

we say of the offensive declarations that accompanied the suspension, which, with so ill a grace, was at last determined on? Major Andrews declares, that "the course pursued towards Col. Crowell, by the authorities of Georgia, "must be considered an unjust one, if not oppressive;" that the course pursued by Col. Crowell, "in inviting the Georgia Commissioners to be present at the examination of his voluntary witnesses, is of an opposite character;" (in other words, that it presents a contrast, honorable to the Agent, and dishonorable to Georgia;) that, in taking testimony against Col. Crowell, all the usual prerogatives were lost sight of by Georgia;" in other words, that the authorities of this state, in taking testimony against him, violated the 6th article of the Federal Constitution in three different respects; &c. &c.

Who is not astonished, who is not indignant, at such insolence? Suppose, for the sake of argument, that the allegations of Major A. are true; who invested him with supervisory powers, in relation to the acts of the government of Georgia, or their forms of proceeding? He was sent, I apprehend, to investigate the conduct of John Crowell, and the causes of the commotions in the Creek Nation, and to apply at least temporary remedies. How dared he step beyond his province, and boldly pass upon the acts of the government of Georgia?

GEORGIAN.

ATTICUS No. II.

From the Athens Centinel.

TO THE PEOPLE OF GEORGIA

"Characters of the greatest eminence in this country object to this government, for its consoling tendency. It will operate like an ambuscade; and insidiously destroy the state governments: it will swallow up the liberties of the people without giving them previous notice. If gentlemen are willing to run the hazard, let them run it! but I shall exculpate myself by my opposition, AND THE MONITORY WARNINGS I PROCLAIM WITHIN THESE WALLS."

[Patrick Henry on the Fed. Con.]

There is an open distinction between the rights and opinions of the people. For the first, every virtuous politician should feel interested; in relation to the last, every honest man should be indifferent. A respect for the former implies duty, but for the latter often betrays duplicity. In referring then the acts of public men to either of these principles, it is of the first consequence to make a proper discrimination. And I would ask the worst enemy of Governor Troup, inflated in impudence higher than Andrews, or sunk in infamy lower than Crowell, where is the political act even of his whole life that is unimpeachable of the one or solicitous about the other? In the late events which have awakened such a generous sensibility in the extended bosom of Georgia, such as all upright citizens, I am bold to say in the teeth of every hireling slave of federal power, will die by, there is not a solitary act of Governor Troup's, when referred to any of the great leading, liberal principles which led to the revolution, guided its mighty course, terminated its glorious career, and founded, I trust, these imperishable state governments, that is objectionable upon any point of republican orthodoxy, or will be found to be at war with any dictate of honest manly frankness—No! his offence is not an attempt at dismemberment, there is none so wicked as to believe it, though there are thousands for the sake of his office, and who covet his talents and honor, base enough to assert it. They have purposely mistaken the bold and confident language of rectitude, for the vile and malicious breathings of treason. There is no villainy too deep for malice, and there is no mischief too wide for ignorance. By the latter, the artful misrepresentations of the former, are to be spread, like electricity over the surface of an unthinking multitude, and actions the most worthy are tortured into designs the most dangerous. In proof this, let any one point to the act of Governor Troup, specially regarding the rights of state sovereignty, that strikes at a single feature of our free institutions. How long has it become treasonable for the Governor of an independent state, as free as the general government, and of higher power, since the last is but the creature of the states, to say to that government, you justly owe our militia and have unfeelingly denied their rights? To say, you have purchased our lands, the birth right of our people, and faithlessly violated your pledge? And carrying this tone, if you choose, into a bolder strain, to say, you have indelicately interfered with our slave property, touching a subject unpropitious to them, and perilous to us, desert, or take any consequence you may conceive disastrous to our present connection? No! depend upon it, there is nothing offensive in the matter of such a remonstrance, it is only in the manner, and the obstinate fidelity of its application. The head of a free people should disdain any other language, especially after having from time to time in the meek entreaty of memorial implored from their grace what was due from their faith. There is a point in the results and suffering of any people, beyond which all becomes either the sullen but quiet submission of slaves, or the firm and manly resistance of patriots. This is a truth, the knowledge of which is to be found every where but upon the unfaithful recollection of a tyrant. And the first step at redress is to "carry the appeal from the justice to the fears of government." If Gov. Troup has essayed more than this he is entirely misunderstood. If any one believes he has spoken in any other than the warning voice of invaded and injured rights, dictated by a sense of affectionate concern—if any one believes he has intended more, in this language, than the inestimable privilege of solemn protestation, they do him an injustice, only equalled by the fatal delusion into which they have been hurried by a treacherous conviction.

I proceed now to the consideration of the second ground of complaint mentioned in my first proposition, to wit, in relation to the disposition of our public lands.

It is well known to every native Georgian that we once owned all the lands from our present western boundary, and between the 31st and 35th degrees of North latitude, to the river Mississippi. That in the year 91, a set of infamous and unprincipled speculators, (among whom, were men, who at this present day, are some of Governor Troup's bitterest enemies, seeking to rob him of his reputation, for the sake of his office, and whose names stand conspicuously on the records of the Federal Government as participants in that unholy transaction,) corrupted the Legislature of their state by

* See 1st volume of the laws of the United States, where Gen. John Clark was concerned in the Yazoo Fraud to the amount of 23,000 acres.

And Wade Hampton, who had the singular felicity in the late war, of disgracing himself and dishonouring his country—the first by the want of courage, in the last, by the folly of the choice, has lately commenced an attack upon Governor Troup, in relation to the treaty, as remarkable for tendentious malignity as a studied distasteful of truth. This gratuitous outrage upon the character of an honest man has been provoked by no other cause than Governor Troup's exposure in Congress of his wicked and corrupt conduct, together with others, in bribing the Yazoo Legislature, for he was the chief of swindlers, the leader of the companies, and the largest sharer in that abominable transaction, to which indeed he owes his present immense and overgrown fortune. BEFORE THAT TIME, I will not be so uncivil as to say, he was as much a vagabond in property as he is now a villain in principle, but such has been the curious vicissitudes of his life, he must always possess a strong FELLOW FEELING for either VILLAIN

or bribery, and purchased nearly all the lands that composed at present all the respectable states of Alabama and Mississippi, plundering at once, from the State, by a dark and crafty device, all her resources, and filching from her citizens their political patrimony. This act, was distinguished by the name of the Yazoo fraud, and for enormity of turpitude and blackness of infamy, has seldom its equal upon the annals of any country, and certainly has no rival in the history of the American republics. Considering this subject in reference to the outrage upon the character of a young and growing country, the vital stab to her reputation, the reproach upon republican institutions, but just then entering upon that experiment so mortifying to the pride of monarchy, the shameful fraud upon the people and its blighting effects upon their private and political morality, the hope was confidently cherished by all virtuous men, that there would be honest indignation sufficient to follow the perpetrators of such unblushing malversation, at least, through their natural lives, and in every stage of it to consign their political pretensions, to the most unqualified detestation—But, alas, it is forgotten! Many of the native citizens, who in that day felt the deepest resentment for the wrong, are now no more, many have gone to foreign countries, and the strangers who have come within our borders know but little of its history, feel less of its injury, and can see nothing of its stain—To them it is a tale twice told, and the surviving pollution of that event, stalks abroad, undreaded and unshunned. But fortunately for Georgia, there was a redeeming spirit of integrity and virtue yet remaining among her citizens. General James Jackson, then an able and high-minded Senator in Congress, and one of its brightest ornaments, resigned that honorable station for a seat in the state Legislature, with no other view, than to crush this monster of corruption, and wipe off from his country the foul and odious blot it had occasioned. Accordingly, after a long and arduous struggle, in which he risked his life and his fortune, he succeeded in accomplishing his purpose—the contract was annulled and the land restored to Georgia—He became the justly and highly venerated favorite of the state, received every honor and office she could confer, and finally died in her service, at the city of Washington. The first factors in this nefarious business, conscious of the villainy of their contrivance and on that account the illegality of the purchase, lost no time in getting the title of the property into other hands, with the artful and subtle expectation, which was afterwards confirmed in the Federal Court by a feigned case, that the state could never regain its property from the hands of "innocent purchasers." The consequence was a compromise, and as intimated by Governor Troup in one of his communications to the late Legislature, "the principle once settled by the Supreme Court, the act of Congress follows," by which, in this instance, the Yazoo speculators received five million of dollars. But returning to a connected history of this transaction: as soon as Georgia repossessed herself of this land, she opened a negotiation with the United States government, with a view to a disposition of it in that quarter, and in 1802 the final arrangement was made, by which the General Government received all the lands belonging to Georgia from her present western boundary to the Mississippi, containing those two valuable states already mentioned, and worth to the Treasury of the Union almost countless millions. For this immense extent of territory, Georgia was to receive only one million and a quarter of dollars and to have the Indian title to all the lands within her reserved limits extinguished, as early as the same could "be peaceably obtained on reasonable terms."

As soon as it was known that the state had parted with her lands to the general government, the Yazoo speculators, with an effrontery certainly only surpassed by the unspendable impudence of the original fraud, flocked to Congress with petitions for compensation for the loss, as they said, of their lands, by the repeal of the Georgia law and the subsequent sale of it to the U. States. Governor Troup was then in Congress from this state, had been almost raised and educated by Gen. Jackson, came into public life under his favorable auspices, was an ardent admirer of his political principles, and doubtless had often been admonished by that distinguished Patriot, never to spare his exertions, and to bend all the powers of his mind, in constant and unflinching opposition to that hideous speculation, and all who were concerned with it. True to the principles of his patron and faithful to the interest of Georgia, he commenced an untiring warfare against the claims of these political free-booters and unprincipled land jobbers. He was successful, as his able speeches will shew, aided by the unparalleled exertions of that extraordinary man, John Randolph, in defeating these claims for ten long years. And his open and manly opposition would to the last have proved victorious, but for the overpowering interference of the Federal Court. No wonder then that he looks to that scene with disappointment and speaks of it with resentment. If his remarks in that regard should be pronounced the indiscretion of a heated zeal, methinks at least, the Georgians should forgive him. It is the expression of a venial censure, edged perhaps with a keen regret for the loss of a cause, which had environed itself around every fold of his heart, in which fraud triumphed over right, and by which his country sustained an undeserved injury and his own warm feelings an unmerited mortification.

While on the subject of his congressional services, and being at the close of this No. I hope I may be indulged in a few reflections upon the unmanly treatment he has received. He has been called a madman and a traitor. Would to God we had a nation of such madmen! and that the councils of the general government were filled with such traitors! Where are we to look for the evidences of his insanity? Is it in his resistance to the most spotted fraud and livid corruption that ever degraded a nation? Is it to be found in his repeated and glowing attacks upon British aggression from without, and federal insurrection from within, during that dark and fearful period of our political relations, preceeding the late war? Does his unwavering political consistency and inflexible republicanism betray this melancholy fact? Is this calumnious secret disclosed by his writings, particularly his communications and correspondence? If so, greatly is it to be lamented that his is not a contagious delirium, at least for the sake of many of his brazen defamers. Where is his treason? Is it in asserting the rights of Georgia and demanding instead of begging redress for her injuries? Is it for warning an officious and misplaced policy from intermeddling with private property, merely to favor hypocritical designs and therein to promote political views? Is it for cautioning a blind and graceless charity, in a language strong, because addressed to a bigotry encased in all its accustomed hardness, not to invade the altar of private rights, or disturb the sacred privilege of conscience? If this be treason, then was our glorious revolution, from beginning to end, nothing but a tissue of plots and counterplots, in which every veteran in that deathless struggle deserved a gibbet. And in future the political lessons of consolidated America will be: slaves may grumble, but freemen must be silent. Resistance belongs to despotism, but submission to democracies. To question, shall be the right of the subject, but to obey becomes the duty of the citizen.

ATTICUS

† See the case of Fletcher, vs. Peck; 6th Cranch, page 27

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