

kennesawor

Massachusetts Centinel, 1787-11-17

Item Type	Image
Citation	Massachusetts Centinel, 1787-11-17, 11/17/1787, Bentley Newspaper Collection, Kennesaw State University Department of Museums, Archives and Rare Books
Rights	The digital reproductions on this site are provided for research consultation and scholarly purposes only. To request permission to publish, reproduce, publicly display, broadcast, or distribute this material in any format outside of fair use please contact the Kennesaw State University Archives.
Download date	2026-05-20 01:26:29
Link to Item	https://soar.kennesaw.edu/handle/11360/7200



FEDERAL CONSTITUTION.

Mr. RUSSELL,

IN the course of the last week the attention of the publick was excited by a letter from the Hon. E. GERRY, to the two branches of the Legislature of this State, containing his reasons for not signing the Constitution for a Federal Government, agreed on by the late august Convention of the States, of which he was a member.

As this Constitution is now under consideration of the citizens of America, for their acceptance and ratification, it is not a little surprising that no one should have stepped forth to counteract the unfavourable, and dangerous impressions this letter is calculated to make upon the minds of the people in general on this all-important subject. Particularly as from the character of Mr. G. as an honest man, and well known friend to his country, there is much reason to believe his suggestions, his fears, and his cautions, may have a much greater influence than in reason they ought, on the minds of many honest men, who really wish well to their country; and from a variety of causes are by no means fully equal to the task of immediately perceiving the excellence of this system; or of discussing a subject of such magnitude, and who from the honesty of their hearts, their zeal for the natural rights of mankind, and a sincere desire of transmitting to posterity a fair inheritance, both of liberty and property, might in the present case too easily allow their judgments to be prejudiced, and consequently give their voice against the complete plan now devised for our political redemption, merely from finding so fair and respectable a character as Mr. G. could not approve of it.—That he approves of by much the greatest part of the Constitution may be gathered from his own words; and that to reject it altogether (which must be the case if it is not accepted) he acknowledges will expose us to the most dismal consequences.

For one moment, my friends and fellow citizens, advert to a few circumstances which will deserve your attention in making up your minds on this serious subject. You will, I doubt not, readily allow that many of you are not so able as you wish you were, to decide at this critical and intertelling period, on what ought to be done in the present affair—but say you, we can safely rely on the knowledge, the honour, and the integrity of Mr. G. With you I admire both his virtues and his abilities;—but of you, I would wish to ask, (not with a view to derogate from Mr. G's character) whether when we call our eyes over the list of the late members of convention, we do not find many, very many characters, equal in every particular of both wisdom, genuine patriotism, honesty, and every other amiable accomplishment, with Mr. G. To mention a WASHINGTON, a FRANKLIN, a MADDISON, a KING and a GORHAM, I think sufficient: And whether, when we observe these worthies have to a man, set their names to, and risked their well established fame on the Federal Constitution, we have not from this circumstance in itself considered, as much reason to be prejudiced in favour of the federal system, and determine to give it our support, as to reject it on the ground of its not comporting in every particular with Mr. G's opinion. Again, when you consider what a vast variety of jarring and opposing interests the Convention had to consult;—how zealous every member must naturally have been, to secure to his particular State as many advantages as possible, and how utterly opposed such a body of honourable characters must necessarily have been to any measure which could in the most distant manner endanger the rights and liberties of this, or any future generation in America;—that they themselves and their posterity, in common with their fellow citizens, and their posterity, must necessarily have been subjected to every inconvenience which could any way result from the regulations to which they have given their sanction;—and at the same time knowing their plan would be critically examined by the politicians of every country: I say, when we consider these and many other particulars which must occur to every one who reflects on the subject; must we not conclude that the reasons in favour of the Constitution, as now proposed to the States, are much more potent and conclusive than any which Mr. G. has to offer in favour of alterations?—And alterations in certain parts is all he pretends to contend for.—His reasons are no doubt per-

fectly satisfactory to himself—but that they were not so to the other worthy and respectable characters of the convention is clear, from their not making the alterations he appears to wish for.—You all know, my countrymen, how easy it is to find fault; and that apparent errors and defects in the constitution of things, most often arise from, and prove the want of, discernment of individuals, than from real defects in the things themselves—this is clearly evinced in many instances in the natural and moral world.

When Mr. G. found himself disposed to suggest that this system was not calculated to secure, but endanger, the liberties of America; methinks he would have done well in recollecting the probability of his judgment failing him in this particular, and that if this event should ever take place, it must arise from the people themselves, who by this constitution will have it forever in their power, if true to themselves, to prevent any body of men from combining against either their liberties or property. Mr. G. should consider, and the people at large I hope will consider, that should his wished for amendments take place, that then there would remain the opinion of the other forty respectable members to combat, before the delegates of the different States could agree in judgment—and that three members refusing to sign, by no means furnishes such evidence of capital defects, as arise in favour of its being as complete as the nature of circumstances would allow, from its having been signed by forty in every respect as honest men, and good judges as the three who seceded.—Again, might not a man of less abilities, more art, and less honest, than Mr. G. cry out at this time, when every man's ears are on the stretch—*beware!—beware!*—you are forging chains for yourselves and children—your liberties are at stake, &c. and would not this cry for a moment spread a general alarm, and with many excite suspicions not easy to be removed? No doubt it would—in that case, those who reflect, would naturally after recovering their first surprize be desirous candidly and cautiously to inquire whether things were really as they were represented, or whether this cry might not have proceeded from causes which rather proved the timidity, and shortsightedness, or perhaps the dishonesty of the alarmer, than the real danger.—If so, why not, in the present case, make a distinction between sounds and things; and if upon a full, fair, unprejudiced attention to the subject, it should appear that we have more to fear from rejecting, than accepting the Constitution, will not reason urge a choice of the least of two evils, even though Mr. G. and many others, should withhold their consent.

Upon the whole, I would observe that upon conversing with those among us possessed of the greatest abilities—with those who are the most anxious to see their beloved country placed upon a respectable footing among the nations of the earth—those who have ever been utterly opposed to any measures which could endanger either the liberties or property of this country, and with those who would sooner lay down their lives than surrender into the hands of any body of men on earth their privileges, either of a civil or religious nature; I find that to a man they agree in the opinion, that in determining the question either for or against the new Constitution, we shall determine one of the most important questions which ever was submitted to the people at large on the subject of government in any age or country.—That the fate of unborn millions is interested in it, and that if the influence of our worst enemies is so great as to lead us to reject it, we shall too late have reason to lament that we were born in a land where the sweets of a free government were ever tasted, or in a country in which from the cradle the citizens are taught to look upon slavery as worse than death, and usurpation more dismal than the grave.

From my heart, let me conjure you, my brethren, to attend carefully to the sentiments and characters of those you may chuse to represent you in the approaching Convention.—Remember there are many snakes in the grass, and that many are hourly avowing sentiments they do not entertain, or which they would support in Convention—and that those who are opposed to the Federal Government are almost to a man, either enemies to the late revolution—friends to tender *aid*, paper money, or hold some place of honour or profit under the present confederation—or that secretly approve

such measures as by involving the States in anarchy and confusion, would free them from debts, many of them have incurred in pursuits disgraceful to humanity. I conclude with advising you not too hastily to make up your minds on the opinions of any, unless of distinguished worth and integrity. ONE OF THE PEOPLE.

Nov. 13, 1787.

CRITICISM.

MR. Noah Webster, jun. in a late Philadelphia news-paper controverting, with Mr. James Kidd, makes the following independent criticism—“You have (he says) quoted a lengthy passage from Dr. Blair, in which he attempts to explain the auxiliary verbs. He says, “Auxiliary verbs are like prepositions, words of a very general and abstract nature.” This, with the whole passage you have transcribed, serves only to show that he did not understand their nature.—However severe this charge against the first critic of the age, yet I pledge myself to prove it. Had Dr. Blair and you, instead of having recourse to Greek, Latin, Hebrew and Arabick for authorities, gone into the ancient Gothick or Teutonic, the origin of our auxiliaries and of the structure of our language, you must have stumbled upon the truth; Dr. Blair would not have written, nor you have quoted so much nonsense about the meaning of the auxiliary verbs. I would therefore inform you, that our auxiliaries, so called, were originally all *principal verbs*, regularly constructed and varied, and no more abstract in their nature, than *love* or *fear*.

This opinion is demonstrated by etymology; and must overthrow every argument you can bring to prove, *should have been loved*, to be a *passive verb*. The phrase is composed of four *principal verbs*, radically distinct, and formerly exhibiting regular infinitives—*sollen, haben* or *han, been loved* or *lufan*. The same remarks will apply to all the auxiliaries. Thus we call *will* go the future tense; but, strictly speaking, it is no more future than *doe* go. *Will*, is a principal verb, in the present time; and the distinction between *will* an auxiliary, and *to will*, is very modern.

I will not go into a particular discussion of the subject: For I am preparing a large treatise for publication, in which I shall produce the authorities on which I found my opinions.”

Detail of ADVICES by Capt. ROBINS, arrived here last Tuesday.

DUTCH POLITICKS.

KING OF PRUSSIA'S DEMANDS.

Utrecht, Sept. 10.



THIS moment we have received intelligence, that a courier from Berlin is arrived at the Hague, who has brought a definitive declaration, according to which, the States of Holland are summoned to render, within four days, complete satisfaction to the Princess; and, in failure, the troops of Prussia are to march upon the territory of the Republick, and enforce this requisition.

The following demands are also contained in this declaration:

1. That the States of Holland abolish and cashier all the armed burgeses of their province, as well as the volunteers.
2. That they immediately, and without delay, re-instate the Prince of Orange in all his rights, prerogatives and privileges, which he enjoyed formerly, and especially the command of the garrison at the Hague.
3. That the States of Holland cashier all the new military corps which they have raised, and that the officers whom they dismissed should be restored to their places.
4. That they shall immediately request the Princess of Orange to return to the Hague, and allow her to be sole mediatrix in reforming certain abuses which have been committed.

We are likewise informed, that as soon as these points were stated, M. Thulemeyer intended to leave the Hague and go to Nimeguen or Berlin; our information goes likewise to say, that these demands were drawn up by the Duke of Brunswick, in concert with the Stadtholder's Court.

In consequence of the above, which was sent to the Grand Pensionary, all the Colleges of the



CASTALIAN FOUNT.

"These are the times that try men's souls"—and he who now espouses the cause of his country, will receive the thanks thereof and of posterity, and the applause of the world.

THE CRISIS.

T'EN now, my Countrymen, before our eyes, At our own option, FAME or RUIN lies. Ye brave COLUMBIANS (if you now can claim, The glorious boon, to bear so great a name), Arouse! Let all that's dear to men inspire Those breasts which once display'd a gen'rous fire; Secure that Empire firm, for which you fought— Which many lives and free-spent treasure bought. Can you soon, in dark oblivion waste Such arduous toils, and ills so lately past? Will you your country into factions break— Bow down your necks—the yoke of bondage take? No! you reply—We'll join in Freedom's cause, To prop her strength, consolidate her laws, And firmly fix her government, to sway 'Till time shall cease, and nature fade away.

AN AMERICAN.

MISCELLANY.

From the (New-York) DAILY ADVERTISER. No. IV.

IBEG that the publick would condescend to observe that Mr. Paul Jones wants to bring to a decision, by news-papers, an affair of honour with me, which might have been terminated, as promised, in Holland, in the year 1779, had he been willing; and had he not, to avoid it then, impeached me with the fallacious charges he has mentioned:—That they may consider his advantages and artful way of writing against a man born a foreigner, not conversant with the language, candid, and unacquainted with the laws, by which he may be entrapped for some unwarly expressions:—That he is not ignorant of my numberless enemies:—That I have in that description, as may appear by the first part of my memorial, his Excellency Benjamin Franklin, and, of course, his party; and, by the second part, the Hon. Arthur Lee, Esq. and likewise his party; whose partizans, of both sides, make the major part of the gentlemen in office in America:—That I wrote a memorial, dated March 25th, 1782, to the Hon. Congress, in which I complained highly of the treatment I had received, in the offices of the Superintendent of the Finances, and in that of Mr. Milligan; and though, by influence against me, the report of the Committee, who examined it, was rejected, I have some reasons to think that these gentlemen bear me no good will:—That the Hon. Rufus King, Esq. who was Chairman of a Committee to report on my memorial, dated the 31st July, 1786, to Congress told me several times in private, that my claim were just; but he would claim the interest of the sums owing to me, for pay, subsistence and advanced money, only from the time I was out of service he would himself make the report, and the other gentlemen of the Committee would assent to it; it would undoubtedly pass in Congress, and I would receive, according to my claim, all in ready money; nevertheles, after I had consented to the great sacrifice of the said interest, for all the time I was in service he told me I could not be paid several sums in ready money, but in certificates, though the same sums were granted and acknowledged to be my credit on account current (which means, I am sensible, to be paid me when I would call for it) by an official letter of the Superintendent of Finances, corroborated by a resolve of Congress on the 6th March, 1782, which approved the steps the Superintendent of Finance had taken, with respect to my accounts:—He deducted likewise a year and a half interest on the gratuity promised me for bringing a cargo of ammunition to America. I begged of him as a favour to be admitted before the Committee, where being, he wanted to put advanced money in Europe to be paid in certificates, particularly the balance of my expenses above the sums I had received to bear them, when ordered to remain in Paris by his Excellency Benjamin Franklin; but the other gentlemen thought and agreed it should be paid in ready money; but Mr. King took a paper and wrote the report whilst the other gentlemen went to Congress, which report gave ground to a Resolve the 2d of June, 1785, by which a law made, by a resolve in the year 1783, to pay officers (in other cases than mine) in certificates, retrospected and annihilated two resolves, favourable to my undeniable demands, passed in 1778 and 1781; by which the amount of my whole pay, and above, being 1814 dollars (allowed as said before, to be paid me in ready money) should be paid in certificates, and which I must totally lose, having no hopes of redress, as I have since repeated my claim unsuccessfully, and am unwilling to

assent to such change in the payment:—That Mr. Paul Jones, by influence, had been sent to Europe (without my knowledge) and kept and enjoyed, since two years, twelve thousand hard dollars of our prize-money which he received there; and though he then remitted the remnant of it to the American Minister in France, by the influence of my enemies here, and particularly in the Treasury Board, I, on the contrary, although I have claimed my share of that money of that Hon. Board, and represented to them that my share was distinct from the rest of the crew, it being two nineteenth parts of that money, I have never received a farthing of it, and I do not know whether, by the preponderance of those enemies, I shall ever receive any; which case makes me shorter of money than Mr. Jones, to bear the expenses of the press: That, by the by-words of my enemies in all the companies I am not known to, which is the greatest part, keeping within a small circle of a few friends, I must have all disadvantages.

I have made these observations, amongst a great many others, to keep the honest, whose approbation only I wish for, upon their guard; I may say, on the whole, if the comparison of rational beings and brutes can be admitted, that I have been as unmercifully used by my enemies, as a country dog is when in town, helpless in the middle of a multitude of the city ones, by whom at last, he is torn to pieces.

P. LANDAIS.

New-York, 1st Nov. 1787.

No. V.

AS there is a letter, in yesterday's Daily Advertiser, of Mr. Milligan, about what happened the 26th ult. between me and Mr. Paul Jones, I beg, as a favour and as a justice, of Mr. Viner Van Zandt, to be so kind as to have his declaration, which he made loudly of his own accord in presence of a great many gentlemen, in the Coffee House, on the 30th ult. printed in this paper, at my own cost; as these news papers will circulate and go in this and foreign countries. I would take it as a further act of his kindness and justice, to give me in writing, certified by him, said declaration.

New-York, Nov. 2, 1787. P. LANDAIS.

No. VI.

STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS-BAY.

In the year of our Lord, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-eight.

An Act for naturalizing Peter Landais, Esq.

WHEREAS Peter Landais, Esq. late of St. Maloes, in the kingdom of France, has left his native country, and has gallantly taken a part with the friends of America, in opposition to the cruel efforts of Great-Britain to subjugate the inhabitants of these United States to its tyrannical authority: And whereas it is just to reward such persons, who have thus voluntarily taken a part in our defence, and expedient to encourage such well-disposed foreigners to join themselves to us:

Be it enacted by the Council and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, That, upon the taking and subscribing the oath of allegiance, appointed by an Act made in the year of our Lord 1777, entitled, "An Act for preferring and establishing an oath of fidelity and allegiance," by the said Peter Landais, he the said Peter Landais shall, from the time of taking and subscribing the said oath before any two of the Members of the Council of this State, be deemed, adjudged and taken to be a natural subject of this State, to all intents, constructions and purposes, as if he the said Peter Landais had been born within this State, and had continued and dwelt therein from the time of his birth, and been here abiding on the fourth day of July, in the year of our Lord 1776, and had at that time, and ever since, taken a part with and been aiding the inhabitants of this State in defence of their liberties.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if the said Peter Landais shall take and subscribe the oath aforesaid, before any two of the Council of this State, the persons, before whom he shall take and subscribe the said oath, shall make return thereof to the Secretary, who shall record the same in a book, to be kept among the publick records of this State, for the purpose of recording the names of such foreigners, as shall be hereafter naturalized by Acts of this State.

In the House of Representatives, Oct. 13th, 1778. This Bill having been read three several times, passed to be enacted. Sent up for concurrence.

JOHN PICKERING, Speaker.

In Council, Oct. 14th, 1778.

This Bill having had two several readings, passed to be enacted. JOHN AVERY, Dep. Sec.

Conferred to by the major part of the Council. True Copy. Attest.

JOHN AVERY, Dep. Sec.

No. VII.

IHAVE had the copy of the act of my naturalization printed above, in order to justify my claiming, as I do claim, hereby, the protection, not only as a man of honour, but also as an American, confidently to the said act, of the impartial Publick, if they judge my future complaints just; as, I am satisfied that I have proved, by my conduct's justifying memorial, that I served you, Americans, as Captain of the Heureux, and after as Captain of the United States Frigate Alliance, sedulously and successfully towards making this a separate, distinguished and glorious nation of Freemen: now being one of the numb. whilst the free press offers me the only resource to shew that I desire and will maintain a Freeman's right, I am going to expose to your judgment, in future news-papers, acts of at least aristocratical oppression, which have been exercised against me; I have great many artful and powerful enemies; but great is the truth, and mighty above all things, and cardinals will always please the honest, which will be my only part, if I can be intelligible enough to be understood.

P. LANDAIS.

New-York, Nov. 6, 1787.

The WEEKLY MONITOR. No. 188.

THOUGHTS ON RELIGION.

EVERY man seeks for truth, but God only knows who has found it. It is unjust to persecute, and absurd to ridicule people for their several opinions, which they cannot help entertaining upon the conviction of their reason. It is he who acts or tells a lie that is guilty, not he who honestly believes the lie. The object of all publick worship in the world is the same, it is that great Eternal Being who created every thing. The different manners of worship are by no means subjects of ridicule, each thinks his own best, and I know no infallible judge in this world to decide which is the best.

Muffs and Tippets.

A QUANTITY of black feathered MUFFS with or without TIPPETS,

By wholesale and retail,

To be SOLD, at No. 60, CORNHILL.

Very CHEAP. Nov. 14. 1787.

Hyson and Bohea Teas.

To be had at the STORE of STEPHEN BRUCE,

No. 28, STATE-STREET,

A Small quantity of fresh Hyson and Bohea TEAS, of a superior Quality.

Boston, Nov. 5, 1787.

BEST superfine Black, Blue, Light-Stone, London-Brown, and Bottle-Green BROADCLOTHS,

to be SOLD, by

Azor G. Archbald,

At his shop in Union-Street. Nov. 7, 1787.

RAISINS.

RAISINS of an excellent quality, to be sold cheap for Cash, by wholesale or retail, at the Sign of the Leopard, Union-Street.

Nov. 14th, 1787.

A Horse.

A HANDSOME, serviceable HORSE, either for saddle or chaise, to be SOLD.—Inquire of the Printer. Nov. 10. 1787.

To be SOLD,

A large, genteel Horse, that goes remarkably well in a carriage, and is suitable for a family Horse. Inquire of the Printer.

To be LET,

A HOUSE in Sudbury-street, having Yard, Out-Houses and pump, with every other accommodation necessary for a family. Inquire of the printer. Nov. 13, 1787.

ALMANACK.

Novem.	Hi. Wa.	Or. & f.	Remarks.
17 Sat.	4 54	7 13 5	
18 Sun.	5 45	7 14 5	24th past Trinity.
19 Mon.	6 36	7 15 5	
20 Tues.	7 27	7 16 5	C. C. P. Lenox. BURIED in town last week 10.—BAPTISED 7.

Published by BENJAMIN RUSSELL, near the State-House, Boston.