

BOSTON, JUNE 18.

TOWN MEETING.

On Monday an adjourned meeting on the subject of the impending War, was held by the inhabitants of this town. The Committee appointed on Thursday last, made a report. The Hon. Mr. OTIS and Col. SUMNER, demonstrated the impolicy of the proposed War, and the right of the People to endeavour by constitutional means to avert it. The Report, of which the following is a copy, was then accepted.

The Committee appointed by the Town of Boston to take into consideration the present alarming state of our public affairs, and report what measures, in their opinion, it is proper for the Town to adopt at this momentous crisis, respectfully Report:

THAT the recent proceedings of the Government of the United States, justify the belief, that measures of direct hostility against Great-Britain have received the sanction of one branch of the Legislature, and probably have already become law; or if suspended, that they will finally be resumed and enforced. While the temper and views of the national administration are intent upon war, and expression of the sense of this town, will of itself be quite ineffectual, either to avert this deplorable calamity, or to accelerate a return of peace. But believing, as we do, that an immense majority of the people are invincibly averse from a conflict equally unnecessary, and menacing ruin to themselves and their posterity; convinced, as we are, that the event will overwhelm them with astonishment and dismay; we cannot but trust that a general expression of the voice of the people would satisfy Congress, that those of their Representatives who have voted in favour of war, have not truly represented the wishes of their constituents; and thus arrest the tendency of their measures to this extremity.

But should this be hopeless, it will enable the people to combine their operations, in order to produce by constitutional means, a change of men and measures, and rescue the nation from ruin. From the commencement of the system of commercial restrictions, the inhabitants of this Town (inferior, we trust, to none in ardent patriotism and attachment to the union) have appeared to render themselves obnoxious to the national administration and its partisans in this State, by their foresight and predictions of their utter inefficacy, destructive operations, and the ultimate tendency of this unprecedented and visionary scheme. They could discern in it nothing but a deliberate sacrifice of their best interests, and a conformity to the views of France, with whose system it co-operates, and whose approbation it receives; and hostility to Britain, whose interests, it wounds, and whose resentment it was calculated to excite. It was for the National Government to determine whether the decrees and aggressions of the belligerent powers (which commenced with the European war) would probably demand of the national honor retaliation and resistance; or whether the peculiar character of the war, and relative situation of our country, would justify a suspension of our resentments, and an adherence to our pacific policy. In the one case, the years which have elapsed should have been occupied in warlike preparations, which would now have been imposing and formidable. In the other event, it was the dictate of sound policy, to protest against the predatory systems which have annoyed our commerce, and still to have pursued it by all practicable means. But Government has adopted neither of these courses. It has not prepared to vindicate our commercial rights upon the ocean, where alone they are assailed; nor has it permitted the merchant to indemnify himself in any measure for the loss of that commerce which is interrupted, by a participation in that which is left. But by a strange and infatuated policy, under the pretence of resisting the invasion of maritime rights, it has debarred its own citizens from the use of the ocean; and professing to avenge the injuries it sustained from France and England, it has aggravated them by its own measures. The decrees of France, the edicts of England, and the acts of Congress, though intended to counteract each other, constitute in effect a triple league for the annihilation of American commerce; and our own Government, as if weary of waiting for a lingering dissolution, hastens to despatch the sufferer by the finishing stroke of a British war.

Had the policy of Government been inclined towards resistance to the pretensions of the belligerents, by open war, there could be neither policy, reason or justice in singling out Great-Britain as the exclusive object of hostility. If the object of war is merely to vindicate our honor, why is it not declared against the first aggressor? If the object is defence and success, why is it to be waged against the adversary most able to annoy, and least likely to yield? Why at the moment when England explicitly declares her Orders in Council repealed whenever France shall rescind her decrees, is the one selected for an enemy, and the other courted as a Conqueror? These enquiries lead us to contemplations too painful to indulge and too serious to express.

Though we cannot discern the least reason for this discrimination in favor of France, to justify the disproportionate measure of resentment exhibited against England; still in a war with the latter power there might have been found some consolation had our Country been in any measure prepared. We might have hoped that success would, in some instances, have rewarded

the efforts of our squadrons, that our sea-coasts would have been in some measure protected, that the gloom of a long and unequal contest, might be relieved by the brilliancy of occasional exploits. But under present circumstances, there will be no scope for valour, no field for enterprise, no chance for success, no hope of national glory, no prospect, but of a war against Britain, in aid of the common enemy of the human race, and in the end an inglorious peace, in which our ally will desert our interest and act in concert with our enemy, to shackle and restrain the commerce of our infant Empire, by regulations in which they will find a common interest. If your committee are correct in the opinion that those sentiments are cherished by the great body of the people, it is highly expedient that they should be expressed by them in their different towns and counties, and that the most speedy and convenient mode should be devised to give effect to their will.

The power of the country is yet in the hands of the people. Union, energy and resolution will cause the public opinion to be respected. Our Constitution affords the means of saving our country, by changing the men and the measures, which have brought upon us our present embarrassments. It cannot be expected that a great people will quietly consent that those who represent them should abuse their trust, and wantonly expose them to ruin and disgrace. If then the people who are opposed to the present system, will move with one accord, and express their disapprobation; if influenced by a sense of their dearest and vital interests, they will unite without party distinction to save their Country from a foreign war, and what is still more to be dreaded, a foreign yoke, "now is the appointed time, now is the day of salvation." But if overawed by power, humbled by suffering, or restrained by erroneous considerations, they will submit to be plunged into the troubled ocean of European wars, the melancholy consolation will remain for the inhabitants of Boston, while they bow in submission to the cruel destiny of their Country, that they have omitted no just occasion to warn their fellow citizens of its approach.

Wherefore your Committee recommend for the adoption of the town, the following RESOLUTIONS—

Whereas the proceedings of the National Government afford reason to conclude that it is their determination to involve our Country in a war with Great-Britain, and meetings of the people in a few places have been held, at which measures have been adopted, and sentiments expressed, calculated to induce government to persevere in those hostile dispositions; and it appearing desirable that the government should have full information of the opinions and wishes of the people—Therefore,

RESOLVED, That under existing circumstances the inhabitants of this town most sincerely deprecate a war with Great-Britain, as extremely injurious to the interests and happiness of the people, and peculiarly so as it necessarily tends to an alliance with France, thereby threatening the subversion of their liberty and independence. That an offensive war against Great-Britain alone, would be manifestly unjust; and that a war against both the belligerent powers, would be an extravagant undertaking, which is not required by the honor or interest of the nation.

RESOLVED, That we view with just indignation, and emotions inspired by the love of our Country, the outrages and aggressions which are offered to our lawful commerce; and we believe it is the duty of government to commence and proceed with as much diligence as the resources of our country will warrant, in providing for its efficient protection by a naval force. And we deem all commercial restrictions as so many engines of destruction, adapted to complete the ruin of that portion of our commerce which escapes the rapacity of foreign aggressors.

RESOLVED, That it is the true policy and duty of this nation to adhere to an impartial neutrality—to abandon commercial restrictions—to husband the resources of the Country—and to indemnify itself against the losses to which its commerce is exposed in the present European war, by improving those casual advantages which arise from this state of things, and which cannot be expected in a time of profound peace. That to abstain from efforts of impotent resentments, blind rage or desperate policy, is not to be deemed submission to any foreign power; but a conformity to necessities imposed on our Country by an overruling providence, for which our courage and patriotism are not responsible. That we should endeavour to ride out the storm we cannot direct; and that to plunge into the present war, would be a wanton and impious rejection of the advantages with which the Almighty has blessed our Country.

RESOLVED, That our free Constitution secures to the people the right at all times to meet together in a peaceable manner and express their opinions on public men and measures, and to adopt means for the security of their rights; and that our fellow-citizens in this and the other Commercial States, are earnestly requested to join with us in a public expression of their sentiments on the system of commercial restrictions, and their abhorrence of war; and that this town, should it become expedient, will appoint Committees for the purpose of receiving their Communications, and for corresponding or meeting with them for the adoption of such constitutional measures as may be proposed, for the restoration of our unalienable com-

mercial rights; for the security of our peace, and for the election of such men to office, as will use their best endeavors for the promotion of these objects, so essential to the preservation of our constitution, to the security of our union, and to the prosperity, of our country.

JOHN C. JONES, Chairman.

The foregoing report, having been repeatedly read and debated, was voted to be accepted.

THOMAS DAWES, Moderator.

Attest— THOMAS CLARK, Town-Clerk.

It was voted, that the Selectmen cause copies of the above Report and Resolutions to be sent to every town in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Randolph's Letter.

[The last Washington papers furnish the following interesting letter of Mr. RANDOLPH to his Constituents.—It is worthy the serious attention of every reader, particularly all cool and reflecting democrats.]

FROM THE SPIRIT OF SEVENTY SIX.

To the Freeholders of Charlotte, Prince Edward, Buckingham and Cumberland.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

I dedicate to you the following fragment. That it appears in its present mutilated shape is to be ascribed to the successful usurpation which has reduced the Freedom of speech in one Branch of the American Congress to an empty name. It is now established for the first time, and in the person of your representative, that the house may, and will refuse to hear a member in his place, or even to receive a motion from him upon the most momentous subject that can be presented for legislative decision.—A similar motion was brought forward by the republican minority in the year 1798\* before these modern inventions applied the remedy.—We must bid adieu to a free form of government forever, for the stifling of freedom of debate has now been discovered. It was discussed as matter of right until it was abandoned by the mover in consequence of additional information [the correspondence of our Envoy at Paris] laid before Congress by the President. In "the reign of terror" the fathers of the federation law had not the hardihood to prescribe liberty of speech, much less the fight of free debate on the floor of Congress. This invasion of the public liberties was reserved for self-styled republicans, who hold your understandings in such contempt as to flatter themselves that you will overlook their every outrage upon the great first principles of free government, in consideration of their professions of tender regard for the privileges of the people. It is for you to decide whether they have undervalued your intelligence and spirit, or whether they have formed a just estimate of your character. You do not require to be told that the violation of the rights of him whom you have deputed to represent you is an invasion of the rights of every man among you, of every individual in society.—If this abuse be suffered to pass unredressed, and the people alone are competent to apply the remedy—we must bid adieu to a free form of government.

Having learned from various sources that a declaration of war would be attempted on Monday next, with closed doors, I deemed it my duty to endeavour, by any exercise of my constitutional functions, to arrest this heaviest of all possible calamities, and avert it from our happy country.—I accordingly made the effort of which I now give you the result, and of the success of which you will already have been informed before these pages can reach you. I pretend only to give you the substance of my unfinished argument. The glowing words—the language of the heart—have passed away with the occasion that called them forth. They are no longer under my control. My design is simply to submit to you the views which have induced me to consider a war with England, under existing circumstances, as comporting neither with the INTEREST nor the HONOR of the American people, but as an IDOLATROUS SACRIFICE of both, on the altar of French rapacity, perfidy and ambition.

France has for years past offered us terms of undefined commercial arrangement, at the price of a war with England, which hitherto we have not wanted firmness and virtue to reject. The price is now to be paid. We are tired of holding out—and following the example of the nations of continental Europe; entangled in the artifices, or awed by the power of the destroyer of mankind; we are prepared to become instrumental to his projects of universal dominion. Before these pages meet your eye, the last Republic of the earth will have enlisted under the banners of the tyrant and become a party to his cause. The blood of American freemen must flow to cement his power, to aid in stifling the last struggles of afflicted and persecuted man; to deliver up into his hands, the patriots of Spain and Portugal, to establish his Empire over the ocean and over the land that gave our forefathers birth; to forge our own chains;—And yet, my friends, we are told, as were told in the days of the mad ambition of Mr. Adams, "THAT THE FINGER OF HEAVEN POINTS TO WAR." Yes, the finger of Heaven does point to war. It points to war, as it points to the mansions of eternal misery and torture; as to a flaming beacon warning us of that vortex which we may not approach but with certain destruction. It points to desolated Europe, and warns us of the chastisement of those nations who have offended against the justice and almost beyond the mercy of heaven. It announces the wrath to come upon those who, ungrateful for the bounty of providence, not satisfied with peace, liberty, security, plenty at home, fly, as it were, into the face of the most high, and tempt his forbearance.

To you in this place, I can speak with freedom, and it becomes me to do so: nor shall I be deterred by the cavils