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James Madison

THE
REPUBLICAN CRISIS,

&c. &c. &c.

THE
REPUBLICAN CRISIS:

OR, AN

EXPOSITION OF THE POLITICAL JESUITISM

OF

JAMES MADISON,

President of the United States of America.

BY AN OBSERVANT CITIZEN OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

ALEXANDRIA:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

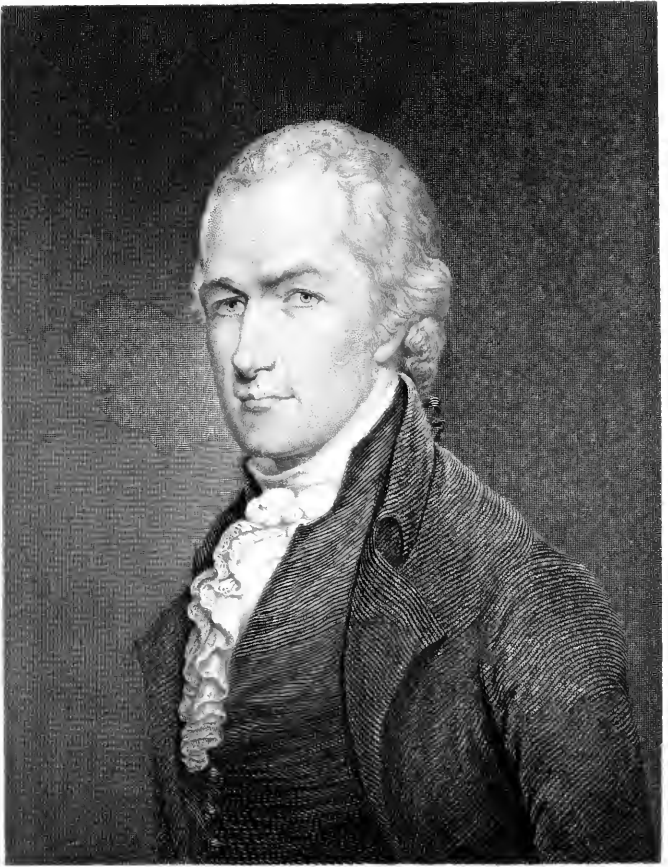
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1812.

THE
REPUBLICAN CRISIS, &c. &c.



NATIONS, like individuals, are liable to diseases of various kinds; and all diseases are subject to a crisis, or critical moment, when a change must take place, either for restoration or dissolution: to such a state as this is the United States, at this truly awful moment, reduced, by the drivelling policy and imbecile judgment of a man, of whose talents and political integrity the good people of these states have formed a most erroneous estimate. It therefore behoves us to fathom to the bottom the depth of the abyss into which we have been drawn, and the source of the vortex which has involved us in so perilous a situation, that the weak contrivers of it are at a loss how to steer the vessel of state clear of the rocks and shoals in which their own imbecile policy and pernicious

councils have entangled us, at the present tempestuous moment. Every observant member of the community must have perceived the crooked and weak policy of Mr. Madison's administration for some time past; more especially during the last and present sessions of congress. But to what an awful crisis are we reduced!—How little do the patriots of our country seem to attend!—What, I would ask, in the name of common sense, is the cause of this apparent apathy in our patriotic citizens at so eventful a period as the present, but a false reliance on the supposed abilities and integrity of the man who now fills the presidential chair? It therefore becomes the painful duty of the writer, who cannot possibly have a single sinister motive in so doing, to develop a scene of political turpitude and depravity over which he has long mourned in secret, and which has occasioned all our interior distractions, and exterior difficulties. The ears of many honest well meaning citizens will undoubtedly be shocked to hear the name of James Madison mentioned as the author of all the evils complained of; but the salvation of the republic sternly requires it, and the following just



ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

A Hamilton

and faithful sketch of his political conduct, from the moment of his appointment to the office of secretary of state of the United States to the present day, must convince every impartial citizen who feels the least interest in the welfare of this country, and in the perpetuation of its most happy system of government, that the removal of Mr. Madison from the helm of state, and the substitution of a more able, honest, and efficient pilot, can alone save the republic from destruction, and the nation from ruin!

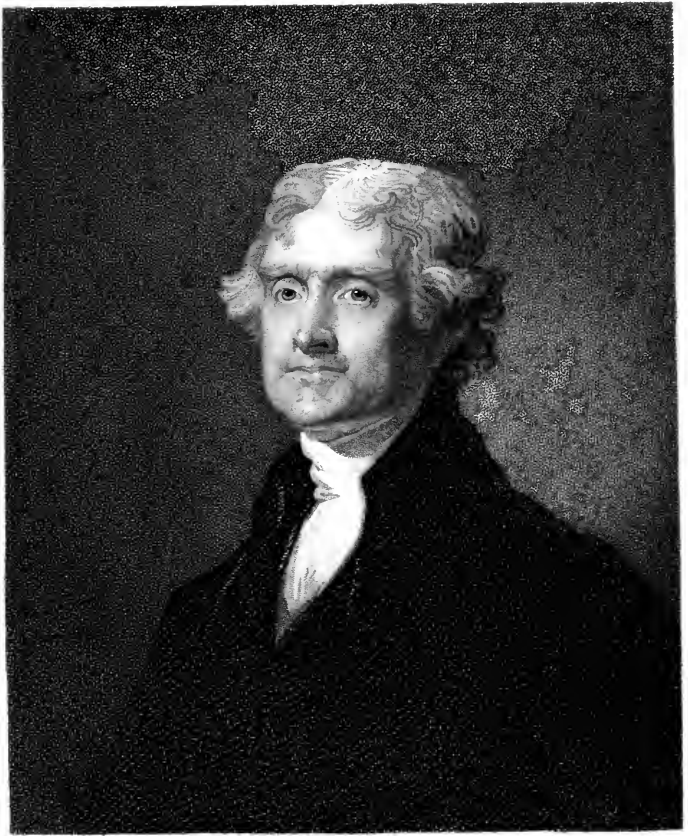
That Mr. Madison was never a sincere friend to the republican cause, can be evidenced from numerous facts ; and facts are stubborn things, unfortunately for this pseudo-republican! That he ever gained credit with the republican party, as a person attached to their principles, has been always a matter of surprise, and often of disgust, to the writer. Let us see then upon what this gentleman founds his claim to their confidence.

From being the bosom friend of the late Alexander Hamilton, and concurring in most of his po-

litical views, a small aberration therefrom was too lightly received by the nation as an evidence of a more patriotic feeling, than his former coincidence with the political views of that gentleman seemed to evince: this was his opposition to the establishment of the Bank of the United States, some twenty years ago. But what has he done for the promotion of republican principles, or the conservation of the great whig cause of our country, during the long interval which elapsed between that important era, and the period of Mr. Jefferson's election to the presidency? The whole sum of his services in the cause amounted to his writing a pamphlet, showing the unconstitutionality of some acts of the general government, in unison with his opposition to the banking system; and if he had ever any real bias toward the republican interest, it was completely annihilated in his mind by his intermarriage with Mrs. Pain, a lady of tory principles, now Mrs. Madison: such is the effect of female influence on men of weak minds! What was his conduct on the first great occasion which presented itself for the display of patriotism, and the exercise of principle, subsequent to the



D. P. Madison

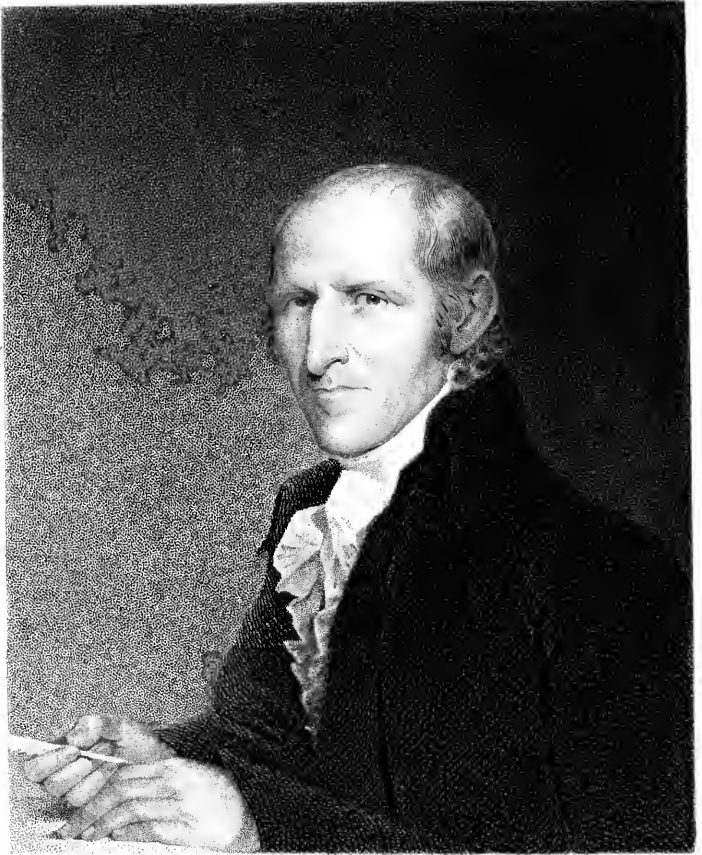


Th. Jefferson

establishment of the federal constitution? During the administration of Mr. Adams, which has been emphatically denominated the reign of terror, from the persecutions which were set on foot against the republican party, by the faction which then governed the country, and their proscription of the republican principle itself, Mr. Madison cautiously avoided all interference, and completely abstracted himself from public life, by retiring to the mountains of Virginia, where he remained in quiet, until the storm which had raged against the system of republican government was past, and the legitimate sons of Columbia had triumphantly placed their favourite sage, Mr. Jefferson, in the presidential chair. This great man, with all his perspicacity and political wisdom, was not able to fathom the jesuitical disposition of Mr. Madison, who had imposed upon his honest credulity by feigned professions of patriotism and republican virtue, insomuch, that the first act of Mr. Jefferson, after his inauguration, was the appointment of Mr. Madison to the highest office under the government, namely, that of secretary of state of the United States. It becomes now our business to

examine into his conduct in that important station, and to trace his career thence to the presidency, and down to the present era.

Mr. Madison, thus brought forth from his safe retreat, on commencing his ministerial functions, found all the offices under the general government exclusively in the possession of federalists and tories. But notwithstanding that the nation had audibly declared, that a change was absolutely necessary, not merely in the high elective offices of the government, but also of those in its disposal, yet, in defiance of the policy which both duty and interest required, that a large portion of the republicans should participate in the minor, as well as the greater offices, Mr. Madison suffered the incumbents which he found in office to remain there, and took some of them into his most intimate confidence, particularly those who had avowed themselves the most hostile to the republican interest, through whom all the wise policy and plans of Mr. Jefferson, for the preservation of our national rights, and the perpetuation of free republican government, in these United States, were betrayed



Wickering.

to the most inveterate enemies of both!—It is sufficient to mention Mr. Jacob Wagner, whom he retained as chief clerk in the office of secretary of state, which afforded him free access to all the secrets of the administration. Let it be recollected, that this man was, and always has been, the bosom friend of the noted Timothy Pickering, chief of the terrorist administration; and that he was then in close correspondence with him, whilst Mr. Madison made him the repository of the full confidence of the administration. Hence the abortion of its wisest measures. And at this moment Mr. Wagner is proprietor of a paper in Baltimore, entitled *The Federal Republican*, which displays more virulent hostility to our national rights, and to the republican cause, than all the tory papers in the United States collectively.

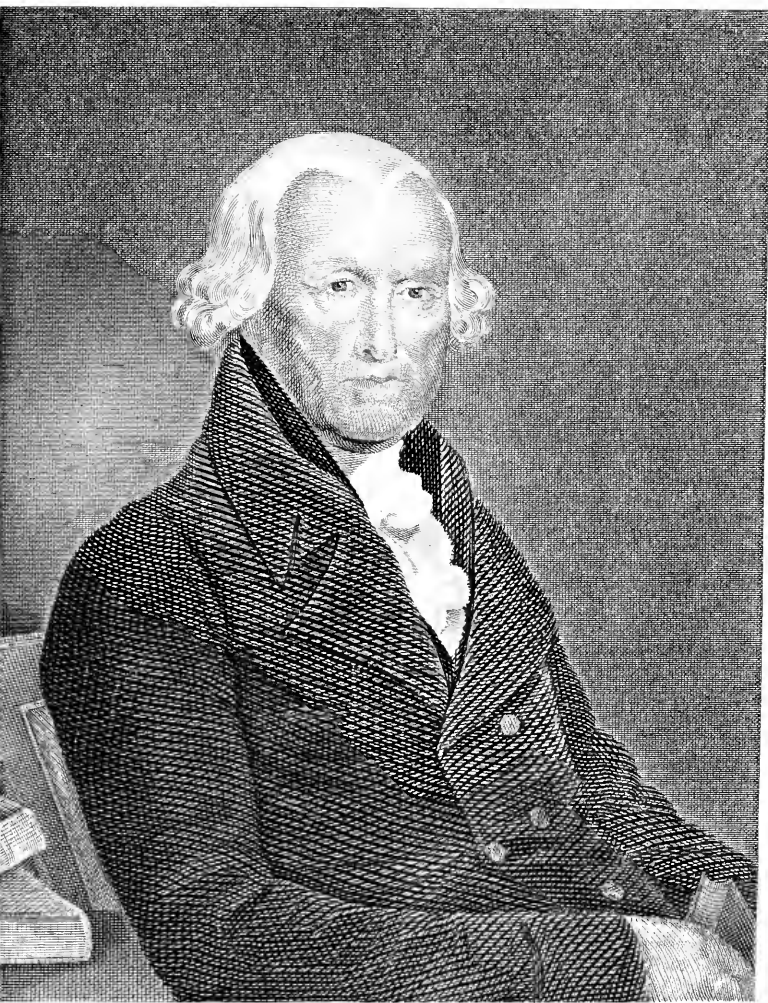
Mr. Madison, not content with retaining such men as Wagner in office; as if to display an open hostility to the republican cause, selected two of its most rancorous enemies as additional clerks in the office: one of whom was Mr. Forest, whose midnight appointment to the magistracy of the city of

Washington by Mr. Adams, on the eve of his going out of office, was rejected by Mr. Jefferson, on account of his known hostility to the republican cause. The other of these newly adopted favourites, in virtue of their hostility to republican principles, was Mr. J. C. King, of whom and his colleague anon.

At this time the clerks in the office of the secretary of state were all violent federalists, with one solitary exception, and Mr. Madison chose for his intimate associates the most strenuous opponents of the republican cause from amongst them: such were Jacob Wagner, Richard Forest, and Doctor Thornton! In fact, his whole deportment towards the republicans in the District of Columbia was generally so repulsive, that it was obvious his prejudices were against that party, and his predilections in favour of the federalists and tories: and notwithstanding his apparent acquiescence in the great and leading measures of Mr. Jefferson, whom he early conceived the desire of supplanting in the government, he often secretly counteracted them by an ambi-dexterous policy, which frequently

defeated the best conceived measures of that able statesman, and tended to prolong and aggravate our national difficulties. The early part of Mr. Jefferson's administration was marked by the strong features of his great mind; and, until thwarted by the counter current of his chief secretary's cunning contrivances, might be said to be in the full tide of successful efficacy. Such was that cardinal measure of his administration, the *embargo*; when an extraordinary and equally unexampled stroke of perfidy or weakness on the part of the secretary of state, and his colleague, the secretary of the treasury, defeated its great effect, and rendered our government and country the sport of the wily cabinet of St. James, which found, in the weakness or wickedness of our own ministers, an easy method of averting its powerful effects, at a moment when the wisdom of that great measure began to be manifest, by its heavy pressure upon the commerce of Great-Britain, and upon the wants of her people.—The necessaries of life become scarce, and famine staring them in the face, supplies of the materials for navigation and manufactures cut off, their European commerce

annihilated, and that with America wholly suspended—this order of things naturally produced great agitation in the public mind, and tumultuous assemblages of the people began to abound throughout the kingdom, so as to become very alarming to the government, and induce a belief that they would be compelled, by our firm perseverance in the judicious attitude we had assumed, to revoke their unjust orders in council, and change their hostile measures towards us, for those of a more amicable character. It is not denied that so bold and novel a measure as a long continued embargo, in a commercial country like ours, was necessarily attended with some inconvenience to ourselves; but there cannot be a doubt, that the patriotism and good sense of our citizens would have reconciled them to the temporary privations which they suffered, until the measure which occasioned them had produced the desired effect: more especially, as they well knew that these inconveniences were of light consideration contrasted with the evils attendant on war, or the more direful alternative of national disgrace and thralldom, in the surrender of those rights and that in-



dependence which our fathers had sealed with their blood: and, notwithstanding that the machinations of the emissaries of Great-Britain had produced symptoms of disaffection in some of the eastern states, I am persuaded there was sufficient virtue and patriotism amongst the great body of the citizens of these states, to have crushed any traitorous attempts of the British faction, had they dared to proceed to overt acts of opposition to the measures of the general government; a fact which is sufficiently exemplified by the correspondence of the spy Henry, with the governor general of the Canadas. At this critical conjuncture of our relations with Great-Britain, and when it had been ascertained that Mr. Madison's intrigues for the succession to the next presidency had succeeded, contrary to every principle of public duty and propriety, as well as to the dictates of honour and sound policy, did he authorize Mr. Gallatin, the secretary of the treasury, whom he had determined to retain in office under his own administration, to open a secret negotiation with Mr. Erskine, the British minister, which should be ratified immediately after his inauguration! The terms of the

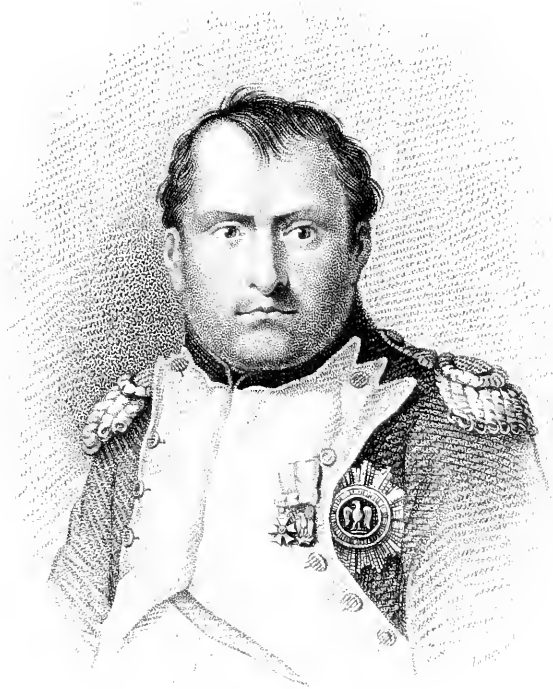
compromise which this injudicious procedure led to, have been long since exposed to public view, by the publication of the famous documents laid before the British parliament, containing the correspondence between Mr. Canning, the British secretary of state for foreign affairs, and Mr. Erskine, the envoy of that government to the United States; by which it has been seen, that an abandonment of some of our essential rights was proposed, together with a relinquishment of the embargo system. At this conference, an odious contrast was drawn between the political characters of the then president and the president elect. Mr. Jefferson was represented as actuated by unjust prejudices and prepossessions; and as being entirely hostile to England, and devoted to France; whilst Mr. Madison was portrayed as the admirer of the British political system, partial to England, and attached to her interests, and at the same time inimical to those of France. To evince the sincerity of those assurances, the faith of Mr. Madison was pledged that he would, as one of the first measures of his administration, cause an act of congress to be passed, placing the two great belli-

gerents on an equal footing with respect to their relations with the United States. (It will be recollected that at that time the ships of Great-Britain were interdicted from our ports and harbours, and those of France were permitted to enter them.) To the weakness and wickedness of this wretched, bungling transaction, we owe most of the national evils which we have endured ever since, and most certainly the prolongation of them all. Let us therefore examine the policy and justness of it as it respects our relations with these contending powers, at that period.

It is admitted that France had committed many injurious acts upon our commerce, and her Berlin and Milan decrees were gross violations of our neutral rights, although she avowed the exception of their operation against us, in the event of our defending these rights against the aggressions of her enemy. Great-Britain, on the other hand, had not only invaded our neutral rights, but her general conduct towards us was atrocious in the extreme. She not only captured our merchant vessels upon the high seas, but, in the

mouths of our own ports and harbours, she interrupted our lawful coasting trade, impressed our seamen, and incarcerated them in her floating prisons, there compelling them to aid in the diabolical work of murdering and plundering their own fellow citizens; and when their feelings revolted at such enormities, flogging them almost to death for refusing to obey their arbitrary orders. To crown all her other atrocities, Great-Britain most grossly insulted our government, and outraged the feelings of the nation, by a perfidious and murderous attack upon one of our frigates in the bosom of our own waters, while peaceably proceeding on a public mission!—Several of our fellow citizens were butchered in cold blood by this unexpected act of violence, and others of them kidnapped to abide a more ignominious fate, by a mock trial for pretended desertion.

Such was our situation in regard to France and Great-Britain at the moment when Mr. Madison procured the passing of the act for placing these powers on a footing in their relations with the United States. It may be seen, by recurring to



the debates in congress on that bill, that the members could not comprehend its meaning, or see into the propriety of the measure; and it was ultimately passed with reluctance, merely through executive influence.

As soon as it was known in France, that England and that country were placed on a footing in their relations with the United States, the impetuosity of Bonaparte's temper hurried him into the infamous Rambouillet decree, by which he seized and confiscated all the property of our citizens which he could find on the continent of Europe, whilst his cruisers were set loose upon our defenceless commerce on the ocean; to capture, burn, sink, and destroy all our vessels which fell in their way, and carry our useful and industrious seamen into port, to be assigned to the prisons of France! Meanwhile the British cabinet, who had instructed their minister Erskine to patch up an accommodation with Mr. Madison on his own terms, with a view to violate it when their object should be effected, finding themselves relieved from the pressure of the embargo, and that they

had effected another purpose not less consonant with their views and wishes, namely, that of exciting against us the renewed hostility of France; did not hesitate to disavow the arrangement entered into between their minister and this government! It is remarkable in this perfidious transaction, that they sent over two sets of instructions to Mr. Erskine, to be made use of as circumstances might require: the one clear, full, and decisive; and the other ambiguous, and professedly doubting the sincerity of the secret overtures, over the weakness of which they rejoiced, and determined to triumph. Thus was our lawful commerce exposed to the ravages of a piratical warfare, carried on against our neutral rights with unrelenting ferocity by the belligerent powers; and this through the weakness and folly of our own government. To account for such a conduct on the part of Mr. Madison, a superficial observer must be puzzled, and even those of more perspicacity, who are placed at a distance from the scene of action, must find themselves at a loss to decipher the springs and motives of so extraordinary a proceeding. To find a clew to the real source of this weak and



Thomas Pinckney

crooked policy, we must look back to an important period of our history, which, at the first blush, may seem to have no connexion with the present subject; but will be found, in the sequel, to have a particular and direct bearing on it. The period which I allude to is that of the convention of the United States, held in 1787, which framed our present federal constitution, and of which Mr. Madison was a member.

It will be recollected that the plan of a general government proposed to the convention by the state of Virginia, was not a federal, but that of a consolidated union, in which the distinction of states should be nearly abolished, and their sovereignty annihilated. This plan Mr. Madison warmly supported by every argument which his ingenuity could suggest; and in the course of the debates of the convention he strenuously advocated a proposition of Mr. Pinckney from South-Carolina, that the national legislature should have the power of putting a negative on all laws passed by the state legislatures, which the general government should disapprove of, and insisted that

this power was absolutely necessary. He also declared that the senate of the national legislature could not be too strong, as he considered it a check on democracy; and the longer the senators remained in office the better it would be for the stability and permanency of the government: he denied that the states ever possessed the right of sovereignty, but were mere corporations, having the power to make by-laws, and that they ought to be still more under the control of the general government than they had been under that of the king of Great-Britain. Such were Mr. Madison's ideas then of the form of government most befitting this country; and though he was obliged to yield to the will of the majority in the adoption of the federal constitution, yet he never lost sight of his favourite scheme, which revived with the prospect of his being placed at the head of the general government, and as soon as his election took place, he conceived the chimerical project of erecting a third party, on the ruins of both the republican and federal parties, which should fraternize with the British, who would become his auxiliaries in carrying into execution his contempla-



From the original portrait by G. Kneller

James Madison

ted plan of new modelling the government. He had another motive, however, which, though of minor consideration, would of itself have induced him to engage in this intrigue with the British minister : this was the desire of robbing Mr. Jefferson of the credit of having compelled the British to change their hostile policy towards us, and withdraw their unjust and injurious orders in council ; as the disclosure of his secret purposes to the British minister, would at once prevent any accommodation with Mr. Jefferson, whose sentiments were represented by his own ministers to be so hostile to Great Britain, and partial to her enemy : thus prolonging our national sufferings, through a jealous and contracted temperament of mind, which could not brook the splendour of such a rival's transcendent talents. He therefore commenced his operations by throwing himself into the arms of the British minister, in the manner we have seen ; and soon after his being initiated into power, his project of forming a third party began to develop itself, by the activity of his friends and emissaries disseminating discourses through the District of Columbia, in which he was represented as dif-

fering widely in character and policy from Mr. Jefferson; for that he was opposed to party spirit (meaning the republican party) and was not biased by any prepossessions in favour of France; but, on the contrary, he thought the government of England was that alone from which we could expect any justice, and that French influence had been too long prevalent in this country; alluding to Mr. Jefferson's administration. In consequence of these intimations he was invited to a public dinner at Alexandria, by the federal party, which he availed himself of with avidity; and in the session of congress which was convened in the month of May next after his inauguration, the federal members warmly eulogized him, and called on the house of representatives for a vote of thanks, in which the republicans wisely refused to concur, and Mr. Madison was mortified by the negative. This did not, however, deter him from pursuing his third party scheme; he used every means to detach influential characters from the republican ranks, and with others gained over the grand sagem of the Tammany society so completely as to prevail on him to desert them on the ensuing

anniversary of independence, and dine with the federalists. At this time the war department was the only one of the public offices in which any republicans were employed, from whence they were soon excluded, at the instance of Mr. Madison! These singular proceedings excited much alarm in the minds of the republican inhabitants of the District of Columbia, which induced them to hold an early meeting, wherein they determined on endeavouring to bring out the government either for or against them; they accordingly resolved to give a public dinner on the fourth of July ensuing, to which the heads of departments should be invited; and when their committee had made suitable arrangements for furnishing the dinner, endeavours were made by a gentleman high in office, one of Mr. Madison's most intimate friends and confidants, to intimidate the person who had undertaken to furnish it, but without effect, and the dinner was of course given: the heads of departments, after long hesitation in giving an answer to the invitation, condescended to accept it, and accordingly honoured the company with their presence; but not one of Mr. Madison's particular friends would at-

tend it; on the contrary, they dined with the federalists on the Capitol hill, openly avowing their contempt for the republicans. Every thing that savoured of the republican system became now unpopular at the presidential palace; and even the militia were deemed proper objects of discouragement; for when he saw them marching towards his house on a grand muster day, with a view of paying him the homage of salutation which they had been accustomed to render his predecessor, he rode out in another direction to avoid them. How different was this from the urbanity and friendly condescensions of Mr. Jefferson, who would throw himself in their way on such occasions, and frequently invite the officers to partake of refreshments; which had a great tendency to encourage military musters: on the contrary, Mr. Madison's repulsive conduct has operated so on the feelings of the gentlemen composing the militia of the district, that meetings of that body have been almost entirely discontinued. It seemed to be in every thing the wish of Mr. Madison to adopt a different policy from that of his predecessor in office, and he very often struck at the reputation of Mr. Jef-

person by invidious means, with a view to break down his great popularity, and build his own on its ruins. Of this character was the insinuations of his emissaries respecting the late predominance of French influence ; his disbanding the militia which was drafted for immediate service, in Mr. Jefferson's administration ; his laying up the gun-boats, and putting the nation on a peace establishment, at a moment when the imbecility of his own measures were calculated to prolong our sufferings by the encouragement and incitement of the aggressions of both the chief belligerent powers. Mr. Jefferson's humane system for meliorating the condition of the aborigines, by introducing the habits of civilized life amongst them, and turning their attention to the use of the plow and the loom, was given up, and those frequent invitations of their chiefs to the seat of the general government, which had such a tendency to attach them to the interest of the United States, were no longer considered a necessary part of the policy of the administration. The consequence of this departure from so judicious a system of policy towards the savage inhabitants of our frontiers, has been their estrange-

ment from us by the arts of the British, who have contrived to convert them into enemies from having been our friends, as the recent catastrophe of Tippacanoë too fatally attests. On the contrary, Mr. Jefferson's conciliatory conduct was calculated to flatter their pride, and the kind treatment of their chiefs, when his guests, had a salutary effect in exciting their friendship, and attaching them to our government, as their natural benefactor. Amongst the many traits of imbecility in the character of Mr. Madison, those acts which are more immediately connected with the domestic system of state policy are not the least evincive of the cast and texture of his mind. His system of favouritism is too prominent to be overlooked, and a few instances will suffice to show the great influence which Mrs. Madison exercises over him. Mr. Richard Forest, before mentioned, the major-domo of her household, was to be made a kind of semi-ambassador to the dey of Tunis, and to be allowed an outfit, a secretary of legation, and an adequate salary: he was accordingly nominated to the senate, but was rejected; and, notwithstanding this repulse, he had the temerity to nominate



Engraving by W. B. Wood

THE HISTORY OF THE

City of Port Peter Published by Harrison Hall 133 Chesnut St Phila. 1841

him a second time, and he was again rejected. Mr. I. C. King, another of the favourites, had asked leave of absence from Mr. Smith, when secretary of state, to go to Philadelphia for a short time; but remaining there much longer than was requested or allowed, without any explanation of the cause of his extraordinary delay, his place was filled by another person; but soon after his return, when Mr. Munroe became secretary of state, he was obliged to yield to the solicitation of Mrs. Madison, and create a new place for Mr. King, as they dared not attempt to remove Mr. Colvin, who had been appointed by Mr. Smith to succeed Mr. King; this Colvin having been editor of a paper in Washington, entitled the Monitor, in which he frequently inserted libellous paragraphs reflecting the grossest slanders on the character of that illustrious patriot, the late vice president of the United States, who acquired such immortal fame by the services rendered to his country during and since the revolutionary war. The popularity of this great and good man rendered him an object of the jealousy of president Madison, who was known to be the writer of those libels published

by Mr. Colvin, against the venerable George Clinton, whose recent removal from works to rewards eternal in the heavens, has left his country to mourn the loss of one of her brightest ornaments, and most virtuous statesmen. The Mr. King, for whom Mr. Munroe was obliged to carve out a new appointment, is a man conspicuous for nothing but an adroitness at the card table, and a constant habit of low scurrilous abuse of republicanism; qualifications best fitted to render him a favourite at court, and a welcome guest in the drawing-room. How different was the character of the late Doctor Dinsmore, whom Mr. Madison removed from the war office on account of his politics. Possessed of an enlarged and highly cultivated mind, this amiable and enlightened man's whole deportment was dignified and benevolent, and his ardent zeal for the republican cause was so eminently displayed while he edited a paper which he formerly published in Alexandria, and latterly in Washington, so strongly recommended him to the friendship of Mr. Jefferson, that he conferred upon him the very place which was taken from him by Mr. Madison on account of his unalterable



Engraving of James Monroe, from the Painting by J. M. W. Turner, 1817.

James Monroe

attachment to these principles. Another instance of Mr. Madison's favouritism, by which the public interests have been greatly sacrificed, is Mr. Tench Cox, the late Purveyor of the army, against whom serious charges of abuse of the public confidence were exhibited upon oath, but were nevertheless overlooked by the president, without even an investigation, till congress passed an act to abolish the office, and create a new one under better regulations; to this new office Mr. Madison thought proper to nominate his favourite, Mr. Tench Cox, notwithstanding that the principal object of congress in abolishing the old one, was to remove him from the public service, which it was the duty of Mr. Madison to have done when his improper conduct in office became manifest: but to the honour of the senate, they unanimously rejected him.

Among many other disqualifications which render Mr. Madison ineligible for the high office of president of the United States, is his great want of discernment in the choice of suitable characters to fill the public offices. After an eight years in-

timate association in office with Mr. Robert Smith, he chose that gentleman for secretary of state on his own elevation to the presidency, yet in less than eighteen months he discovers that Mr. Smith is devoid of the capacity and talents necessary to qualify him for head of the department of state, if we are to credit the report of his friends and emissaries. The address of that gentleman to the people of the United States has already shown the jesuitical manner in which he endeavoured to get rid of him, without incurring the displeasure of his friends. The appointment of Dr. Eustis to the office of Secretary at war, is still a more glaring evidence of Mr. Madison's want of *perspicacity*, and discrimination of talent. It is notorious to the whole union, that Doctor Eustis is totally inadequate to discharge the duties of that important office; and Mr. Madison himself has given us the best evidence possible that he is not ignorant of this incapacity, by his late message to congress proposing to appoint two assistant secretaries to that department; which the congress wisely refused to sanction; and yet he continues this man in office, after so public an acknowledgment of his inability



to discharge its important functions. This is another instance of favouritism, whereby the national interests are jeopardized.

The weak and jealous disposition of Mr. Madison would not suffer him to appoint men who are admired for their transcendent talents, to the great offices of the government, lest he should be supplanted in the presidency; and his want of discrimination in selecting suitable characters from the class of citizens who are less conspicuous for great talents and abilities, has proved a sore evil to the nation. It is no way unlikely that his choice of such men is in a great degree influenced by the cunning contrivance of Mr. Gallatin, who has so great an ascendancy over the president's mind, that he may be said to govern the union in his name, as the British ministry govern in the name of their king: and such men would be more likely to acquiesce in his purposes than those of greater abilities.

Mr. Madison commenced his presidential career under the impression that the British ministry would

coalesce in his plans of a third party, and new modelling the constitution of the United States ; but to his great disappointment they disregarded his visionary projects, and only took advantage of his weakness to promote their own purposes, as we have already seen. The rejection of his arrangement with Mr. Erskine so far disconcerted his views, that he was obliged to abandon his favourite plans, and again look to the republican party for support. Thus baffled in his favourite project, and this by the perfidy of his new friends and allies the British, Mr. Madison's weak mind was irritated to the highest pitch of resentment against them, and he determined to avenge himself upon them in the most summary way !—He therefore flies to the opposite extreme of attaching himself to France, with equal indiscretion, and issues his proclamation, declaring, that he had received satisfactory evidence of the revocation of the Berlin and Milan decrees ; and placing France again on the most favoured footing in her relations with the United States, notwithstanding that it is too well ascertained, by every day's fatal experience, that these obnoxious decrees of France are still in full force,

with some small degree of relaxation in the rigour of their operation against our commerce and neutral rights. It is to this weak and premature step that we are to attribute the prolongation of those aggravated wrongs which we have suffered from England; together with the imminent hazard we are, at the present eventful moment, placed in, of being made parties to Napoleon's war of extermination against Great Britain: and whilst we throw ourselves into the rapacious arms of the mammoth of the earth, we inevitably involve ourselves in the risk of being devoured by the great Leviathan of the sea! What miserable policy! Surely an impartial neutrality, and a dignified attitude of self defence, maintained by wisdom and firmness in our national councils, would have preserved us from a predicament at once so humiliating and disastrous!—Paternal spirit of the great Washington! we invoke thee to arise and avert so dreadful a calamity from thy beloved country!—May Heaven, the celestial asylum of thy blissful abode, avert it, and in mercy remove from our councils those weak and mischievous men who have thus

jeopardized our peace, our prosperity, and our safety.

The whole tenour of Mr. Madison's administration, from the fatal moment of its commencement to the present day, has exhibited such a scene of jesuitical tergiversation, of futile expedients, and pusillanimous subterfuges, that it sickens the mind to dwell on them; whilst the alarming deterioration of our public concerns, by means of this drivelling policy, ought to be sufficient to arouse the nation from the apathy into which we have been too long sinking, to a sense of the dangerous predicament in which we are placed. Every one indeed, seems to be sensible of the unfortunate results of Mr. Madison's imbecile measures; but few there are who take the trouble of investigating the true cause, which is, in one word, the *incapacity* of the man to direct the affairs of government, more especially at a period when the whole world is in so convulsed a state as at the present awful crisis.

Finding our affairs growing worse and worse, session after session of congress, by the inefficien-

cy of his measures, Mr. Madison at length becomes apprehensive of the dissatisfaction of the people, and the consequent loss of a re-election to the presidency; he therefore concludes to call that body together before the usual time, and assume a tone of energy and determination, which no way characterised any former part of his administration. Accordingly, when the present session of congress commenced, Mr. Madison made them a communication on our national concerns, which, if it were sincere, would have much redounded to his credit: the committee of foreign relations, to whom this message was referred, regarding it as an expression of the genuine sentiments of the executive, and as a true representation of the real state of our national affairs, conceived it to be their duty to report the absolute and pressing necessity of congress adopting more energetic measures, for the maintenance of our national rights, than had been yet pursued: but Mr. Madison, in his usual jesuitical style of tergiversation, endeavoured, by private unofficial means, to counteract this effect, and get them to pursue a half-way course of inefficient measures,

as formerly : finding, however, that these underhand intimations were disregarded, and that congress had voted for putting the nation in a warlike attitude, as recommended by the message, he contrived another method, through the ingenuity of his premier, Mr. Gallatin, of paralyzing the war spirit, which had began to diffuse itself through the nation with a degree of enthusiasm which did honour to the patriotic feelings of the people : this was Mr. Gallatin's war budget, which proposed the most odious and unpopular system of taxation that could be resorted to, and at once put a damper upon the ardour of the nation. Mr. Giles, in an admirable speech, which should be read by every citizen who wishes to understand the true state of our public concerns, so ably exposed the weakness and inefficiency of the measures of the executive, as totally to disconcert the cabinet, and drive them to resort to other subterfuges, of which the measure of the present embargo was one ; this, in conjunction with Mr. Gallatin's singular budget, had a tendency to federalize the

great commercial states of New-York* and Massachusetts; a result calculated on, and equally desired by Mr. Madison; for he found that his popularity with the republicans, both in and out of congress, was sinking to a very low ebb; and he calculated, that by federalizing these states, and breaking down the northern influence, where he apprehended the republicans to be most opposed to him in sentiment, that those states which still remained republican, would be so alarmed as to cling together in support of his re-election, rather

* The New-York House of Representatives consists, for the next year, of

| | | |
|------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| | 52 Republicans and | 60 Federalists. |
| The Senate | 24 | 8 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 76 | 68 |

and as the electors of president are chosen by joint ballot, republican electors, in favor of Mr. Clinton, are certain in that state; notwithstanding the strong attempts from Washington to destroy, by dividing his party.

The present legislature which nominated Mr. Clinton, consists of 95 republican members, of which four were absent from the meeting; two from motives of delicacy, being officers of the general government, and two from indisposition. The 91 who were present were unanimous---a unanimity rare, and almost unprecedented, and which appears to have been ordered by providence as an earnest of the success which is to follow.

than hazard, by divisions, the elevation of a professed federalist to the important station of president of the United States.

I hope, however, that I have so far pulled off the mask of this double faced Janus, that every impartial man can see the true features of his real character and policy; and the destructive tendency of the measures of his administration, as it respects our most essential interests both at home and abroad. Should my humble efforts to save my country from impending ruin, and the great cause of republicanism from certain immolation at the shrine of a frensied ambition, prove successful, I shall deem myself the happy instrument of rescuing these states from foreign thralldom and disgrace; and the republic from so ruinous an infatuation as the re-election of so unfit a character as Mr. Madison, to hold any longer the reins of our government.

But the late business of the nomination at Washington, may stagger the minds of some honest republicans, as to the propriety of opposing it,

I trust, however, that a candid statement of the circumstances which attended that transaction, will remove all doubt, and enable every true friend of the country and of the cause, to form a correct judgment as to the safest line to pursue. It has been shown above, that Mr. Madison, apprehensive of the desertion of the republican party, conceived the weak idea of superadding the present embargo upon Mr. Gallatin's designedly unpopular budget, in order to produce an effect that should federalize the great commercial states, and lessen the influence of the republicans in the quarter where he dreaded their opposition most, with a view to excite an alarm in favour of his own reelection, among those republicans whom he hoped would support him: thus displaying at once a depravity that would sacrifice every thing sacred to honour, to patriotism, and to prudence, for the thirst of power. Policy would have probably restrained him from so barefaced an act of perfidy; but that he began to despair of a nomination by a congressional caucus, from the tardiness of the members, and the actual opposition to his measures, made by many of the most influential repub-

lican members of both houses.—It is believed that this tardiness of the members in holding a caucus for nominating a candidate to the presidency, was owing to the southern and western states, as well as those of Maryland and Massachusetts looking to that of New-York for a nomination, which would undoubtedly have taken place earlier than that at Washington, and of course have absolutely superseded it, but for the accidental circumstance of a difference in opinion between the governor and the legislature of that state, on a local measure of state policy, which occasioned a prorogation, in order to give time for reflection and due consideration of that measure. This incidental occurrence inspired hopes in the breast of the president, and of his state juggler, that a caucus might be conjured up, by good manœuvering, which should nominate Mr. Madison; and the wily Genevan lost no time in setting his engines at work about the capitol, in order to effect the desired object: it was now therefore represented that no business of importance would come before congress until the arrival of the Hornet from France; an event which could not be expected sooner than the first of June, if

then, and that the members might disperse, to visit their families, or pursue their pleasures, without a risk of injury to the public interest, till that period. Many active and influential members did accordingly ask, and obtain leave of absence till the first of June ; and some for the remainder of the session ! Congress thus thinned off, the precious moment was seized, before the return of the absent members should take place ; and a caucus was procured after tampering with many members of both houses, and persuading them that no nomination would take place in the state of New-York (to which it was known they looked) and that it was necessary, from the unpleasant result of the recent elections in that state and Massachusetts, to appear unanimous in the nomination of Mr. Madison, as there were apprehensions entertained that there would be a powerful federal opposition. Thus the members were cajoled by mere management, to acquiesce reluctantly in a surreptitious nomination : but when the news of the nomination from New-York reached the capitol at Washington, how did the members stare at each other with astonishment ; how vehemently did they express

their regrets at what had taken place there; and with what consternation were the folks at the presidential palace seized, at beholding so unanimous a vote of the republican members of the important state of New-York, in favor of their own candidate. It behooves us now to consider the merits and character of the gentleman whom that state has offered for the national suffrages, at the ensuing presidential election.

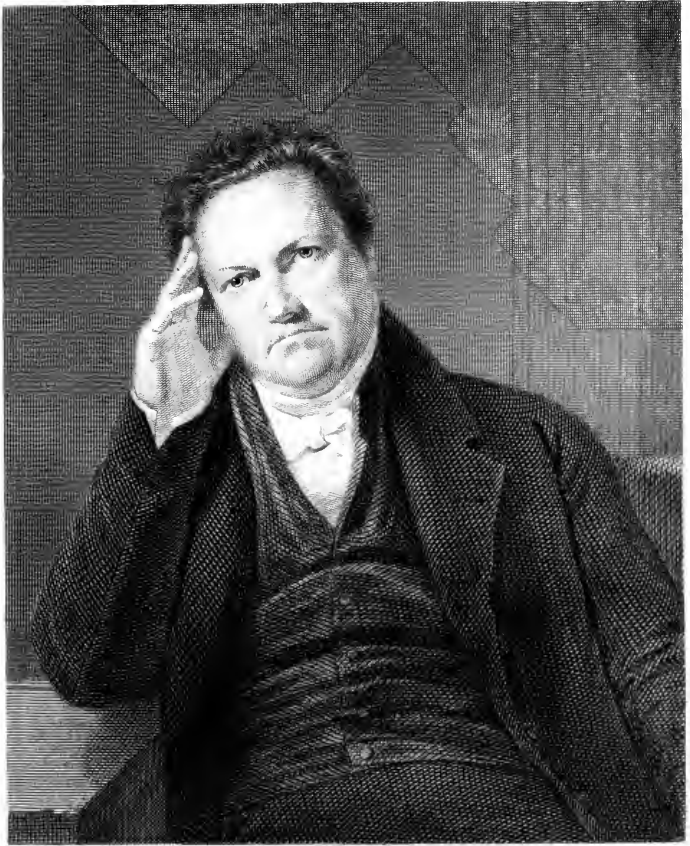
Mr. De Witt Clinton is the son of the respectable General James Clinton, the present Cincinnatus of our country, and one of those revolutionary heroes who fought our battles during the struggles for independence with unshaken zeal and fidelity; and the nephew of our late vice president, the venerated George Clinton, who was a still more conspicuous character in that glorious cause: having been not only an active general in the army, but governor of the state of New-York when the enemy had possession of her metropolis in the south, and hung upon her borders in the north; a situation the most arduous of any in the United States at that important era, in which he

Engraved for Murray's History of the American War.



GENERAL CLINTON.

Printed for T. Robson, Newcastle, upon Tyne.



De Witt Clinton

acquitted himself so ably, both as a soldier and a statesman, as to have acquired never fading laurels, with the meed of his country's eternal gratitude.

Thus our present candidate for the high office of president of the United States, may be said to have been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, where his youthful breast was early inspired with the most exalted sense of patriotism and public virtue; and where the brightest example could not fail to emulate his ardent soul with the love of liberty, and of his country. With the advantages of a most liberal education, Mr. Clinton possesses an expansive and highly enlightened mind: having from the first attached himself to the great whig interest of his country, he is a confirmed republican in principle; and has been the uniform friend and promoter of the republican cause. An early, though modest display of great talents and strong powers of mind, drew towards him the attention of his native state, which regarded him as a citizen of great promise to the republic: the exertion of those talents and powers of mind, was soon

called forth, by elections to the legislatures of both his own state, and of the general government, in which he acquitted himself in a manner fully answerable to the expectations of his constituents. The brilliant speech he made in the senate of the United States, on the question of our right of deposit at New-Orleans, cannot be forgotten, from its force and energy, and the sound reasoning with which he maintained that right. Mr. Clinton has greatly contributed to promote the ascendancy of the republican interest in the state of New-York, and his party have not ceased to demonstrate their gratitude and high sense of his merits, for he has been frequently called to the most important offices of the state, being alternately a member of her councils, mayor of the city of New York, which office is invested with judicial functions, and is of course, of great importance to the lives, property, and morals of the people; and at present he is lieutenant governor of that state. This gentleman's attachment to the interests of commerce, agriculture, and internal improvements is well known; and the grand plan of uniting the great lakes with the Hudson river, by canal navigation, in the promotion of which he has

so ardently engaged, must not only benefit his native state, but our western country, in an eminent degree.

The great satisfaction which Mr. Clinton has rendered, in the performance of his public duties, is a pledge of his future rectitude, and the able discharge of those trusts which his country may think fit to repose in him; and the dignity of his deportment cannot fail to command respect, whilst the amenity of his manners, and the benevolence of his mind, must insure him the esteem of those who have the best opportunities of knowing his real character. As a statesman, Mr. Clinton's intimate acquaintance with the law of nations, with civil polity, with diplomacy, with finance, and fiscal economy, and with state affairs generally, but more especially with the general interests of these United States, eminently qualify him for the chief seat in our national councils. With these endowments, Mr. Clinton possesses a vigour of mind and body, seldom united in one man, and his well known firmness and decision of character, at once point him out as the proper object of national suffrage for the important ensuing election of presi-

dent of the United States. The times call for such a choice, the situation of our country calls for it; and the vital interests of republican government demand it; for wo betide us if Mr. Madison ascends the chair of state again! I shall conclude this recommendation of Mr. Clinton, with the closing observation of Mr. Robert Smith, our late secretary of state, in his address to the people; in writing which, I am persuaded he must have had this great and enlightened statesman in his eye.

“I may, I trust, be allowed to declare to my
“countrymen, as I most sincerely do, that to in-
“sure the duration of the republican party, as well
“as to preserve the honour and the best interests
“of the United States, it has become indispensably
“necessary that our president be a man of ener-
“getic mind, of enlarged and liberal views, of
“temperate and dignified deportment, of honour-
“able and manly feelings, and as efficient in main-
“taining, as sagacious in discerning, the rights of
“our much injured and insulted country!”

Such a man is Mr. De Witt Clinton, to the certain knowledge of the author.

POSTSCRIPT.

Since the foregoing was put to press, the declaration of war against England, by our government, has been published. An event which the author fondly hoped would have been averted at so unpropitious a moment, by the wisdom of the constituted authorities of the nation: but alas! electioneering intrigue proves to be paramount to every thing sacred, sage, and prudent! I do not mean to be understood that I consider this declaration of war to be unjust.—Far from it.—I think it ought to have been made long since; but we have let the proper time pass—when our treasury was overflowing, our citizens unanimous to an unparalleled degree; millions of British property in our hands, and the measure of our wrongs from British cupidity and hostility full to the brim; whilst the aggressions of France were comparatively light and small. I do therefore contend that this measure is highly inexpedient at this period, and under

existing circumstances, and that if the dire alternative of an appeal to arms was necessary at the present eventful crisis, we had a choice of two evils, and might have made our election of that which, (in all human probability) would be productive of the least injury to ourselves. The late outrages of France, in sinking, burning, and plundering our vessels, and her general spoliations upon our commerce, fully justified our declaring war against her; and she could comparatively inflict but very light injuries upon us, more especially when it would become the interest of her enemy to aid and abet us: whereas, we have chosen the greater evil of throwing down the gauntlet to that power which alone can injure us to a serious degree, without even the expectancy that her enemy can or will aid us in an honourable conflict with the greatest maritime power on earth! But this is not the worst of it; we chain ourselves to the triumphal car of the great military despot of Europe, who, if he succeeds in his ambitious views of annihilating the power of Britain, will next turn his attention to the destruction of republicanism in America, as he has done in every part of the old

world;—not a vestige of free representative government has he suffered to remain on the continent of Europe, and what are we to expect from his gracious indulgence, when we enable him to prostrate the power of Britain. Our true policy was, to maintain, as far as in us lay, the balance of power between the contending rivals for the mastery of the world, instead of which we have made ourselves parties on the worst side of despotism, in this mighty conflict! We have already adverted to the expediency of this measure, let us now consider of the fitness of the period of its promulgation: and here let me ask my fellow citizens, could it be more untimely? Never since the revolutionary war did we owe less to Britain; indeed we scarcely owe her any thing at this moment, in consequence of the long continuance of our non-importation act, and the very low rate of exchange, which induced our fellow citizens to remit the full amount of their old debts, whilst they were allowed to ship away produce, both foreign and domestic, to an immense amount, to the ports of Great-Britain and Ireland, which now remains in the hands of the consignees in those countries; be-

sides the incalculable amount of property which we have scattered in different parts of the world, affording a grand and ready prey to the plunderers of the ocean : add to these weighty considerations, the melancholy fact that we are in no wise prepared for war, either military or maritime ; and it was evidently far from Mr. Madison's real intentions to involve us in a war at this conjuncture, by the backwardness of preparation, in which he has purposely kept the country, but that he found his re-election to the presidency put to hazard by the imbecility of his measures, and the want of energy in his councils : thus, like a man suddenly aroused from a reverie, or awoke from the sleep of delusion, he inconsiderately plunges his country in all the horrors of war, from the unworthy motive of securing his own continuance in power, without regarding either the costs or the consequences!— What but such a motive could lead him, at such a time, to take such a step? The chief of the British ministry, the prime supporter of the obnoxious orders in council, was removed by assassination! a shock which must have at once disconcerted their whole system of measures, and occasioned the

formation of a new ministry, in which event, we have the most rational grounds for believing that the old whig party (the friends of an amicable adjustment of the existing differences between that country and the United States) will have gained the ascendancy in their national councils, and it would have been our wisdom to have waited this most desirable result; but such forbearance did not suit the electioneering purpose of Mr. Madison!

And now, Americans, we are involved in war precipitately, without the necessary preparations for carrying it on with credit or with success! Our treasury drained, our munitions for war unprovided; and whilst we are recruiting men for the service and defence of the country, we have scarce a musket fit for use ready to put into their hands, or a blanket to protect them from the noxious damps of the night; nay, not even camp equipage to accommodate an army, at a moment when they should have been crossing the Canada lines, to drive the enemy from our vicinage! Almost every department of the general government is marked

by the incapacity and inertness of those to whose management our public concerns are committed! the cabinet itself, with its head, deplorably conspicuous for contemptible intrigue, for want of energy, and for puerile imbecility; by the combination of which pernicious characteristics, our all of independence, of liberty, and national prosperity, are staked on a declaration of war, in a state of unpreparedness, and without efficient characters in office, rightly to direct the physical force of the country, in maintaining so awful and arduous a struggle! Fellow citizens, look at this genuine picture of your real situation, and be aroused to a sense of your danger: let neither party spirit, favouritism, or prejudice warp your judgment, or paralyze your exertions to remove from our national councils, men who, if suffered to pursue this ruinous career much longer, will inevitably work the destruction of our independence, of free representative government, in this, her last asylum upon the face of this great globe, and the happiness of the most favoured people who ever existed upon its surface! It is in fact become indispensably necessary to our safety, as an independent na-



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DE WITT CLINTON ESQ

tion, to place a man of energy and firmness, of wisdom and resource, at the head of the general government in such a momentous crisis: a man who will rid the public offices of incapacity, and select, as the coadjutors of his administration, men of tried ability and virtue, and who will enlist all the talents and integrity of the nation at a crisis which so imperiously demands their services: by such a man the destinies of our country may be conducted to triumph and to glory! Our sister state, New-York, has offered us such a candidate for the next presidency, and every consideration of sapience and sound policy enjoins it upon us to embrace her patriotic proffer of the public services of one of the wisest and most magnanimous of all Columbia's sons, at a moment so portentous, and so big with her future destinies! In this eventful crisis, the finger of heaven points to De Witt Clinton, as the saviour of his country, under the good providence of the Most High.

Finally, my fellow citizens, let me entreat you to hear the voice of wisdom and of true patriotism, ere it be too late: we are now in a state of

war, under all the disadvantages above described, and if you leave the management of it to those who have placed us in this situation, under such unpropitious auspices, it will be a lingering war of disasters and humiliation, resulting in distant, but disgraceful peace: whereas, if you timely place a man of energy, of dignity, and firmness, in the executive chair, he will, by the blessing of Almighty God, lead you to a victorious triumph over all difficulties, and to a speedy and honourable peace.

And now, ye inhabitants of my beloved country, whether of native or foreign birth, my fellow citizens of these United States, whose fate is involved in one common lot, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." *Deuteronomy*, 30; 19.

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