

THE JOURNAL.

"ONE COUNTRY, ONE CONSTITUTION, ONE DESTINY."

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TERMS.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

From the Licking Valley (Ky.) Register.
Burr and Blannerhasset.

Much has been said and written on the conspiracy of Aaron Burr, and a diversity of opinion still exists, as to the extent of his designs. The elegant retirement of Blannerhasset, previous to his association with Burr, has also been a theme of eloquence, and a subject of admiration. As I lived near the centre of Burr's operations, and was intimate with the family of Blannerhasset, many acts came under my observation which perhaps are not generally known. I therefore comply with your request, by detailing circumstances which were familiar to me at that period.

With reference to Burr's conspiracy, I have never doubted the fact, that his first object was a separation of the States, and the establishment of "an energetic government" including our north-west and southern territories. This intention was clearly manifested by a series of publications over the signature of "QUERIST" in the "Ohio Gazette," a paper then printed at Marietta by one Fairbank.

Those numbers held forth all the arguments that could be urged, to induce the withdrawal of the west and south from the old States. Burr furnished the leading points. Blannerhasset wrote them out, and attended to their publication. The first number was read to the printer by Blannerhasset at my father's house, and in presence of several of the family. After the printer had retired, my father made a strong appeal to Mr. B. on the folly and danger of such an enterprise; reminding him of his narrow escape from the troubles of Ireland, of the happy for of government he then enjoyed, and of his delightful situation at the Island, surrounded by all the sources of earthly bliss.—Mr. B. was disconcerted; he acknowledged his obligations for my father's friendly motives, but attributed their different views to the different age. My father indignantly replied that he had fought for the government under which he had lived, that he loved it as the apple of his eye, and that treason against it could not be concerted under his roof. Mr. B. politely withdrew, took up his quarters at a public house, and never made his home with us afterwards. But number after number of the "QUERIST" came before the people, holding forth the possession of the public lands, with all their mineral productions—the great agricultural prospects of the west—the vast navigable waters—the occupation of New Orleans as a commercial emporium, and various other arguments in favor of a separate Government. A day was also appointed to hold a convention at the Island.

But the plans of Burr were not confined to a separation of the States; he knew his project might fail, and the establishment of an empire in the Mexican country, was his alternative. A number of bateaux or row-galleys were prepared on the Muskingum river, and probably at some other points, with which he intended a rapid descent on New Orleans, or to ascend the Red river toward Mexico, as circumstances might require. Numbers of restless and desperate spirits were enlisted in his visionary schemes, from Pittsburgh to New Orleans, but the mass of the western people were attached to their government, and their connections east of the mountains. If the convention had assembled at the Island, the inhabitants of the neighborhood were prepared to disperse them with force and arms. The convention failed; and when a party attempted to escape with boats, they were prevented by the Matilda, under a special law of Ohio, passed for the occasion, with closed doors. But there were traitors in that Legislature—in Congress—and in the army of the United States.

Burr met in council with a fragment of his followers, on an Island in the Mississippi, where his scheme was abandoned. He fled in disguise but was arrested, tried at the city of Richmond, and acquitted by a quirk of the law. Blannerhasset and other associates were discharged. His family, servants and furniture having descended the river to Natchez, he located himself on a cotton farm in that vicinity. The embargo and the war which followed, defeated his expectations; he became embarrassed; his fortune having been impaired

by his liabilities for Burr. Under the prospect of a civil appointment of Lower Canada, he removed to Montreal, but his friend, the Governor, being removed, he was again disappointed, and retired at last to the Island of Jersey, in the British channel, where his maiden sister resided, a lady of fortune. There he died, the victim of a romantic and visionary mind. Blannerhasset was an Irish nobleman, a man of science, and a polished gentleman. He excelled in the composition and performance of music, his instruments were the violin and the bass-viol, both of which he used in the manner of the bass. His spacious hall was constructed in musical proportions, where the tones of his viol vibrated with thrilling effect. His library was elegant and extensive, his laboratory was provided with abundant apparatus for chemical and philosophical experiments, and his house and grounds were furnished with various means of winter and summer amusements. The mansion with its corridor and wings formed half an ellipsis, and the finish and furniture of its apartments were adapted to the use for which they were intended. The hall was a spacious lofty room, its walls painted a sombre color, and its furniture rich, heavy and grand. The drawing room was in perfect contrast, and its decorations light as a Fairy's wing. In short, the whole establishment was noble and genteel, without the glare of tinsel finery, or the inconsistency of bad taste. His style of living was in unison with his house and furniture, always elegant, easy and comfortable. The arrangement of the ground was equally complete, the famous shrubbery was a mimic wilderness, with labyrinth walks bordered with flowers; and interspersed with arbors and grottos. The extensive pasture in front with its flocks and herds, was separated from the lawn by an invisible fence; and the view up the Ohio was unobstructed for several miles. But the whole scene requires the pen of a poet. The description of Wirt is nearer the reality than is generally believed, and his sketch of Mrs. Blannerhasset is equally true to nature. She was a beautiful and accomplished lady, of dignified appearance and manners; affable, friendly, and without the least affectation, yet with all her elegance she was a notable house-wife, and devoted to her needle, not in the production of flowers and frounces, but of garments for her children and servants. The miserable slanders which have been reported of her, are without the least foundation. Burr did not seduce Blannerhasset, through the medium of his wife, as has often been stated, his only visit to the Island did not exceed three days, and no woman of Mrs. B.'s mind and character, could be corrupted so by a brief acquaintance. Blannerhasset was an open and unregarded man, easily imposed upon, and enthusiastic in all his impulses. Burr enticed him in the most artful and insidious manner. Descending the river in a bateaux, he landed as a passing stranger merely to see and admire the far-famed Island. Mr. Blannerhasset hearing that a stranger was on his lawn, sent a servant to invite him to the house; the wily serpent sent his card with an apology, but Mr. B. with his usual hospitality, walked out and insisted on his remaining a day or two. Burr very quietly acquiesced, and during that unfortunate interview, infused the poison of ambition into the unwary mind of his visionary host. Mrs. B. endeavored to dissuade her husband from the enterprise, but finding his soul enlisted in it, her sense of duty compelled her to acquiesce in his views, which resulted in the ruin of his family.

"Years have gone by, and the tale at last, is told as a sorrowful scene long past."

The steamboat passenger looks on the deserted Island for some vestige of its former embellishment, but he looks in vain. The mansion was destroyed by fire, its beautiful appendages are obliterated, its hospitality, the soul of music, and the refinement of taste and intellect, have all departed. On my last visit to the scene of many happy hours, the only memento of my early associations I could find, was "R. W. 1805," carved on the bark of an old beach tree.

"I felt like one who treads along,
Some banquet hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled, whose garlands gone,
And all but he departed."

Frightful snake story.

The following incident was related to me the other day, by one whose veracity is unquestioned, and who was almost an eye witness to the fact. It is more appalling than any we recollect to have ever read in the history of these terrible reptiles.

Some time last summer, the inhabitants of Manchester, Mississippi, gave a barbecue, which was attended by the beauty and fashion of the town and surrounding country. It happened that among the guests there was a young lady, Miss M., recently from one of the eastern cities,

who was on a visit to her relations in the neighborhood of the town. Miss M. was a gay and exceedingly fashionable young lady, and withal possessed of an uncommon share of spirit and courage except in the matter of snakes—and of these she had so great a dread, that she scarcely dared to walk any where except in the most frequented places, for fear of encountering them. Every effort was used, but without avail, to rid her of her childish fears. They haunted her continually, until at last it became the settled conviction of her mind that she was destined to fall a victim to the fangs of a rattle snake. The sequel will soon show her terrible presentment was fulfilled.

Towards the close of the day, while scores of fairy feet were keeping time in the dance to the merry music, and the whole company were in the full tide of enjoyment, a scream was heard from Miss M., followed by the most agonizing cries for help. The crowd gathered around her instantly, the perfect image of despair, with here hands grasping a portion of her dress with the tenacity of a vice. It was some time before she could be rendered sufficiently calm to tell the cause of her alarm, and then they gathered from her broken exclamations, that she was holding the head of a snake among the folds of her dress, and dreaded to let go her hold for fear of receiving the fatal blow! This intelligence caused many to shrink from her, but most of the ladies, to their honor be it spoken, remained with her, determined not to leave her in her direful extremity. They besought her not to relax her hold, as her safety depended on it, until some one could be found who had the courage to seize and remove the terrible animal. There were none of the ladies, however, who had the courage to perform the act, and the condition of Miss M. was becoming more and more critical every moment. It was evident that her strength was failing very fast, and that she could not maintain her hold many minutes longer.

A hasty consultation among the calmest of the ladies was held, when it was determined that Dr. Tisan, who was present, should be called to their assistance. He was quickly on the spot, and being a man of uncommon courage, he was not many minutes within the circle of weeping and half fainting females, until he caught the tail of the snake, and wound it firmly round his hand to make sure of his hold. He then told Miss M. that she must let go the moment he jerked it away and to make the act as instantaneous as possible, he told her he would pronounce the words one, two, three, and that, at the moment he pronounced the last word she must let go her hold, and he doubted not he could withdraw the snake, before it could make the strike. All stood in breathless horror, awaiting the act of life and death and at the moment the word three was pronounced, the Doctor pulled out the most diabolical looking **BUSTLE** that ever was seen in Mississippi! The whole affair was at once explained. The fastenings of the machine had become loose during the dancing, and it had shifted its position in such a way that it dangled about the lady's legs, and induced the belief that it was a snake with an enormous head!

The Doctor fell right down in his tracks and fainted.—*Han. Jour.*

Letter of Hon. James Cooper. Relative to Hon. W. COST JOHNSON'S plan in aid of the States.

WASHINGTON January 11, 1843.

DEAR SIR:—The present embarrassed condition of the country almost necessarily induces every body to look round for a remedy for the evils of the times. The people, suffering all the embarrassments which result from the great indebtedness of the States, as well as the evil of a bad, at the same time, restricted circulating medium, begin to manifest dissatisfaction that some measure is not adopted for their relief. They find it difficult to believe that a country enjoying profound peace, abounding in all the elements of wealth, prosperity and greatness, should be hopelessly prostrate, without power in the government to provide a remedy. A rage for internal improvement, similar to that which involved Pennsylvania so deeply in debt, has been experienced by other States both in its influences and consequences. The embarrassment and distress of the people, resulting from the enormous debts of the States, and the vitiated condition and scarcity of the currency, have hardly a parallel in the past history of the country. The load of taxes, imposed on the people to pay the interest on the immense debt contracted by the States, is not only embarrassing, but threatens us with a worse misfortune in the loss of the national honor. The payment of heavy taxes in times like the present, when money was scarce and all agricultural productions of the country greatly depreciated in price, is so difficult and oppressive, that it is to be feared, a remedy will alter a while be sought for the

evils endured by the people, in repudiation by the States.* This is the dangerous tendency of the spirit of the times and should be resisted by the adoption of such measures as will remove the cause of the apprehended evil. The infamy will attach to us as a nation, if any of the States should refuse to pay their debts; will be esteemed by every patriotic citizen as the heaviest misfortune which can befall us.—To relieve the people, and thereby prevent the occurrence of such deep national disgrace as will follow the refusal of the States to pay their debts, should be the anxious care of all those who occupy positions which may enable them to contribute to an object so desirable. But how is this relief to be afforded? Is the question which is naturally suggested.

By the act of Congress, passed the 4th day of September 1841, the proceeds of the sales of the public lands were to be distributed among the several States, in proportion to their representation in the House of Representatives. This act contemplated a semi-annual distribution of the proceeds of the public lands—but in the embarrassed condition of the country, the quantity of land sold was small, and the amount for distribution so inconsiderable as to afford but little relief to the States in their pressing exigencies, even had the act remained in force. An extension, however, of the principle of this act would afford immediate and effectual relief—and a measure having this object in view was brought before Congress at its last Session by Mr. W. Cost Johnson of Maryland; a somewhat similar one having been proposed by Mr. Meredith P. Gentry, of Tennessee, as early as 1840.

The measure proposed by Mr. Johnson, contemplates an issue of stock by the national government to the amount of \$200,000,000, to be distributed among the States, in proportion to their representation in Congress; and it provides that the proceeds of the sales of the public lands shall go into the treasury of the United States and constitute a fund for the redemption of the stock proposed to be created. It will be perceived that this is but an extension of the principle of the late act, which provided for a semi-annual distribution of the proceeds of the sales of the public lands among the States. This measure proposes, that in anticipation of the receipt of the proceeds of such sales, the national government shall give to the States, presently, in the form of stock, what they would only have received under the late law in a long series of years, and in consideration of this, the States are to relinquish to the general government, the proceeds of the public lands until the stock issued by it shall have been redeemed. The exigency of the times is pressing. Something must be done for the restoration of the prosperity of the people and the preservation of the faith and credit of the States. This measure promises to effect these objects, both of which are so desirable; and in the present conjuncture of affairs there is no other, in my judgment which can be relied on, to afford such extensive, effectual relief as the country requires.

This measure does not contemplate, as is generally supposed, an unequalled assumption of the debts of the States by the general government, but only that the latter shall lend to the former the benefit of its credit for a full equivalent. But if an assumption of the debts of the States were intended, there would be found both precedent and authority of great names to vindicate it. In 1790 Congress did assume the debts of the States—and Mr. Jefferson, as I am informed, was in favor of the measure.

In claiming the aid of the general government, the States are not seeking a gratuity. They demand but an equivalent for what they have done for the nation—an equivalent which will cost the nation nothing but the loan of its credit until the proceeds of the public lands shall have redeemed the stock proposed to be issued. The works, the cost of which has so deeply involved the States, have all contributed to that common good, the wealth and power of the whole country. Every spade full of earth which has been dug from our canals; every foot of railroad which has been constructed, has gone to swell the general prosperity of the U. S. by opening up ways to its inexhaustible resources and facilities of communication between its different sections. What would the country have been, in comparison to what it is, were it not for the improvements constructed by the States? It is the canals and railroads, and other improvements de-

* This, to some extent, has already been the case with the States of Mississippi, Indiana and Illinois; but it is to be hoped, for credit of these States, and the honor of the country of which they form a part, that their refusal to pay their debts was rather the result of inability to pay them, than of a fraudulent determination to cheat their creditors.

If this charitable construction be correct, the measure which is the subject of this letter, will enable them to redeem their character as far as that is now possible.

signed and completed by the States out of their own means, which constitute the glory of the country in peace, and which will prove its strength and security in war, should it ever be visited by such a calamity. And when the States have crippled themselves and embarrassed their citizens by works of common utility, shall the nation deny them its aid, when such aid may be furnished without detriment of the general welfare? Nay, the aid which they ask is such as will be advantageous to the general government in restoring its credit, as it will be to the States and the people in relieving them from their embarrassments. The national credit has received a severe shock, abroad, from the failure of several of the States to pay the interest on their foreign loans. Being but imperfectly acquainted in Europe, with the peculiar form of our Government, the default of the States in meeting their engagements, have effected the credit of the United States to such an extent that we are looked upon as but little better than a community of swindlers among whom obligations of good faith are unknown. This opinion so derogatory to our national character prevails so far, that those European houses who have been the guarantors of our State credit have been in danger of being destroyed by mobs and riots. This measure promises not only to afford relief to the people, but will serve materially, to re-establish our credit in Europe, and save the nation from indelible disgrace which will surely follow repudiation on the part of the States; a disgrace which, if once attached, will cleave to the character of the whole country forever. If this measure does nothing more than save us from the stain of bad faith, which twenty centuries have not washed from the name of Carthage—it should be supported by every man who feels a proper regard for the character of his country and its institutions.

But, let us enquire, what is to be objected to in this measure? It will hardly be alleged by those who were the advocates of the late Distribution law, that Congress does not possess the power to afford the aid contemplated by this measure, and so imperatively required by the condition of the States. This measure but proposes to extend the principles of that law without changing it. But in addition to this, it has already been shown that Congress, by the direct assumption of the State Debt in 1790, exercised a power involving all that is required in the adoption of the present measure.

The argument urged against this measure with the greatest effect, is the expediency of involving the General Government in a large debt for the benefit of the States. This argument is not well considered, inasmuch as it presupposes that the people of the U. States are not the same. If it be conceded that this measure will benefit the people of the States, enough is conceded, not only to justify, but to require its adoption. The object of all governments is, or at least should be, the welfare of the people. But the adoption of this measure will not materially increase the debt of the country; it proposes rather to change the manner, and vary the means of paying the existing debt, than to create a new one; and in this change of manner and variation of means, consists the benefit of the measure. If the existing debts are to be paid by the States, the money to pay them must be drawn from the pockets of the people by direct taxation. But if the General Government should undertake to pay them, the means may be raised by the imposition of duties upon foreign goods; and these duties, instead of being oppressive to the people, by judicious discrimination in levying them, may be rendered instrumental in its prosperity. Indeed it is no slight reason for the adoption of this measure, that its tendency will be to render the Tariff permanent, by withdrawing the fluctuating amount of the proceeds of the sales of the Public Lands from the objects to which it is now applied—leaving the ordinary expenses of the Government to be paid out of its ordinary revenue.

I have stated that the argument most frequently urged against this measure, is the expediency of involving the General Government in embarrassments. Those, however, who are acquainted with the past financial history of the country, will not feel any apprehension on this score. In 1815, when the population was less than eight millions, the public debt exceeded \$125,500,000. The resources of the country at this period, were less than half what they are at present; and the surplus revenue accumulating in the treasury, became a matter of greater inconvenience than ever the debt had been. The population of the country has increased since 1815, from less than eight to more than eighteen millions—and the resources and available wealth of the country have increased in a greater ratio. What real difficulty then, in view of these facts, is to be apprehended from a debt of \$200,000,000? A debt of this magnitude would be very formidable to the States, and its payment difficult and highly oppressive; but

to the United States, in comparison, it would be nothing. By the former it would have to be paid, as before stated, by a resort to direct taxation; the latter can pay it by a well regulated tariff of duties, not only without oppression, but with advantage to the great agricultural, manufacturing and mechanical interests of the country.

I have thus briefly stated some of the reasons which recommend this measure. There are others but little less cogent—One of the great evils of the times is party violence, which discovers itself in hostility to measures on account of their authors, without regard to their intrinsic merits. As soon as a measure become identified with a particular party, from its parentage or otherwise, the adverse party arrays itself in opposition to it. Such has been the experience of the country for years past; great is its experience at the present moment. The late distribution law, aside from party, could hardly have failed to commend itself to general favor; but becoming identified with its great author, the whole of a powerful party was arrayed against it. The measure now proposed, has not yet encountered either the favor or the hostility of party; and I trust it will not. The condition of the country requires that some measures of relief should be adopted; and the interests which are staked on this are of too great magnitude to be sacrificed at the shrine of party prejudice. If this measure be such as its friends regard it, let the people embrace it. Let them not be driven from its support because this or that party has refused it its countenance. Can the people of our State, in view of its condition, suffer party spirit to mislead them so far as to cause them to reject the means of relief which it proffers?

Pennsylvania is involved in a debt of nearly \$40,000,000. The interest of this immense sum, amounting to \$2,000,000 annually, can only be raised by a resort to direct taxation. Already the people are overwhelmed with the weight of their burthens, with nothing but the hope of relief renders tolerable. The payment of the interest alone without any attempt to extinguish the principal presently, or remotely, swallows up the fruits of their industry. This measure promises relief. Of the \$200,000,000 of stock to be issued by the general government, for distribution among the States in the manner proposed, the share of Pennsylvania would exceed \$20,000,000. This would at once extinguish the half of the debt, when the balance would become manageable and be brought within the reach of remedy by State legislation.

But bad as is the condition of Pennsylvania, it is not worse than many of the other States. Subjoined is a statement of the debts due by the several States:

ABSTRACT.

Statement of the debts of the several States, Territories, and District cities of Columbia, as reported to Congress by the Secretary of the Treasury, June 25, 1842:

	Amount outstanding and unredeemed.
Main	
Massachusetts	\$ 5,424,137 00
Pennsylvania	40,000,000 00
Maryland	15,214,761 49
City of Washington	817,920 00
Alexandria, D. C.	885,100 00
Georgetown, D. C.	116,010 00
Virginia	4,037,200 63
South Carolina	3,691,234 41
Georgia	606,750 00
Alabama	15,400,000 00
Louisiana	23,985,000 00
Mississippi	7,000,000 00
Kentucky	3,085,500 00
Michigan	561,000 00
Ohio	10,924,123 00
Indiana	12,751,000 00
Illinois	13,527,272 53
Missouri	842,261 60
New York	22,539,733 91
Tennessee	3,398,166 00
	\$189,774,189 97

From a glance at the above table, it will be seen that many of the States are as deeply involved, in proportion to their means, as our own; and some of them are more so. The adoption of this measure will, in my judgment relieve them, at least in a great degree. It will mitigate the burthen of taxation; restore the credit of the States and the United States, at home and abroad; renovate business, and revive the perishing prosperity of the country. I have thus hastily in a desultory way, thrown together my views on this important subject. My object is to draw public attention to the measure. If I accomplish this I shall think I have done some good.

Very respectfully
Your friend and
Obedt Servant,
JAMES COOPER.

Geo. DARRIE, Esq.
Art may win applause, but merit only can retain it.