FROM THE VIRGINIA ARGUS.

TO THE

FREEHOLDERS OF THE CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT,

COMPOSED OF THE COUNTIES OF

Mecklenburg, Lunenburg and Brunswick

FELLOW CITIZENS,

The conclusion of an extraordinary and important session of Congress furnishes an occasion, of which I avail myself to address you some observations on our public concerns.

The relations of the U. States with the European belligerents have, since the declaration of war, undergone no material change. After the adoption of that series of unparalleled injuries, found itself compelled most reluctantly to resort, but a short period was allowed to elapse, before overtures were made by the President for a reconciliation with the enemy on terms mutually just and honorable. The overtures, the off spring of that dignified moderation and undissembled spirit of amity, which have always so eminently distinguished the Executive in its foreign intercourse, were met by the British government with low sarcasms, and the affectation of contemptuous indifference! But even this conduct did not extinguish the desire of the administration for an accommodation with England. The interposition of the Emperor of Russia for the establishment of peace was promptly accepted by the President; and an embassy for the attainment of that object was, without any delay, dispatched to St. Petersburg. A favorable issue of this mission will depend solely on the question, whether G. Britain has returned to a sense of justice. The U. States will, at least, possess the consolation of having, in the view of an impartial world, absolved themselves from any accountability for the calamities resulting from a continuance of the war.—As well the misery which has already ensued, as that which may follow, and the innocent blood which has been and may be spilt, must be visited on the English rulers!——Their perversity pointed directly to the course which we were to pursue.—The *only means* left to us for the security of the most essential rights, and the redress of the most enormous injuries, *were to be looked for in a vigorous and successful prosecution of the war.* In no other way were we to expect the release of thousands of our fellow citizens, who, by British impressos, have been dragged into the most wretched and horrible captivity—In no other way were we to expect a future safeguard against singular impressments In no other way could we seek remuneration for millions and millions of property which the enemy had pirated from us on the ocean——By no other expedient had we any prospect of atonement for the numberless expiated atrocities that had been committed upon our coasts, on our frontiers, and within our very domicils—In fine, there was no other mode by which we could hope to [illegible] our privileges as an independent State.

It was under these imperious circumstances that the Legislature acted, when at the preceding session, measures were taken to enlarge the *active* military resources of the country—to increase the navy—to give a more efficient form and structure to the army—and to provide immediate supplies of money.——Impelled by circumstances of undiminished pressure, Congress has, at the present session, adopted a variety of measures which for their support address themselves to the tried patriotism of the American people.

In order to give security to the public faith, and invigorate our military operations, laws have been enacted for the annual collection of an internal revenue to the amount of 5 or 6,000,000—An act has been passed to authorise an additional loan of $7,500,000—Encreased expenditures have been authorised, for the better protection of our maritime frontier against the savage incursions, the depredations, the burnings, the rapacious plunderings, and the brutal violence of a most abandoned and ruthless foe!! The public burden has been also somewhat augmented by provisions for the more perfect organization of certain portions of our land forces.—These, together with other expenses previously incurred, and sanctioned, for the support of the military and naval establishments, will, during the present year, amount probably, to $22,000,000—of which about fourteen millions of dollars will have been expended on the army, and about $8,000,000 (including the sum appropriated for building ships of war) on the navy.

The professed object of the late extra meeting of the Legislature was to provide a revenue, which, together with the receipts from duties on imports, and sales of public lands, would be sufficient to meet the ordinary demands of the government, and to discharge the interest accruing on the public debt, and also that which may arise on new loans. The sum required annually for those objects is about $11,000,000—of this sum, five millions five hundred thousand dollars, are calculated to be derived from pre-existing sources. The deficit of $5,500,000 is contemplated to be raised from internal taxes. Of this latter sum, it is proposed, by laws recently passed, to take effect on the 1st January next, to raise $3,000,000 from a direct tax on lands and slaves; and about $3,500,000 by various indirect taxes;—namely, by a tax on carriages, $150,000 it is estimated will be produced—By a tax on licenses to retailers of merchandizes and liquors, $500,000—By a duty on sales at auction, $50,000—By a duty on Bank notes and other negotiable paper, $400,000—By a tax of 20 cents a bushel on salt, $400,000—and by a tax on stills, $765,000—There exists scarcely a doubt, but the indirect taxes will produce nearly four millions annually, than the sum estimated.

By the adoption of this system of taxation, which I believe will operate as equally and as impartially on the several sections of the community as almost any that could be devised, the very important fiscal principle assumed at the commencement of the war, will be fully maintained—That principle, the preservation of which is so essential to the public credit, I stated, in adverting to the late session.—It is simply this, that a permanent revenue be provided during the war, equal in amount to the current ordinary expenditures, and the interest of the public debt, and of sums borrowed; leaving the amount of loans contracted on account of the *extraordinary* expenses of the war, to be repaid upon the return of peace, & the re establishment of commerce. Without this provision, the public creditor would have no adequate assurance for the punctual payment of the interest of the debt; and, of course, the rate of interest would be encreased—The pledges of the nation might be forfeited; and its character deeply affected. In guarding against these evils, the Legislature has been obliged to have recourse to pecuniary impositions.

If ever taxes comparatively moderate, and expenditures such as these, were warranted by any object, or could, in any state of things, claim the support of those who were to bear them, they, upon the present occasion, will be cheerfully sustained by a free and enlightened people, who know and are determined to maintain their rights, and, with whom, no price would be an equivalent for any loss of national character. As to my immediate constituents, I feel a confidence which imparts the highest gratification, that every contribution, whether personal or pecuniary, that is necessary to the successful progress and termination of the war, will be borne with the utmost alacrity. If a war like the present, waged as it literally is, for *personal liberty* on the ocean, for the right of passing undisturbed on the "high way of nations," and for the privilege of disposing, in a lawful manner, of the products of our soil and labor;—if, in a word, a war, waged for the preservation of the unalienable attributes of national sovereignty, shall not be supported by the only people on earth who in fact exercise the right of self government, then patriotism is a mere name, & political liberty an idle phantom? Then, indeed, shall expire the world's best hope! And the only remaining fabric of practical representative democracy shall moulder into ruins!!

Fellow Citizens—I am conscious that I am sensible that by *you* the magnitude of the objects involved in the present test are fully appreciated. You would conceive no perils too formidable to encounter, no sacrifices too great to be made, in order that, under approving Heaven, we may transfer, without deterioration, to our children, the rich inheritance which has descended to us, consecrated by the blood of our ancestors.

But I am incautiously yielding to the ascendancy of my feelings: I have been carried away by the high interest of the subject—I will return.

I have yet, fellow citizens, to call your attention to a topic, which from its nature, has excited universal concern.

The deeply interesting incidents—the continually varying fortunes of war——will never fail to produce the most anxious solicitude. In the progress of that in which we are engaged, we have sometimes witnessed the celebration of the most brilliant triumphs; and sometimes we have bitterly lamented the most sad disasters.—Our operations on land, altho' often successful, have, nevertheless, been marked by singular fatalities—Our soldiery have, indeed, most amply displayed the highest susceptibilities.—The officers, generally, have attained military skill with celerity.—The common soldier is brave, decile, and capable of enduring the greatest hardships. Yet, with superior numbers and abundant supplies, our armies—not from being beaten in fair and equal combat, (on the contrary it is believed in every case of that sort, they have conquered) but, from some other causes, have, in several instances, failed in their enterprizes.

To comment on this subject, is extremely painful to me. For what I consider it my duty to say, I trust I shall be excused, by the frequent occurrence of the question—what are the causes of these failures?—Do they exist in the conduct of the Executive department? Do they exist in the composition and defective equipment of the forces employed? Or are they to be found in the mismanagement, the unskilfulness, the temerity, or the treachery of the commanders under whom they have occurred.

In discussing this very delicate, but interesting subject—one which, if not correctly understood, now unhappily tend to damp the military ardor of the country, and lead to consequences ever to be deprecated—I unequivocally disclaim any, the remotest, intention to derogate in the slightest degree from the worth and merits of the officers of the army. I would not, under any circumstances, do injustice to any of them. But it is a fact perfectly notorious to those who are any way acquainted with the history of the several expeditions which have been undertaken since the commencement of war, *that the commanding Generals, in every instance of failure or defeat, have had within their controul, or under their command, sufficient means to have avoided such failure or defeat, and to have accomplished the enterprize in view.* This may be considered as a strong assertion—It is notwithstanding, true.

Beginning with the most disgraced of the disasters, we will take (unpleasant and ungracious as is the task) a concise view of them all.

That HULL's surrender could have been avoided by him, and the enemy driven at his command, no honest and unprejudiced man will deny.——That these forces were well supplied with every necessary, has been amply attested by eye witnesses of the first respectability—I have myself heard declarations to that effect from a source not to be questioned.

The next failure was that of General *Van Rensallaer.* To subdue the enemy in Upper Canada, he relied on a force, a great portion of which had constitutional scruples with regard to passing the U. States boundary, whilst he had, within his reach and controul, a brigade of *regulars*, whose services, if employed, would, beyond all rational doubt, have been completely effectual.

The defeat and capture of Gen. Winchester and his detachment were occasioned by an impetuous misguided bravery, untutored by the requisite discipline and subordination, and unmixed with the essential prudence and precaution—Had this detachment kept, as it should have done, near the main body of the army, it would have been safe, and the expedition might have succeeded. But it hurried on to unnecessary extremities, without the orders of commanding General, to whose army it belonged:—and thus perished by the tomahawk, the scalping knife, and by *treacherous murder*, so many of the brave, enlightened and patriotic Kentuckians!

The capture of a detachment of militia at the siege of Fort Meigs, was, from all the statements I have seen on the subject, attributable solely to the rashness and insubordination of the brave, but unfortunate officers and men composing the detachment. Had they obeyed the orders of their gallant Gen'l, they would have been secure.

The surrender of Colonel Boerstler's regiment near Fort George, must, from the number of our force at that place, evidently have been the result of some misconduct.——To what officer the blame is imputable, remains to be enquired into.

These are all the reverses of any moment, which our armies have experienced; and, from a view of them, I think it must appear perfectly manifest to every impartial and unprejudiced mind, that they have been, morally and physically impossible for the government to control. That they, perhaps with one or two exceptions, have resulted, from that want of familiarity with the military art, which was to have been expected from thirty years of peace; and that, when they contrasted are with our numerous and splendid victories, they should afford no cause of discouragement.——For, if the enemy has occasionally gained advantages from the imperfect discipline of some of our corps; we too have an ample source of pride and exultation, in the long list of *our* achievements.

Our naval triumphs have astonished an admiring world—victory, with a single accidental exception, has never deserted our flag—we have seen again and again the British Lion cowering beneath the American Eagle; and the names of HULL, DECATUR, JONES, BAINBRIDGE, and LAWRENCE will live forever! They have established for themselves & their country, imperishable renown; a fame more durable than brass!

On land also we can recount our successes. The decisive victories we have gained in the battle at Fort George, at Sackett's Harbor, at York, memorable for the heroism of the immortal Pike—at Fort Meigs, and at Crany Island, furnish indisputable testimony of the superiority of our troops. In several of these battles, as well as some not mentioned, particularly in the glorious opposition to superior numbers at Hampton, the undaunted and unconquerable bravery displayed by our forces, both militia and regulars, and their incredible slaughter of the enemy, would almost challenge history for parallels.—Nothing has ever occurred that surpassed the intrepid conduct of our seaman and militia at Crany Island; and the conduct of the militia was not less brave & meritorious at HAMPTON! a name at which a *Virginian* feels more than is within the power of utterance, and which alone should be sufficient to nerve the arm of the irresolute, against the brutal assassins of female innocence and honor! But I will turn away from a subject which fills the mind with so much abhorrence!

Under a just Providence, I doubt not, fellow citizens, but the issue of the war in which we are engaged, is in our own hands.—If we are faithful to ourselves and the republic, our efforts will conduct us to the reclamation of our rights, and I trust to a *speedy*, but certainly to an *honorable* peace.

With the highest respect,
I am your friend and servant,
THOMAS GHOLSON.

Washington, August 2d, 1813.

THE FRONTIER WAR.

Plattsburg, August 4.

On Friday last, the British Flotilla, consisting of 2 sloops of war, 3 Gun Boats, and about 40 Batteaux loaded with troops, sailors and marines, about 1400 in all, crossed the line at Champlain, and on Saturday afternoon arrived and landed at this place and began the work of destruction which lasted until Sunday at ten o'clock, when they embarked and stood out of the Bay; the Batteaux and 2 Gun Boats went north and were last night in Missique Bay: The two sloops and the other gun boats stood for the south & went 10 or 12 miles south of Burlington, and yesterday morning passed Cumberland head in company with 2 sloops which they had taken, having burned the Essex sloop, and taken a Durham boat, loaded with flour.

On the first information of the approach of the enemy, General Moore gave orders for calling out the Militia and when the enemy arrived, about 300 from this and the neighbouring towns had collected, who retired back a few miles, and have since been joined by the residue of the regiment from this county, and a regiment from the county of Essex.

Altho' the officer who had the command of the expedition assured the civil authority of the village, that private property should be respected, and that citizens not in arms should remain unmolested—yet these promises were no sooner made than violated; the enemy not satisfied with destroying the public buildings; such as the block house, arsenal, armory, hospital, and military cantonment; wantonly burned two store houses belonging to Peter Sailly, Esq. and one belonging to N. Z. Platt, took and carried off several thousand dollars worth of hardware belonging to Frothingham and Co. of Boston, which had been stored with Mr. Sailly. The destruction of private property was not limited to such as they could eat, drink and carry away, but furniture, which could not be of any use to the plunderers, was wantonly destroyed--tables, bureaus, clocks, desks, cupboards, and crockery, were cut & broken to pieces, & thrown about the houses—books and writings were torn in pieces, and scattered about the streets.

It is impossible to describe this scene of cruel and wanton waste and plunder of the property of our fellow citizens and abuse of their persons in a suitable manner. No one, except such as were eye witnesses, can form an adequate idea of the distressing reality. Well was it for our wives, sisters and daughters, that they remembered the [illegible] Hampton, and trusted not their persons to the mercy of the invaders. The dwelling houses of Peter Sailly, Henry Delord, & John Palmer, Doctors Miller and Davidson, Henry Powers, and Mrs. Peabody, a poor woman with a large family of children, & many others were stripped of every thing valuable, which could be carried away or destroyed; Jonathan Griffin, Esq. removed his furniture about a mile out of the village to his farm house, where the enemy sent a picket guard, and compelled him, with his 2 children, to take refuge in the woods—scattered about his property in different directions, and actually killed and dressed his own sheep in the house—our citizens were driven like slaves about the village to procure horses, carts and harness, to carry off the spoil of their inhuman invaders.

One man was compelled with his own hands to bring a brand to set fire to his dwelling, & then told if he would give them ten dollars it should not be burnt. The Masonic Hall was robbed of its records, refreshments & jewels, (the latter of which were returned.)—On their return to Point au Roche, the crew of one of their boats landed, and a part went to the house of a Mr. Williams—they found his wife out of the house, and two went in to keep the husband in check, while the third attempted to gratify his brutal desires upon her. Her husband hearing her screams, came to her assistance, and in the struggle the woman discharged the villain's gun and disengaged the bayonet therefrom, which she struck twice into his own back and wounded him pretty severely; the other two fled, and Mr. Williams and his wife bound the rascal and sent him in; the inhabitants on Point au Roche took the skiff in which they came and the other soldiers. We have twenty one prisoners in the whole, which have been picked up and brought in by the inhabitants.

About 60,000 dollars of the cargo of the American ship Venus, from England, sent into Salem last summer by the Dolphin privateer, has been condemned to the captors as enemies property, by his honor Judge Davis, of the District Court of the United States now sitting in Boston.

Six Russian ships of war were to be sold at auction at Plymouth, (England) June 28. *Salem Register.*

MARYLAND ELECTION.

From the National Intelligencer.

If ever a party had incitement to exertion or food for hope, it is the Republican party, the nominal minority but actual majority, in the State of Maryland, at the approaching Election.—A little exertion must ensure them victory. We believe that a general exposition of the character and arts of the dominant faction is all that is necessary to its prostration. Let it be generally understood that the creed of the Federal leaders in Maryland is "Federalism of the Boston Stamp;" that is, such federalism as is professed by Pickering, Strong, Quincy, and the other members of the Essex Junto.—Let it be understood, that, in the creed of Modern Federalism, the first article of faith is the immaculate virtue and spotless honor of the enemy, whom the Federal Governor, Strong has set up as the Bulwark of our Religion and the object of his admiration; that another article is, that it is unbecoming a moral and religious people to celebrate the victories achieved by the national arms; that the general practice of the faction is in consonance with these professions. Let the truth only appear, and we will not doubt that the People of Maryland will indignantly spurn from their councils those men whose boast it is that they profress the unalloyed Federalism of the Boston stamp—that Federalism which was so lost to American feelings as to revile its government for developing the iniquity of the Henry Mission; & the end and aim of which, in the event of its inability to mount the ladder of promotion, is evidently to undermine and destroy the fabric of the constitution against which it is reared; that Federalism which boasts that Maryland looks up to the Legislature of Massachusetts for an example worthy of imitation, which example, we presume, is to be found in the anti-national proceedings of that body during its last session!

REPUBLICANS OF MARYLAND!

Do yourselves justice! You have not at this Election to encounter the injurious effects, on your cause, of a Riot created by an armed Mob in the bosom of your metropolis, who had the art to excite the passions of your people to revenge the insult offered to your City, and then to take advantage of the brawl to raise themselves into power. The tomahawk and lathing hatchet, the swivel and the carabine are no longer brandished in your sight; the defiances uttered by a band of infuriate and unfortunate deluded partizans no longer assault your ears. Your enemies have not now an opportunity, if they have the will, to wake into action the worst passions of your citizens, and excite them to enormities which they must since have deeply deplored. The passions of the People cannot at this election be inflamed by a "solemnn mockery of woe," for the death of an unfortunate Revolutionary soldier. The shade of LINGAN cannot now be hypocritically invoked, and cited by your opponents to answer the most grovelling purposes of party. No; the time for such unhallowed scenes has passed. Reason has resumed her empire. The tempest of passion has subsided. The people have seen what were the views of the faction, and what it has achieved. The records of one branch of the Legislature of Maryland have been disgraced during the last nine months by some of the most undignified proceedings which ever characterized a public body. Nay, we doubt whether the Jacobin Club at Paris ever exhibited a more wanton spirit of proscription, a more ruthless and ferocious temper. Had there not been a redeeming virtue in the Senate, which stayed the uplifted arm, there is no saying to what extremes the party would have gone.

THINKING PEOPLE!

Reflect on these things. Look at the history of the winter session of your Legislature, and say whether a succession of such scenes can lead to any thing else than civil war, and that despotism in which it will assuredly end, whenever and however it begins. Haste, ye, then, to the polls when the day of Election comes, & vote for men who will save you from the mortification of witnessing a recurrence of similar scenes, & restore to your State that respectability of character it has heretofore maintained!

NEWPORT, (R. I.) August 12.

We are authorized to state, that HORATIO S. DEXTER, formerly of this town, is now, and for some weeks past, has been, on Block-Island, at the house of John Gorton—that he has been repeatedly on board the Ramilies, and once or twice on board the Poictiers. We are further authorised to state, that Mr. Gorton has now on board, stores of various kinds, all wanted by his Britannic majesty's ship, to the amount of six or seven thousand dollars.——*Justice is lame!*