons' and spend the evening with his daughters—How, cried I, with much surprise, is it possible you can make such a proposal to me, after the sermon you have just concluded? Pshaw! says he, I only made those remarks in order that we might have the better chance ourselves." When my uncle Toby had concluded, Corporal Trim and myself indulging in a hearty laugh.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BOSTON, Nov. 26, 1823.

To the Hon. John Quincy Adams.

Sir,—The undersigned, citizens of Massachusetts, residing in Boston and its vicinity, take the liberty of addressing you on the subject of a statement published in the National Intelligencer of the 21st of October, and which purports to have been communicated or authorized by you.

In this statement after speaking of those individuals in this State, whom the writer designated as 'certain leaders of the party which had the management of the State Legislature in their hands, in the year 1808, and saying, that in the event of a civil war, he (Mr. Adams) 'had no doubt the leaders of the party would secure the co-operation with them of Great Britain,' it is added, 'That their object was, and had been for several years, a dissolution of the Union, and the establishment of a separate Confederation, he knew from unequivocal evidence, although not proveable in a court of law.

This, sir, is not the expression of an opinion as to the nature and tendency of the measures at that time publicly adopted, or proposed, by the party prevailing in the State of Massachusetts. Every citizen was at liberty to form his own opinions on that subject; and we cheerfully submit the propriety of those measures to the judgment of an impartial posterity. But the sentence which we have quoted contains the assertion of a distinct fact, as one within your own knowledge. We are not permitted to consider it as the unguarded expression of irritated feeling, hastily uttered at a time of great political excitement. Twenty years have elapsed since this charge was first made in private correspondence with certain members of Congress; and it is now deliberately repeated, and brought before the Public under the sanction of your name, as being founded on unequivocal evidence, within your knowledge.

We do not claim for ourselves, nor even for those deceased friends whose representatives join in this address, the title of leaders of any party in Massachusetts; but we were associated in politics with the party prevailing here at the period referred to in the statement above mentioned; some of us concurred in all the measures adopted by that party; and we all warmly approved & supported those measures. Many of our associates who still survive, are dispersed throughout Massachusetts and Maine, and could not easily be convened to join as on the present occasion. We trust, however, that you will not question our right, if not for ourselves alone, at least in behalf of the highly valued friends with whom we acted at that time, and especially of those of them who are now deceased, respectfully to ask from you such a full and precise statement of the facts and evidence relating to this accusation, as may enable us fairly to meet and answer it.

The object of this letter therefore is, to request you to state.

First, Who are the persons, designated as leaders of the party prevailing in Massachusetts in the year 1808, whose object, you assert, was and had been for several

years, a dissolution of the Union, and the establishment of a separate Confederation? and

Secondly, The whole evidence on which that charge is founded.

It is admitted in the statement of the charge, that it is not proveable in a court of law, and of course that you are not in possession of any legal evidence by which to maintain it. The evidence however I must have been such as in your opinion would have been pronounced unequivocal by upright and honorable men of discriminating minds; and we may certainly expect from your sense of justice and self-respect a full disclosure of all that you possess.

A charge of this nature, coming as it does from the first magistrate of the nation, acquires an importance which we cannot affect to disregard; and it is one which we ought not to leave unanswered.—We are therefore constrained, by a regard to our deceased friends and to our posterity, as well as by a sense of what is due to our own honor, most solemnly to declare, that we have never known nor suspected that the party which prevailed in Massachusetts in the year 1808, or any other party in this state, have ever entertained the design to produce a dissolution of the Union, or the establishment of a separate Confederation. It is impossible for us in any other manner to refute, or even to answer this charge, until we see it fully and particularly stated, and know the evidence by which it is to be maintained.

The undersigned think it due to themselves to add, that in making this application to you, they have no design or wish to produce an effect on any political party or question whatever. Neither is it their purpose to enter into a vindication or discussion of the measures publicly adopted and avowed by the persons against whom the above charge has been made. Our sole object is to draw forth all the evidence on which that charge is founded in order that the public may judge of its application and its weight.

We are Sir, with due respect,
Your obedient servants,
H. G. OTIS,
ISRAEL THORNDIKE,
T. H. PERKINS,
WILLIAM PRESCOTT,
DANIEL SARGENT,
JOHN LOWELL,
WILLIAM SULLIVAN,
CHARLES JACKSON,
WARREN DUTTON,
BENJ. PICKMAN,
HENRY CABOT,
Son of the late George Cabot.
C. C. PARSONS,
Son of Theophilus Parsons, Esq. dec'd.
FRANKLIN DEXTER,
Son of the late Samuel Dexter.

MR. ADAMS' REPLY TO THE PRECEDING LETTER.

Washington, 30th December, 1823.

Messrs. H. G. Otis, Israel Thorndike, T. H. Perkins, William Prescott, Daniel Sargent, John Lowell, Wm. Sullivan, Charles Jackson, Warren Dutton, Benjamin Pickman, Henry Cabot, C. C. Parsons, and Franklin Dexter—

GENTLEMEN—I have received your letter of the 26th ult. and recognizing among the signatures to it, names of persons for whom a long and on my part uninterrupted friendship, has survived all the bitterness of political dissension, it would have afforded me pleasure to answer with explicitness and candor not only those persons, but each and every one of you, upon the only questions in relation to the subject matter of your letter, which as men or as citizens I can acknowledge your right to ask; namely whether the interrogator was himself one of the persons, intended by me in the extract which you have given, from a statement authorized by me and published in the National Intelligencer of 21st October last.

Had you or either of you thought proper to ask me this question, it would have been more satisfactory to me to receive the inquiry separately from each individual, than arrayed in solid phalanx, each responsible not only for himself but for all others. The reasons for this must be so obvious to persons of your intelligence, that I trust you will spare me the pain of detailing them.

But, Gentlemen, this is not all. You undertake your inquiry, not in your own names alone, but as the representatives of a great and powerful party, dispersed throughout the State of Massachusetts and Maine: A party commanding, at the time to which your inquiries refer, a devoted majority in the Legislature of the then United Commonwealth; and even now, if judged by the character of its volunteer delegation, of great influence and respectability.

I cannot recognize you, on this occasion, as the representatives of that party, for two reasons—first, because you have neither produced your credentials for presenting yourselves as their champions, nor assigned satisfactory reasons for presenting yourselves without them. But, secondly, and chiefly, because your introduction of that party into this question is entirely gratuitous. Your solemn declaration that you do not know that the federal or any other party, at the time to which my statement refers, intended to produce the dissolution of the Union, and the formation of a new confederacy, does not take the issue, which your own statement of my charge (as you are pleased to consider it) has tendered.—

The statement authorized by me, spoke, not of the federal party, but of certain leaders of that party. In my own letters to the Members of Congress, who did me the honor at that agonizing crisis to our National Union, of soliciting my confidential opinions upon measures under deliberation, I expressly acquitted the great body of the federal party, not only of participating in the secret designs of those leaders, but even of being privy to or believing in their existence. I now cheerfully repeat that declaration. I well know that the party were not prepared for that convulsion, to which the measures and designs of their leaders were instigating them; and my extreme anxiety for the substitution of the nonintercourse for the embargo arose from the imminent danger, that the continuance and enforcement of this latter measure would promote the views of those leaders, by goading a majority of the people and of the legislature to the pitch of physical resistance, by state authority, against the execution of the Laws of the Union; the only effectual means by which the Union could be dissolved. Your modesty has prompted you to disclaim the character of leaders of the federal party at that time. If I am to consider this as more than a mere disavowal of form, I must say that the charge, which I lament to see has excited so much of your sensibility, had no reference to any of you.

Your avowed object is controversy.—You call for a precise statement of facts and evidence; not affecting, so far as you know, any of you, but to enable you fairly to meet and to answer it.

And you demand,

1. Who are the persons designated as leaders of the party prevailing in Massachusetts in the year 1808, whose object I assert was, and had been, for several years, a dissolution of the Union, and the establishment of a separate confederacy? and

2. The whole evidence, on which that charge is founded.

You observe that it is admitted, in the statement of the charge, that it is not proveable in a court of law, and your inference is, that I am of course not in possession of any legal evidence, by which to maintain it. Yet you call upon me to name the persons affected by the charge; a charge in your estimation deeply stigmatising upon those persons; and you permit yourselves to remind me, that my sense of justice and self-respect oblige me to disclose all that I do possess. My sense of justice to you, gentlemen, induces me to remark, that I leave your self-respect to the moral influences of your own minds, without presuming to measure it by the dictation of mine.

Suppose, then, that in compliance with your call, I should name one, two or three persons, as intended to be included in the charge. Suppose neither of those persons to be one of you. You however have given them notice, that I have no evidence against them, by which the charge is proveable in a court of law—and you know that I, as well as yourselves, am amenable to the laws of the land. Does your self-respect convince you that the persons so named, if guilty, would furnish the evidence against themselves, which they have been notified that I do not possess? Are you sure that the correspondence, which would prove their guilt may not in the lapse of 25 years have been committed to the flames! In these days of falling and of treacherous memories, may they not have forgotten that any such correspondence ever existed!—And have you any guarantee to offer, that I should not be called by a summons more imperative than yours, to produce in the temple of justice the proof, which you say I have not, or be branded for a foul and malignant slanderer of spotless and persecuted virtue! Is it not besides imaginable that persons may exist, who though twenty-five years since driven in the desperation of disappointment, to the meditation and preparation of measures tending to the dissolution of the Union, perceived afterwards the error of their ways, and would now gladly wash out from their own memories their participation in projects, upon which the stamp of indelible reprobation has passed? Is it not possible that some of the conspirators have been called to account before a higher than an earthly tribunal for all the good and evil of their lives; and whose reputations might now suffer needlessly by the disclosure of their names? I put these cases to you, gentlemen, as possible, to show you that neither my sense of justice nor my self-respect does require of me to produce the evidence for which you call, or disclose the names of persons, for whom you have and can have no right to speak.

These considerations appear indeed to me so forcible, that it is not without surprise, that I am compelled to believe that they had escaped your observation. I cannot believe of any of you that which I am sure never entered the hearts of some of you, that you should have selected the present moment, for the purpose of drawing me into a controversy not only with yourselves, but with others, you know not whom—of daring me to the denouncement of names which twenty years since I declined committing to the ear of confidential friendship; and to the production of evidence which, though perfectly satisfactory to my own mind, and perfectly competent for the foundation of honest and patriotic public conduct, was adequate in a court of law neither to the conviction of the guilty,

nor to the justification of the accuser, and so explicitly pronounced by myself.

You say that you have no design nor wish to produce an effect on any political party, or question whatever,—nor to enter into a vindication of the measures publicly adopted and avowed by the persons against whom the above charge has been made.—But can you believe that this subject could be discussed between you and me, as you propose, when calling upon me for a statement, with the avowed intention of refuting it, and not produce an effect on any political party or question? With regard to the public measures of those times and the succeeding, which you declare to have had your sanction and approbation, it needs no disclosure now, that a radical and irreconcilable difference of opinion between most of yourselves and me existed. And can you suppose that in disclosing names and stating facts, known perhaps only to myself, I could consent to separate them from those public measures, which you so cordially approved and which I so deeply lamented? Must your own defence against these charges forever rest exclusively upon a solemn protestation against the natural inference from the irresistible tendency of action to the secret intent of the actor!—That a statesman who believes in human virtue should be slow to draw this inference against such solemn assertions, I readily admit; but for the regulation of the conduct of human life, the rules of evidence are widely different from those, which receive or exclude testimony in a court of law. Even there, you know, that violent presumption is equivalent, in cases effecting life itself, to positive proof; and in a succession of political measures through a series of years, all tending to the same result, there is an internal evidence against which mere denial, however solemn, can scarcely claim the credence even of the charity that believeth all things.

Let me add that the statement authorized by me, as published in the National Intelligencer, was made, not only without the intention, but without the most distant imagination of offending you or of injuring any one of you. But, on the contrary, for the purpose of expressly disavowing a charge, which was before the public, sanctioned with the name of the late Mr. Jefferson, imputing to certain citizens of Massachusetts, treasonable negotiations with the British government during the war, and expressly stating that he had received information of this from me. On the publication of this letter, I deemed it indispensably due to myself, and to all the citizens of Massachusetts, not only to deny having ever given such information, but all knowledge of such a fact. And the more so, because that letter had been published, though without my knowledge, yet I was well assured, from motives of justice and kindness to me. It contained a declaration by Mr. Jefferson himself, frank, explicit, and true, of the character of the motives of my conduct, in all the transactions of my intercourse with him, during the period of the embargo. This was a point upon which his memory could not deceive him, a point upon which he was the best of witnesses; and his testimony was the more decisive because given at a moment, as it would seem, of great excitement against me upon different views of public policy, even then in conflict and producing great exasperation in his mind. The letter contained also a narrative of a personal interview between himself and me in March 1808, and stated that I had then given him information of facts, which induced him to consent to the substitution of the nonintercourse for the embargo; and that I had apprised him of this treasonable negotiation by citizens of Massachusetts, to secede from the Union during the war, and perhaps rejoin after the peace. Now the substitution of the nonintercourse for the embargo, took place twelve months after this interview, and at a succeeding session of Congress, when I was not even a member of that body. The negotiation for seceding from the Union with a view to rejoin it afterwards, if it ever existed, must have been during the war. I had no knowledge of such negotiation, or even of such a design. I could therefore have given no such information.

But in giving an unqualified denial to this statement of Mr. Jefferson, and showing that upon the face of the letter itself, it could not be correct, it was due to him to show, that the misstatement on his part was not intentional; that it arose from infirmity of memory, which the letter itself candidly acknowledged; that it blended together in one indistinct mass, the information which I had given him in March 1808, with the purport of confidential letters, which I had written to his and my friends in Congress a year after, and with events, projects, and perhaps mere suspicions, natural enough as consequences of the preceding times, but which occurred, if at all, from three to six years later, and of which he could not have had information from me. The simple fact of which I apprized Mr. Jefferson, was, that, in the summer of 1807, about the time of what was sometimes called the affair of the Leopard and Chesapeake, I had seen a letter from the governor of Nova Scotia to a person in Massachusetts, affirming that the British government had certain information of a plan by that of France, to conquer the British possessions and effect a revolution in the United States, by means of a war with Great Britain.