

From the Commercial Advertiser.

New-York, July 14, 1867.

Mr. Lewis,
In your paper of Wednesday evening, I observed the following Resolution—

In Common Council, 13th July, 1867.
Resolved, That this board will carefully cede to the United States, such part of the public grounds at the Battery and at the Basin in Duane-street, or elsewhere, together with the right of soil under water within their jurisdiction, as the secretary of war may deem necessary for erecting fortifications for the defence of the city.

There can now no longer exist a doubt of the intentions of the government to take prompt measures for the defence of this city and harbor. It is a question of great national importance, and on which the fate of this city, and the welfare of its inhabitants materially depend.

As a native of this city, I conceive I have a right to express my solicitude, that the fortifications contemplated to be erected may answer the end intended, be fully competent to the defence, and not the cause of the destruction of the city, and the distress and ruin of its inhabitants. As an officer who served the whole of the revolutionary war, I should view myself highly culpable in withholding my opinion on this interesting subject, (not the hasty opinion of the moment, but one formed on observation and reflection, aided by the judgment of our oldest and most experienced officers,) whilst I am impressed with the idea that my observations may be of some service, or perhaps have a tendency to draw forth the opinions of others more competent to the subject.

The resolution of the corporation cedes to the United States such part of the public grounds at the battery, and at the basin, in Duane-street, &c., as the secretary of war may deem necessary for erecting fortifications for the defence of the city.

I boldly hazard my opinion in this early stage of the business, invite criticism and rest my apology for calling the attention of the gentleman employed by government, on the importance of the subject, and the interest and lives of my fellow-citizens.

In my opinion any attempt to defend the city of New-York by batteries erected on its wharfs, Governor's Island, Bedlow's or Ellis's and Paulus Hook is not only impracticable, and fruitless, but exposes this flourishing city to inevitable destruction. *Whoever is master of the harbor is master of the city.* It becomes, therefore necessary to defend the entrance of the harbor by such fortifications and such a distribution of troops and artillery as effectually to prevent an enemy from entering and taking possession of it. To prove the first assertion, that the city cannot be defended from its wharves, nor by batteries from the Islands and Paulus Hook, I refer to the plan of the city, the chart of the harbor, and the stations aforesaid, where batteries are, and where others are proposed to be erected.

The south point of York Island is formed by the confluence of the North and East rivers, extending to the harbor. On this point the city approaches every where close to the waters, and this part is occupied by the most respectable mercantile inhabitants. Here are the most capital buildings, dwelling-houses, store-houses, and magazines, the depots of merchandise, the value of which is as immense as difficult to ascertain. The treasures of our commerce are here exposed in the vicinity of these very wharves where it is proposed to erect batteries, and prevent an enemy from bombarding and taking possession of the city. Here likewise is our government house, where is deposited the valuable records, bonds, and papers appertaining to the officers of the collector, naval officer, and surveyor of the customs, and other very valuable edifices. Yet here it is that it is proposed to erect batteries, and foil the attempts of ships of the line to lay our city under contribution, or in ashes, or to pass to eligible positions above the city. But there is to be a battery on a pier projecting from the Flag-staff; and another at the bottom of Duane-street; Oyster-Island is to be garnished with heavy artillery, and Fort Jay is to display thirty heavy pieces of ordnance. If any doubt the possibility of passing these batteries, I call their attention to the very little regard the British ships of war paid to our fire when passing up the North river in '76, when Paulus Hook was strongly fortified, the old battery and fort George presenting a double tier of 32 and 24 pounders in full fire, and also the very recent circumstance of the forcing of the Dardanelles, and the threatened destruction of the capital of the Turkish empire. Lord Nelson, before Copenhagen, presents another picture.—This proposed exterior defence being then of no effect, it follows that the inhabitants of New-York are to be reduced to the necessity of defending their city under the windows of their houses, and the field of battle is to be established in the centre of their disconsolate families. What a dreadful scene, what a horrid picture will here be presented! Not only all these useless batteries, but every street enfiladed by the enemies fire every building exposed to be set on fire by shells, red hot balls and carcasses. The fathers of families fighting the enemy, within hearing of the cries of their wives and children, driven by terror from their houses, and flying distractedly they know not where. What troops will remain in batteries thus situated, within view of such a horrid scene, with an almost certain prospect of seeing, after all their struggles, this grand and flourishing city reduced to an heap of ashes, and its streets covered with the bodies and limbs of old men, women and children?

Convinced of the inefficiency of the defence from Paulus Hook, governor's island and the batteries proposed to be erected to shelter the city from an approach of the enemies' ships, when they have once entered the harbor.—It remains now to consider whether the entrance into the harbor cannot be secured in such a manner, as to prevent an enemy from entering it, and secondly to examine the advantages which will result to the party who is in possession of the harbor. In contemplating these subjects the topographical map with the accurate soundings will of course be referred to.

The Narrows is the spot pointed out by nature for the essential defence of the harbor and city of New-York. On the west is presented an elevated shore, susceptible of three formidable batteries, one above the other; the first battery on the shore presents an horizontal fire enbarbet; from this a point blank shot from an 18 pounder reaches above double the distance of the channel.

The second, calculated for a plunging battery, will present a most destructive fire, against an approaching enemy, at the same time that it effectually covers and protects the horizontal battery below.

The third, a strong redoubt with heavy artillery enbarbet, offers a heavy fire against hostile ships at the full range of shot, as they approach the narrows, at the same time extending ample protection to the batteries of the first and second positions.

In addition to these, at the distance of about 120 yards, is an inviting hill near the shore, well calculated for a redoubt, capable of containing about 120 men, from which a battery of 6 guns commands the bay at the full range of fire.

In rear of these redoubts, at the distance of 600 yards, is ground favorable for an encampment of three thousand men.

On the eastern shore, the point of Long Island descends gradually to the waters of the narrows. This point projects with a sandy flat into the water at the distance of 250 yards, covered with from four to six feet of water, and consequently may be wharfed up so as to plant a heavy battery above high-water mark, opposite to the horizontal and plunging batteries on the Staten Island shore.

The distance between these batteries will be less than one mile. In rear of this position is an elevated spot for a close redoubt, capable of containing 600 men. Its cannon will afford ample protection to the horizontal battery on the pier, and at the same time give a plunging fire on the enemy. At three hundred yards from this redoubt is a spot for a redoubt, and battery of field fortification to contain 120 men and eight pieces of artillery. This work affords the double advantage of enfilading the river through the narrows and of covering the right wing of an excellent encampment for 3000 men.

To enforce more effectually the defence of the passage, it is proposed to station two floating batteries armed with heavy guns, stationed on the north side of the two opposite horizontal batteries, attended by a sufficient number of gunboats. These may with great facility form a line of fire, occupying the full space from the one shore to the other, and thus effectually strengthen the defence of the channel, and be fully protected by fortifications on the shores.

The narrows, thus garnished with fortifications, and garrisoned, and in case of solemn war and actual invasion, supported by additional troops in two advantageous camps, with the proposed floating batteries and gunboats, affords a formidable and sufficient defence for the entrance of the harbor. But the importance of the object ought not to permit the least neglect of any additional obstruction against an invading enemy. A cone sunk in the centre, crowned with 4 thirty-two pounders, with chains extending to the horizontal batteries on the Staten Island and Long Island shores, supported by the two floating batteries, and gunboats inside of the chains, and the harbor of New-York becomes the most formidable & best secured of any within my knowledge.

The Narrows being thus secured, the positions on both sides are the places where the troops of New-York and New Jersey will assemble and be ready to oppose the landing of any troops destined for the assault of the works. The harbor of New-York then becomes the safe depot of the produce of an immensely rich and extensive country; and the city, inaccessible to any invasion, may see the end of war without molestation or danger.

I return to the principle upon which my opinion is founded, viz. that whoever is master of the harbor of New-York, is not only master of the city, but all the places to a great extent into the country. No illustration can be necessary on this highly interesting position.

Having detailed the nature and positions of the fortifications for the security of the entrance into the harbor, I will add the disposition of the troops, for the defence of these fortifications.

In time of peace, a garrison of one company of artillery, consisting of 50 artillerymen, cannoniers, bombardiers, and 50 matrosses, would be sufficient under the orders of a captain commanding, 4 lieutenants, and a due proportion of correct, well instructed non-commissioned officers. The commanding general to reside in the city; at an alarm by rockets or cannon from the Narrows, indicating the approach of an enemy, a select corps, previously organized, of 600 men, will pass down immediately, and man the forts on the right and left. The same signal of alarm will call from Staten Island and Elizabeth-Town 300 select men to garrison the fort on the west, and 300 other men from Kings' county will garrison the redoubts and fortifications on the east side. The total of garrison consisting of 1300 well chosen men, will be promptly prepared for defence.

A corps of 3000 organized militia will march without delay and occupy the camp on the east, and the same number from Staten Island and New Jersey will occupy the camp on the west of the Narrows; at the same time, the chain is raised, the floating batteries and gun-boats take their proper stations, and the approach of the enemy may be waited for with firmness and confidence. Under these arrangements, no plunderer will ever attempt the passage, nor will an invader hazard his ships; but he must land, beat us on our own shore, make regular approaches to our strong protected redoubts, and entrenched camps, before he can possess himself of our water batteries to ensure his fleet a safe harbor. Should he be foiled in his attempts, and campaign wasted in a hardy soldier like

defence, he must retire from our shore and coast, seeking an asylum for his fleet in some other port, from the storms of autumn and the inclemencies of the winter.

The reverse will inevitably be the case, if we proceed with the fortifications on our Islands and wharves. A blockading squadron will take possession of the bay and watering place, cut off all communication with the Atlantic, and check, if not totally obstruct, all intercourse with water with the Jerseys and southern states. Facts of such magnitude surely merit attention; and the safety of our city demands all the exertions of the patriot whether in the cabinet or the field.

W. S. SMITH,

Aid-de-camp to the commander in chief, and adjutant-general of the light infantry of the late continental army.

FROM THE AURORA.

To the Editor.

Sir—So much has been said of my disclosures to the executive respecting the pretended conspiracy of colonel Burr, and they have recently been brought into notice by the council for the prosecution, against him in so extraordinary and unwarrantable a manner, that I think it incumbent on me to make a few observations on that subject, with a view of removing erroneous impressions which otherwise might prevail with regard to my character.

A few days after my arrival at New-Orleans, in September last, letters were received in town from General Wilkinson, then on the Sabine river, stating that hostilities with the Spaniards were unavoidable, that his next letter would bring the details of the first engagement, and that he hoped to give a good account of the *donos*.

In consequence of this information, which occasioned considerable alarm, about three hundred men were dispatched from New-Orleans, to proceed by land to the Sabine, to reinforce general Wilkinson. Some artillery was sent off by water to ascend the Red river for the same purpose and two gun boats were ordered up the Mississippi to be ready for an attack on Baton Rouge.

By what magic general Wilkinson, whose letter in so positive a manner had announced hostilities as unavoidable, wrought such change in the mind of the Spanish commander, who was at the head of fifteen hundred men, and actually invaded the territory of the United States, as to make him subscribe to terms of accommodation which general Wilkinson has termed most humiliating and to induce them to retreat twenty leagues beyond the ground in dispute.—This gen. Wilkinson alone can explain! The fact is, that to the astonishment of the world, such an accommodation did take place, and that general Wilkinson suddenly arrived at New-Orleans, where he came, to use his own phrase, "to play the devil."

When in the month of December, I was seized and arrested by order of general Wilkinson, but in the name of the United States, and was forcibly transported, I left New-Orleans under the impression that colonel Burr, in consequence of the transmitted information to him of the hostile complexion of affairs on the frontiers, and of the supposed certainty of war, might find himself with a large body of volunteers, determined to push on towards Mexico, and whom, perhaps, it would be difficult to divert from that purpose, notwithstanding the unexpected pacific arrangements between the Spanish commander and general Wilkinson.

When I arrived at Charleston, Annapolis and Washington, all the newspapers presented col. Burr as being at the head of two thousand men, and they were ringing at the same time with the reports of his pretended treason.

These circumstances occasioned in my mind great indignation, with regard to the reports just mentioned, and great solicitude lest gen. Wilkinson's conduct and col. Burr's situation might lead to occurrences which col. Burr would deprecate, and which, involuntarily, would put him in the wrong.

I therefore requested an interview with the president of the United States, for two decided objects. 1. To remove from his mind the false impressions he had received with regard to treason. 2. To endeavor to convince him that the interests of the U. States would be best consulted by going to war with Spain, and giving countenance to the expedition which colonel Burr had planned.

It appeared to me that this step might do some good, could do no harm, and, in my situation, ought to be attempted.

I saw the president, together with Mr. Madison, and having first, when questioned on that point, declared to the former that I had no personal motives for this interview, spoke to them to the effect just mentioned.

The day after the interview I received the following note from the president, the original of which, in his own handwriting, now remains in my possession:

"The communications which Dr. Bollman made yesterday to Thomas Jefferson, were certainly interesting, but they were too much for his memory. From their complexion and tendency, he presumes Dr. Bollman would have no objection to commit them to writing, in all the details into which

* Urged on this point gen. Wilkinson has declared before the grand jury, that after receiving Mr. Swartwout's communication on the Sabine river, he terrified the Spanish commander with an account of an approaching expedition of volunteers, sufficiently strong to crush him, and to march to Mexico in spite of resistance. By this means he made him listen and subscribe to an humiliating accommodation! This peace has been preserved, through col. Burr's and the plan of an expedition, justly calculated on events actually impending which would have rendered it legal and laudable, has acquired an opposite character through the injurious conduct of a weak and treacherous friend.

he went yesterday, and such others as he may have then omitted, Thomas Jefferson giving him his word of honor that they never shall be used against himself, and that the paper shall never go out of his hand.

"January 25, 1807."

I immediately complied with the president's request; and considering the communication, in conformity with the tenor of his note, as *strictly confidential*, I had no motive to be unusually guarded, or to weigh every expression with more than ordinary care.

The paper, containing nearly 20 pages, was hardly finished, when I immediately sent it to the president. I borrowed it from him, some time afterwards, when in prison, in order to take a copy, and then returned it.

The whole of it goes to the two points above mentioned, viz. to disprove treason, and to shew the expediency of war. It can give no other ideas to an unbiased reader, unless one or two expressions, improperly used, and for which the allowance ought to be made, that the English is not my native language, are singled out, are considered disconnectedly with what precedes and follows, and construed in a hostile manner.

The president had given his word and honor that this paper should not be used against myself; yet it was predicated the pretended necessity of a pardon for my personal safety. The attorney for the district in open court, when offering me the patent of pardon, referred to it. May, when I indignantly refused that pardon, he reminded me of the *harrows of an ignominious fate*, in order if possible to change my determination! Is a paper not used against me when, on account of its contents, misunderstood, I am thus assailed with the *trader of a badge of infamy*? Is it in Mr. Jefferson's opinion *all*, and *character and reputation*, which alone can render it desirable, *nothing*? The great inquest of the nation after hearing a variety of testimony, and particularly that of Gen. Wilkinson, by an opinion nearly unanimous on my subject have absolved me from guilt! No indictment has been preferred against me, though they have indicted various gentlemen in different parts of the United States. Was it then becoming the first magistrate of the union, whom I had approached with some degree of confidence, who stood pledged not to use that confidence against myself, and with regard to whom neither my conduct nor my language have ever been unfriendly—was it becoming him in a measure to forestall the opinion of the grand jury and to stigmatize me as a pardoned criminal?

The paper was never to get out of the president's hands; but it is now in the hands of the attorney for the Virginia district. On the 23d of June, an occurrence of which the prints have taken no notice, the grand jury came into court. Their foreman stated that one of the witnesses had mentioned to him an important paper, written by another witness, which was in the possession of Mr. Hay, the attorney, and of which they wished the delivery. Mr. Hay replied that this referred to my letter to the president, which was in his possession, but that he did not consider himself warranted to give it to the grand jury. He also declared it to be his firm persuasion that the paper was written in my own hand writing; it has further appeared that he had occasioned General Wilkinson to read it. Through him he had brought what is falsely stated to be its contents insidiously before the grand jury. Gen. Wilkinson, when before that body, and of course on his oath, did assert that he saw the paper in Mr. Hay's hands; that it was my hand writing and my signature!

This measure, however, of the attorney, has not proved injurious to col. Burr. The contents of my letter even communicated to the grand jury, through such a channel of corruption and impurity, have had no influence on their decision. It is well understood that their indictment has arisen from a *misconstruction* of the law of treason. From 20 to 30 unarmed men had assembled on Blennerhassett's island. They demeaned themselves peaceably but embarked in three boats and descended the river towards New-Orleans. They were, with others, to proceed *all the way thither* in case of certain contingents and probable events, in order to be equipped for a further expedition, but were to stop at Washita, to effect a settlement, should those events not take place. This fact and the false supposition that New Orleans, for the purpose mentioned, was to be occupied by force, and was to be held by force, until the party were ready for their enterprise; these are the grounds which, in their opinion, have warranted the indictment. A close investigation of the law and of the facts before a petty jury, with the advantage of testimony from both sides, will, ere long, correct that opinion, will remove every doubt with regard to colonel Burr's patriotism, and justify his views!

I have nothing to add except that, notwithstanding the ill treatment I have on this occasion received from the president of the United States, I should have forbore making these observations, if I had not been forced to it by considerations of self defence. I am inclined to believe that Mr. Jefferson has not been actuated by any *ill will* towards me. His pardon was not intended to affect my character; he did not mean to forfeit his word of honor by transmitting my letter to him to Mr. Hay, but the injury I have sustained remains the same. The history of the pardon will have flown over Europe, and the impression of treachery to a friend—this more detestable, more odious crime than any infraction of the laws of the country, because essentially, fraught with turpitude, be blended with my name in the minds of many who may never see this letter. And if all this injury could be inflicted by Mr. Jefferson without *ill will*, merely from want of consideration under the disturbing influence of passion and resentment against col. Burr, notwithstanding his mature age, and the dignity of his station—it will amount to a strong proof at least, that I, in my humble sphere, and with a more youthful imagination, may have become enamored with the beautiful prospect of the emancipation of an enslaved kingdom—a project, which Mr. Jefferson himself approved of, and connived at when planned, not by col. Burr, but by *Miranda*—and that I may have engaged in it without meaning any harm to the United States, or to their president.

But not only have I been injured by Mr.

Jefferson himself, his agents and confidants, from the secretary of state to his private secretary, and from him still downwards to the attorney who represents him in the prosecution in Richmond, have on more than one occasion manifested hostility, and have been guilty towards me of glaring infractions of every rule of propriety and decorum. The secretary of state has detained letters directed to me, and has only given them up after I had accidentally discovered the fact, and when I urged them for their delivery. The private secretary has several times betrayed an unbecoming temper, and the attorney in particular, sheltering himself behind his privileges as counsel, and taking advantage of the peculiar delicacy of my situation at this moment, has treated me in open court with the most unprovoked, and therefore most abominable indecency. If this was mistaken zeal, arising from an extreme want of discernment and sound policy;—if it was unauthorised by the president, and if it is therefore not to be attributed to him—it will strongly remind him at least, that if some unfortunately wild heads, lately associated with col. Burr, should have blended their own incongruous, prepossessions and apparently treasonable ideas, with his honorable views, their guilt ought not rashly to be transferred to their principal.

Even the papers in the interest of government propagate on my subject the most injurious falsehoods. Before the pardon came out, and before it was known, that the president of the United States, in transmitting my letter to him for Mr. Hay, had violated his word of honor, no invectives appeared against me. But since the measure of the pardon has proved abortive and ridiculous, and since the fact of his breach of the word of honor can no longer be denied—their tone is changed. As usual I am abused, not for the wrong I did, but for the wrong which has been committed upon me. They insinuate among other things, that at Washington I had obtained promises from Mr. Jefferson, and had agreed with him for a pardon; that I refused it at Richmond, in order to have a pretext for withholding testimony on the ground that it would criminate myself, tho' it is well known that such promise, such agreement, never took place, and that before the grand jury, during an examination of upwards of two hours, I answered, without a single exception, every question that was asked me. Mr. William Duane, moreover says, that I am indebted for my life to the benevolence of Mr. Jefferson—sixteen of the first characters of Virginia, after hearing evidence decided that there is no ground of accusation against me; but the editor of the Aurora, without having any evidence, decides that I am indebted for my life to Mr. Jefferson's benevolence!!!!

When party spirit and passion go so far, it would be improper to remain silent, and should what I have said, in my defence, operate to the prejudice of Mr. Jefferson, or wound his feelings, it is not my fault.

ERICK BOLLMAN.

[Remarks of the Aurora to-morrow.]

BY THIS DAY'S MAILS.

BOSTON, July 18.

FROM MONTE VIEJO.

On Wednesday arrived in town Mr. Morris, who was a passenger in the Swift, at Newport, and left Monte Video on the 1st of June. The British had extended their conquests on the north side of the river Plate, as far as opposite Buenos Ayres, but had made no attempt on that place—intending to undertake that enterprise until the arrival of expected reinforcements. Gen. Whitelock had landed at Monte Video and taken the command; the troops that sailed from England with him, were parted with at sea, but were momentarily expected. Gen. Caldwell had reached the Cape of Good Hope, where he found orders to proceed to La Plata. When the whole force is collected, the British will have about 16,000 soldiers.—The Spaniards at Monte Video appear to be well satisfied with being under the English—a pretty brisk trade was carried on with the natives. The British and American vessels would make better voyages than had been expected. The British were civil and obliging to the Americans there. A spirit of independence appeared to be pervading the Spaniards and Portuguese in South America—and it was thought that Spain would certainly lose her colonies whether they submitted to the English or not. Gen. Beresford had sailed for England. Mr. White, his late fellow prisoner, was at Monte Video.—A paper in the English language, edited by Mr. Scollay, of this town, has been commenced at Monte Video. We have been favored with a letter from the editor inclosing the prospectus and first number.

TOWN MEETING.

Yesterday the inhabitants of this town assembled at Faneuil-Hall, to consider the communications from the committee of the citizens of Norfolk and Portsmouth, Virginia, respecting the late attack on the American frigate Chesapeake, by his Britannic majesty's ship Leopard, acting under the orders of admiral Berkeley. John Coffin Jones, Esquire, was chosen moderator; and the following gentlemen were appointed a committee to draft suitable resolutions: Hon. John Q. Adams, Hon. Harrison G. Otis, Hon. William Eustis, Hon. Christopher Gore, Dr. Charles Jarvis, Hon. John C. Jones, Thomas H. Perkins, Esquire, Hon. Jonathan Mason, Dr. John Warren.

The committee reported the following resolutions, which were agreed to, without division by the committee, a unanimously accented by the town:

Whereas, by the communications from